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Challenging Power:
Youth Activism in the Thai Pro-Democracy Movement (2020-2022)

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Abstract

This study explores the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand (2020-2022) and the ways in which Thai youth are challenging traditional power structures. Through an analysis of the movement's trajectory from its start to its current state, the research discusses the various ways in which youth are challenging the status quo.
The study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the movement through the lens of the activists, tracking the development of the protest movement alongside the activists' reflections on their involvement. The discussion follows the phases of the movement; from mobilization on the individual level to the peak of the movement, followed by a discussion of state repression and implications of the movement as a whole. The research is based on a four-months fieldwork in Thailand from September 2022-December 2022, where research was conducted utilizing qualitative research methods, such as interviews with young activists and observation of protests. The collected data material reveals that youth activists in the pro-democracy movement have disrupted traditional ways of thinking and shaken the foundations of Thai society. Overall, this study aims to provide new and valuable insights into the ways in which youth activists challenge power structures and fight for democratic rights in Thailand by amplifying the voices of the youth activists.

Word count: 44 873
Key words: Thailand, power, pro-democracy movement, social movement, collective identity.

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List of Abbreviations

NCPO: National Council for Peace and Order

NGO: Non-governmental organization

NIB: National Identity Board

TLHR: Thai Lawyers for Human Rights

UN: United Nations

UTFD: United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration

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1 Introduction

Throughout 2020, Thais were shocked by the tens of thousands of young people gathering in the streets. Youth across Thailand were calling for change in some of the biggest pro-democracy protests the country had seen in years. The youth-led protest movement has resulted in a national network raising three key demands: Dissolve parliament, revise the constitution, and above all, reform the monarchy. Their rapid mobilization alongside their nationwide symbolic campaigns of anti-government actions have shaken the foundations of Thai society.

In September 2022, I went to Thailand for fieldwork to learn about, and do research on, the youth-led movement. After reading about the movement and seeing pictures of the large masses of young people in the streets of Bangkok, I was interested in learning about the motivations behind youth activism and investigate the current state of their struggle for democratic reforms. By conducting field research, which is understood in a broad sense as "research based on personal interaction with research subjects in their own setting" (Wood, 2009, p. 23), I expanded my knowledge in ways I could hardly imagine. Three weeks after my arrival, I was standing in the midst of a protest arranged by the student group United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration (UFTD) at Victory Monument in Bangkok. Around me were heaps of people in anti-government shirts raising the resistance symbol of the three-finger salute in the air while listening to the speeches and performances that were held on stage. People in cars, buses and on motorbikes were driving past the protest in the big roundabout at Victory Monument, some raising the three-finger salute in support. On the other side of the stage were stalls selling street food and clothes, and in front of these were tens of people with 'PRESS' showing on their backs. During my time in Thailand, I got to know and interview several prominent student leaders, following the developments of the movement from the activists' perspectives by attending protests and activities connected to the movement.
By the end of my fieldwork, I had attended eight protests and many more activities, which allowed me to immerse myself in the field of inquiry.

1.1 Aim and Rationale

All around the world, children and young people have taken to the streets in the recent years to demand their rights. Although every context is unique, young people are calling for action on the climate crisis, for better education and employment opportunities, for an end to corruption and inequality – and for a fairer world (Unicef, 2019). It is therefore a heartbreaking irony that, in standing up for democratic change and for their fundamental rights, many children and young people are simultaneously having their rights taken away. Today, the study of social movements is solidly established, and the social and political events over the last decades have made the investigation of grassroot activism more relevant and urgent (della Porta & Diani, 2009, p. 1). della Porta and Diani (2009, p. 1) highlights that social movements and protest actions have become a permanent component of Western democracies, which triggered me to wanting to learn about social movements in non-Western democracies. Thus, the aim of this research is to explore youth activism in the context of Thailand. The study seeks to provide a comprehensive understanding of the role of youth in the 2020-2022 pro-democracy movement and the ways in which they challenge traditional power structures in Thailand.

Prior to my research, I was especially interested in conducting research in Thailand, as the country has a special place in my heart as well as a wish to learn more about its complex political landscape. Since Thailand began its transition from absolute monarchy to constitutional monarchy in 1932 (The Siamese Revolution), its political environment has been continuously unstable. Thailand has undergone 20 constitutional changes, 29 prime ministers and 13 successful coup d'états (with many more attempts) since the overthrow in 1932. This has resulted in the country being stuck in a vicious cycle of coups and revolution, with its political institutions having faced reforms – from waves of military takeovers to processes of democratization (Tejapira, 2016). As the pro-democracy movement is a response to the persistent political turmoil and suppression of democratic values under the military rule, I was especially interested in learning more about the role of youth in the movement, who are considered the driving force behind it. Since my background is within the field of education, it was the 'white ribbon movement' organized by high school students that was my primary interest. However, when taking the ethical guidelines and measures for concentrating on children below 18 as the main research group into consideration, I quickly realized that the most feasible approach would be to focus my research on university students.

1.2 Research Question

The main research question of this project is:

What is the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand (2020-2022) in challenging traditional power structures?

To narrow the scope, I have developed the following sub-questions:

- What are the key factors that facilitated the mobilization of youth in the pro-democracy movement?
- How do the demands of the movement and the forms of activism challenge traditional power structures?
- What are the forms of repression used against the youth protestors, and how have they responded to this repression?
- How has involvement in the pro-democracy movement impacted the activists?
- What are the broader cultural and political implications of the pro-democracy movement?

To clarify the potential for confusion in my research question, I will explain what I mean by 'traditional power structures'. Thailand's traditional power structures are complex and multifaceted, with a history that is shaped by monarchy, military and bureaucracy (McCargo, 2005). This can be considered as part of Thailand's institutional power structure, as these are formal and organized entities within the political system that hold significant power and influence. In addition to institutional power structures, there are also societal and cultural power structure that shape politics and society in Thailand. These power structures are less formal and more diffuse, as they are deeply embedded in cultural practices and social norms. For example, Thai society places a high value on respect for authority, hierarchy, and social order, which can be seen in deference shown to elders, monks, teachers, government officials, and other 'high status' people (Vorng, 2017). Nationalism and Buddhism are also central elements in shaping politics and society in Thailand, as they play important roles in shaping social norms and values. This value system may influence political behavior, making it more difficult for individuals or certain groups to challenge established power structures. In this thesis, the main focus is placed on societal and cultural power structures. Understanding these

power structures and their relationships is essential for analyzing the dynamics of power in Thai society, and for identifying the potential for lasting political change.

1.3 Core Concepts and Delimitations

In this thesis, most concepts will be defined throughout the chapters. Despite this, I find it useful to clarify the meanings of certain concepts and terms that I use from start to end. First of all, 'social movements' can be understood as "a distinct social process, consisting of the mechanism through which actors engaged in collective action are involved in conflictual relations with clearly identified opponents; are linked by dense informal networks; and share a distinct collective identity" (della Porta & Diani, 2009, p. 20). Social movements usually arise from tensions and dissatisfaction with the status quo, often displayed in the form of protest against those in power. For this type of counterpower to be heard, the group must be loud, of significant size, and have sufficient resources (della Porta & Diani, 2009).

'Mobilization' is important for every social movement to gain momentum. Traditionally, this term has been used for preparing troops for war or battle. Over time, it has become a common term in social movement activity for describing "the network and organizational activities that transform the potential for action into real change" (della Porta & Diani, 2009, p. 7). In this thesis, mobilization is understood to be any action taken which contributes to further action, either by oneself or by others.

'Youth' is a term that generally refers to individuals who are in the stage of life between childhood and adulthood. However, the exact age range that defines youth vary depending on the context, culture, and country (Àkànle, 2022, p. 18). In their work, Hank, Enrique, and Joseph (2009, p. 14) explains that a 'youth movement' seem to be composed largely of people between the ages of eighteen and twenty-eight. I will use this understanding of 'youth' throughout the paper.

'Activism' is defined as "taking actions to effect change in an unjust status quo" (Conner, Greytak, Evich, & Wray-Lake, 2023, p. 128). This understanding of activism encompasses organizing actions that challenge injustice or inequities in society. An activist can therefore be understood as a person who advocates and engages in actions to bring about social, political, economic or cultural change.

1.4 Structure of the Paper

This thesis consists of eight chapters. In this first chapter, I have given an introduction by explaining the aim and rationale of the thesis, as well as presented the research questions of this study. This chapter also consists of the following overview of the thesis, which provides a short description of each chapter.

Chapter 2 will provide the necessary context that will serve as the background of the remainder of this thesis. I start by outlining a brief historical trajectory of the ideology of the three pillars 'nation, religion, king' in relation to the formation of Thailand's official nationalism. This is followed by a short description of the post-1976 state, in which the new ideology of 'democracy with king as head of state' evolved. Then, 'modern political history' will be shortly presented, before I explain the main developments of the pro-democracy movement of 2020-2022.

Chapter 3 will outline my research methodology, where I used qualitative methodology to explore the ways in which youth are challenging traditional power structures in Thailand. I discuss how I collected and analyzed the data, and provide a reflection over the ethical considerations I have taken in conducting this type of research.

Chapter 4 presents the theoretical framework that is used to discuss the data material in the discussion chapters. As I was reviewing my transcribed interviews, I realized that the responses required analysis drawing from multiple concepts and theories, rather than forcing my analysis to fit within a singular conceptual framework. As a result, I draw upon the concepts of Social movement theory, as well as the work of Michel Foucault and James C. Scott on power and resistance in my discussions of the findings from my fieldwork.

The subsequent three chapters will cover my findings from my fieldwork. The chapters will follow the trajectory of the movement, from mobilization on the individual level to the peak of the movement, followed by a discussion of state repression and implications of the movement as a whole.

Chapter 5 discusses the factors that have facilitated the mobilization of youth in the pro-democracy movement, and explores the ways in which youth are challenging traditional

power structures by discussing their demands and the specific forms of activism in light of power theories.

Chapter 6 discusses the measures that have been used by the government to suppress the pro-democracy activists and the youth-led movement. Elements that will be explored are state measures of repression, the aim of utilizing repressive measures, and the power struggles that arises between repression and resistance.

Chapter 7 seeks to explore the effects of the movement through a discussion of the biographical and cultural implications of the movement. In the last part of the chapter, I discuss the potential for lasting political change.

Chapter 8, the concluding chapter, presents a short summary of the discussions and highlight the main points of this paper. I shortly discuss the contributions of this study along with its limitations, and I present some suggestions for further research. Lastly, I end with some concluding remarks.

2 Background

This chapter will present the relevant background information in order to thoroughly understand the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand's current political environment. I will start by outlining a brief historical trajectory of the ideology of the three pillars 'nation, religion, king' in relation to the formation of Thailand's official nationalism. This is followed by a short description of the post-1976 state, in which the new ideology of 'democracy with king as head of state' evolved. Then, I will shift the focus to 'modern political history', in which essential events from 2000 and onwards will be presented. The most important features of this part are the developments of the color-coded politics of the 'red shirts' and the 'yellow shirts', as well as the military coup of 2014. Certain other events in this period will be briefly touched upon, but not thoroughly explained as these are more relevant to expand upon in later discussions in this thesis. Lastly, I will briefly explain the developments of the contemporary student-led movements, to provide a backdrop for delving into these developments in the discussion chapters.

2.1 'Nation, Religion, King'

The work of crafting Thailand's 'official nationalism' started during the reign of Rama V, also known as King Chulalongkorn, who served as the King of Siam from 1868-1910 (Ferrara, 2015, p. 59; Vorng, 2017, p. 45). This nation-building process was partly in response to external threats, and partly as a reaction to the national and territorial oppositions that had emerged in the process of building an absolutist state. Its priority was to strengthen the legitimacy of the King as the wielder of absolute power and to eventually identify the nation with the King. In the discussion of adopting a constitutional monarchy, Ferrara (2015, p. 59) highlights King Chulalongkorn's statement: "Siamese kings, unlike their European counterparts, had never been faced with popular demands to limit their absolute authority, something he attributed to their righteous, enlightened rule". In a later statement, the king argued publicly that "people in *Mueang Thai*" had never been divided in their opinions, but had rather always practiced "unity in one and the same opinion: the King's opinion" (Ferrara, 2015, p. 59). In addition, King Chulalongkorn's emerging state nationalism emphasized the King's role as the guarantor of the country's cultural traditions, and the key strategy to build the nation was to promote the national identity based on the concept of 'chat' (loosely meant nation), monarchy, and religion (Heng, 2019, p. 69). Seeking to understand Thailand's

political landscape, it is useful to trace the developments of Thailand's 'official nationalism' back to the reign of King Chulalongkorn.

In the wake of modernization alongside the spread of Western ideas and practices, King Chulalongkorn urged everyone to walk together on the "middle path" he was intent on pursuing, which combined "an openness to adopt necessary reforms with a determination to preserve Siamese customs" (Ferrara, 2015, p. 60). Buddhism was essential among these customs, which the King invoked as an important aspect of Siam's identity that had to be protected from the spread of Western ideas and practices. Buddhism was also one of the main legitimizing sources for the new absolutist state, which involved certain reforms for preserving tradition. For example, the Sangha Act imposed "a centralized hierarchy that maximized the King's control over appointments and standardized religious training, teachings, texts, and practices to match the ideology of the court" (Ferrara, 2015, p. 60). Together with reforms in the Ministry of Public Instruction and changes in school curricula, this laid the foundations for universal education. Around the very beginning of the 20th century, education began to be seen as a matter of social security (Ferrara, 2015, p. 63). Thus, these efforts were seen as necessary in terms of preserving Siamese customs in the nation-building process.

The official nationalism conceived during this period sought to find new sources of legitimacy for 'traditional' hierarchies, which involved that the notion of being Thai required everyone to accept their station in life. This entailed the performance of 'duties' related to their position without challenging inequalities of power, status, and wealth (Ferrara, 2015, p. 61). Ferrara (2015, p. 61) writes that King Chulalongkorn himself argued that the notion of 'social order' in Thailand required 'big people' (*phu yai*) to treat 'small people' (*phu noi*) with generosity, while *phu noi* should show deference to *phu yai*. Vorng (2017, p. 24) notes that Thai status differentiation is highly complex, as a person may simultaneously possess both higher and lower status in comparison to another person. Among the variables that defines these are age, education, occupation, wealth and family of birth. These hierarchies were presented as natural and beneficial during the process of developing the official nationalism and rationalized through Buddhist elements of karma and merit. As described by Ferrara (2015, p. 64), King Chulalongkorn pointed out that "real Thais perform duties that come with their social status". Those who question social hierarchies or break the rank might then be accused of being 'not really Thai', as also evident to this day. At a time of particular

cultural and institutional change, these ideas were seen as crucial to the new system's legitimacy (Ferrara, 2015, p. 61).

The son and successor of King Chulalongkorn, King Vajiravudh of the Sixth Reign (from 1910-1925), further articulated the official nationalism as his ideas builds on those sketched out during the Fifth Reign. He defined 'preserving the Thainess of the nation' (*raksa khwam pen thai haeng chat)* as the responsibility of all, duty-bound to 'love the King, love the nation, love the religion' and protect all three from the enemies aiming to destroy them (Ferrara, 2015, p. 67). By the end of the Sixth Reign, the nationalist ideology that legitimized the newly built absolutist state of Siam had set the official parameters of Thai national identity. The new Thai nation was delimited by 'membership rules' based on certain ethno-cultural traits, which excluded minorities who did not speak Central Thai, did not practice state Buddhism, and did not embrace 'civilized' customs as prescribed by the court. The ideology of 'Thainess', which is still evolving, provided content to Thai national identity, in which most important was its identification of King and the nation, as well as its hierarchical conception of society supported by chosen traditional beliefs about the Buddhist cosmos (Ferrara, 2015, p. 71). I conclude this part by highlighting the words of Heng (2019, p. 85): "Nation, religion, and monarchy constitute the central ideological system of Thailand and form the core of modern Thai national identity".

2.1.1 Democracy with King as Head of State

Since 1976, all state agencies in Thailand have complied in propagating a certain ideology: "Democracy with the king as head of state" (Connors, 2003, p. 129). As Connors (Ibid.) explains, this ideology is a curious mixture of traditionalist conceptions of kingship and democracy. In the traditional aspect, the king is seen as inviolable and infallible, and should not be accused in any circumstance. In light of the Buddhist-prescribed duties (*rachatam*) to the people, it is the king's duty to rule the country in line with the ten virtues of Buddhism. This also includes providing morale to the people, ensuring the production of food, recognizing people's achievements and alleviate their suffering. Additionally, the king must be "born to be king", which is related to his own karmic merit as well as the high family circle from which he emerges (Connors, 2003, p. 129). These elements are central parts of the traditional aspect of the state ideology of "democracy with the king as head of state".

As to the democratic aspect of the ideology, the kingship has been used in "the pursuit of creating modern citizens and political order in a modernizing state" (Connors, 2003, p. 129). The social transformations during the 20th century were seen as threats to stability, and it was therefore the king who could – as a symbol of order, place and identity – act as a focal point of loyalty. In effect, the monarchy functioned as a central institution in the political development. In this regard, McCargo (2005, p. 500) argues that "Thailand's political order is characterized by network-based politics", what he describes as 'network monarchy'. 'Network monarchy' can be understood as a form of semi-monarchical rule: "the Thai king and his allies have forged a modern form of monarchy as a para-political institution" (McCargo, 2005, p. 501). Hence, in this perspective, the monarch is presented as the central component of a novel mode of governance, best understood in terms of political networks. In terms of what is normally considered appropriate for a constitutional monarchy, the King often appears to be acting outside its limits. In order to understand the road to democracy in Thailand, it might be argued that one needs to understand royal power as a form of network governance. This is central to understand the reconstruction of national ideology since 1976.

In the construction of deploying a renewed national ideology in the post-1976 state, the task of defining Thai identity was given to a National Identity Board (NIB). National identity was defined as "land, people, independence and sovereignty, government and administration, religion, monarchy, culture and dignity (pride)" (Connors, 2003, p. 144). This was closely connected to the development of the country, as governmental technology aimed at subjective orientations of citizens in order to sustain the political imaginary of Thainess. Connors (2003, p. 144) describes this as a conscious mobilization for hegemonic and governmental aims. In its strategies of producing the Thai citizen, democracy was to play a key role in forming a link between identity and ideology: "Democracy was the political form under which identity would be enhanced, preserved and advanced by the self-governance of rational citizens in the frame of the three pillars" (Connors, 2003, p. 144). It might therefore be argued that democracy was more related to self-discipline than political structures as such. In other words, democracy could be seen as a way to shape citizens' self-discipline and subjective orientations in the frame of the three pillars.

2.2 Modern Political History

In order to provide a thorough and relevant understanding of the political history in Thailand, I find it useful to narrow the scope of 'modern political history'. As 'modern' political history

is rather relative, I choose to focus on providing an understanding of the political events after year 2000. This will be done in order to provide a base for understanding the deeper political reasons behind the contemporary pro-democracy movement. Between the years of 2001 to 2006, Thaksin Shinawatra – one of the most influential and polarizing characters in Thai politics – served as prime minister. As Pavin (2014, p. 4) explains, Thaksin won two landslide elections, in 2001 and 2005, becoming the only prime minister who had ever served a full four-year term in Thai history. During his five years in power, he grew enormously popular especially among the rural poor. However, he was also characterized as a polarizing figure and was deeply unpopular among many of Bangkok's rich elite. Thaksin's intensifying political strength worried the traditional elite who perceived him as a threat to their long-standing political influence (Pavin, 2014, p. 4). As his grip on power became stronger, the political divide between Thaksin-supporters and the traditional elite also grew bigger. This resulted in the old and well-known trick of the traditional elite; the military staged the eighteenth coup since the abolition of absolute monarchy and removed the elected government of Thaksin Shinawatra from power in September 2006.

The military coup in 2006 is important as the effects of the coup were largely different from earlier coups and is still relevant for the pro-democracy movement today. First of all, the coup was meant to protect the political interests of the military and safeguard the royal interests (Pavin, 2014, p. 4). However, with the new social class that had emerged during Thaksin's period of power, the coup gave birth to an anti-establishment movement whose members identify themselves as 'red shirts'. Paradoxically, the coup that was initially staged to reinforce the monarchy's position in politics, also triggered an anti-monarchy reaction among many Thais. Many became aware of the political position of the monarchy and their active involvement in politics, with the backing of the army. Thus, the military coup in 2006 deepened the political conflict as it gave rise to a new anti-establishment movement that was more conscious and critical to the role of the royal institution in the country's democratic development.

The political divide that deepened in the aftermath of the 2006 coup evolved into a standoff between two colored-coded sides that is still evident in today's political climate. The previous mentioned "red shirts" are considered anti-military, Thaksin-supporters, mainly from the populous north and northeast, whose goal is to upend the status quo (McCargo, 2021, p. 176). On the other side, we have the "yellow shirts". This group is characterized as pro-

establishment, royalist-conservatives, mainly concentrated in Bangkok and the upper south. Although this divide seems simple and straightforward, the yellow-red divide is a complex political phenomenon. McCargo (2021, p. 176) points out that both sides comprise "diverse, improvised alliances of groups encompassing wide-ranging views" (p. 176). To simplify, there exists many sub-groups that belong to the two sides with different political stances. Despite this, the colored t-shirtology has provided a shorthand for Thailand's polarized politics for nearly a decade and is understood as an ongoing conflict.

The years between 2006 and 2014 were characterized by a shifting dynamic of protests, street politics and uprisings between the yellow shirts and the red shirts. This period can be divided into three parts: The military junta, yellow shirts and street politics (2007- 2008); the red shirt uprising and the government's crackdown (2009-2010); and the resurrection of the Thaksin regime and the new face of protest movements (2011-2014) (Jotikut, 2016, p. 81). After the coup in 2006, a new general election was held in 2007 where The People Power Party (PPP) of Thaksin won and became the ruling party in a coalition government. During 2007-2008, protest politics intensified when the yellow shirts under the People's Alliance for Democracy (PAD) occupied two of the main international airports to get the PPP government to resign. The yellow shirts declared victory after the weeklong occupation of the airports when the constitutional court charged the parties in parliament of election fraud. Soon after the PPP's termination, their members regrouped under a new party name, the Pheu Thai Party, to regain power. However, the opposition party Prachatipat Party won, which again sparked uprising among the red shirts, and resulted in the new government facing one of the most violent protest situations in Thailand's political history. During March-May 2010, the red shirts occupied central Bangkok for 10 weeks, which culminated in a crackdown where 90 people died and more than 2000 were wounded. After a new round of elections in 2011, Thaksin's proxy party won the election, which led his youngest sister, Yingluck Shinawatra, to become the first female Prime Minister of Thailand. Eventually, political history in Thailand was repeated after the Royal Thai Army decided to intervene in 2014.

On May 20th, 2014, the Royal Thai Army declared a nationwide martial law with the declared purpose of restoring peace to the people after the decade-long political conflict. Two days later, the Thai army chief General Prayuth Chan-o-cha seized the 13th successful coup since 1932 as he announced the seizure of power to restore law and order, suspended the constitution, and vowed to reform the corrupted political system (Pavin, 2014). Especially

notable was the campaign of ideological transformation and political repression launched by the self-proclaimed National Council for Peace and Order (NCPO) junta which represented a shift from what had followed Thai coups of the recent past (Montesano, 2019, p. 1). NCPO used repressive laws and techniques of intimidation to silence critiques in a more aggressive way than any coup since 1976. For instance, they retained a nationwide martial law lasting over ten months and replaced it with Section 44 which gives the prime minister (the head of the NCPO) the power to issue any executive order that is deemed necessary to maintain peace and order, security, or public welfare, without any legal or parliamentary oversight. In addition, they restricted debates on politics and banned all expression of political opinion (Baker, 2016, p. 390). As the machinery to restructure the country's political system began its work, it was announced that a program of "reform" would cover 11 areas and extend over 20 years because of the volume of legislation required. These areas involved politics, public administration, law and justice, local administration, education, economy, energy, public health and environment, media, society, and others (Baker, 2016, p. 390). All in all, the NCPO junta kept tight control, suppressed all critique and opposition, and outlawed all debate in order to push through a large-scale program of change. This placed the 2014 coup on the list of Thailand's major history-changing coups.

2.3 Contemporary Pro-Democracy Movement

On February 22nd in 2020, youth protests arose from a specific political context: the military coup of 2014, the subsequent suppression of political activity by the ruling NCPO, and the Constitutional Court's decision to dissolve the Future Forward Party (McCargo, 2021, p. 177). Taking a quick return to the elections in May 2019, the newly established Future Forward Party had a remarkable success by becoming the third largest party in parliament. The progressively oriented Future Forward party appealed strongly to the new generation Thais, as well as to everyone eager for a fresh start and included both former yellow-shirts and former red-shirts. With its signature orange color symbolizing its positionality of moving beyond the color-coded contestations of the last decades, the party won 6.3 million votes in the 2019 election. However, Future Forward was overly critical and far too outspoken to be tolerated by the Thai establishment, which used a strategy of 'lawfare' to crack down on the party and its leaders. Consequently, Future Forward Party was dissolved by the Constitutional Court in February 2020, allegedly over receiving 'illegal' loans from the party leader, although the law made no reference to loans (McCargo, 2021, p. 178). This sparked the start of the protest movement among students across Thailand.

2.3.1 Four Waves of Protests

The immediate reaction to the dissolution of the Future Forward party in February 2020 is considered the starting point of the first wave of the student protests, which lasted from February to mid-March. On February 22nd, protests started at Thammasat, Chiang Mai, and Naresuan University (McCargo, 2021, p. 178). Over the next three weeks, more than 86 protests (flash mobs) were held on 47 different university campuses. These actions spread out nationally, as the protests were happening across 28 provinces (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). As Lertchoosakul (2021, p. 208) explains, this was the first time since the 1970s that political protests were led by university students at conservative universities. However, in mid-March, the authorities issued an emergency decree due to the spread of Covid-19 and temporarily suspended all campus protests. At that time, the students started an online campaign with the hashtag #MobFromHome, sparking a rapid mobilization of protests through social media (Lertchoosakul, 2021; McCargo, 2021). To provide a sense of the widespread scale of the online spheres, the hashtag #ถ้าการเมืองดี (If Politics was Good) had over 120,000 tweets referencing it in a single day (Waiwitlikhit, 2020, p. 21). This rapid online mobilization resulted in protests moving off campus, becoming more radicalized, extensive and dynamic.

The second wave started when protests resumed again in mid-July. On July 18th, one of the largest student groups called Free Youth (เยาวชนปลดแอก) staged a flash mob consisting of more than 2500 participants at Bangkok's Democracy Monument in support of three demands: an end to intimidation, dissolution of the sitting parliament, and a new constitution (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). In the following months, a large number of protests were held across the country, in which some events are of particular interest for understanding the developments of the movement. On August 10th, a ten-point manifesto (in the form of a speech) for monarchy reform was presented at a rally organized by United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration (UFTD), which is considered one of the main student activist groups. This manifesto was radical in its call for several issues: Revoke Article 112 of the Criminal Code and allowing the people to exercise freedom of expression about the monarchy, cease all public relations and education that excessively and one-sidedly glorify the monarchy, reducing the royal budget, and the demand of the monarchy refraining from interfering in politics (Prachatai, 2020). As stated in the speech, these demands were not a proposal to topple the monarchy but were rather a good-faith proposal made for the monarchy

to be able to continue to be respected and appreciated by the people within a democracy. This was remarkable as it was the first time in Thai history that students had organized a mass protest against the monarchy, "a previously untouchable institution" (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). Other striking events in the second wave took place on September 19th and on October 15th, when students mobilized Thailand's largest political rallies in years with the attendance estimated to have been between 50,000-100,000 people. At that point, the demands became more radical and the major issue presented by leaders was monarchy reform. Between October 13th and 16th, the government responded by arresting most protest leaders, breaking up gatherings and threatening to use new control measures such as detention, water cannons, tear gas, and a declaration of a "severe" state of emergency (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 209). Instead of declining, there was a new form of protests emerging from October 17th, as protestors used social media platforms such as Twitter and Telegram as the main communication platform, to share information about spontaneous gatherings. After five months of street protests, the movement quieted in late December along with a new covid-19 outbreak in the country.

The third wave from February-April 2021 and fourth wave from May-November 2021 were faced with more heavy-handed government response. Throughout 2021, the movement continued to mobilize through voicing their opinions online as well as organizing spontaneous protests, while prominent student leaders faced legal battles. Violent demonstrations increased between August and October 2021 when three protestors were shot at a clash between demonstrators and the police at Din Daeng, one of the biggest low-income communities in Bangkok (ACLED, 2023; Amnesty International, 2023). The escalation of violence led to the death of Warit Somnoi, a 15-year-old boy, who died of his wounds after spending two months in coma. Unlike previous protests in 2020 where participants mainly were well-educated students from the middle-class, most of the protestors at Din Daeng were children living in poverty. Most of them had left school at a young age for work in the service sector as informal workers. Their three-months long daily demonstrations, from September-November, reflected frustrations over the government's handling of the pandemic, which had negative consequences on their livelihoods as an economically vulnerable population (Amnesty International, 2023, p. 11). Following heightened levels of protests in 2020 and 2021, street protests decreased in 2022 due to state suppression and the ongoing prosecution of activists under the lèse-majesté law (ACLED, 2023). Below is an overview of the anti-government demonstrations in Thailand, which illustrates the trajectory of the movement from 2020-2022.

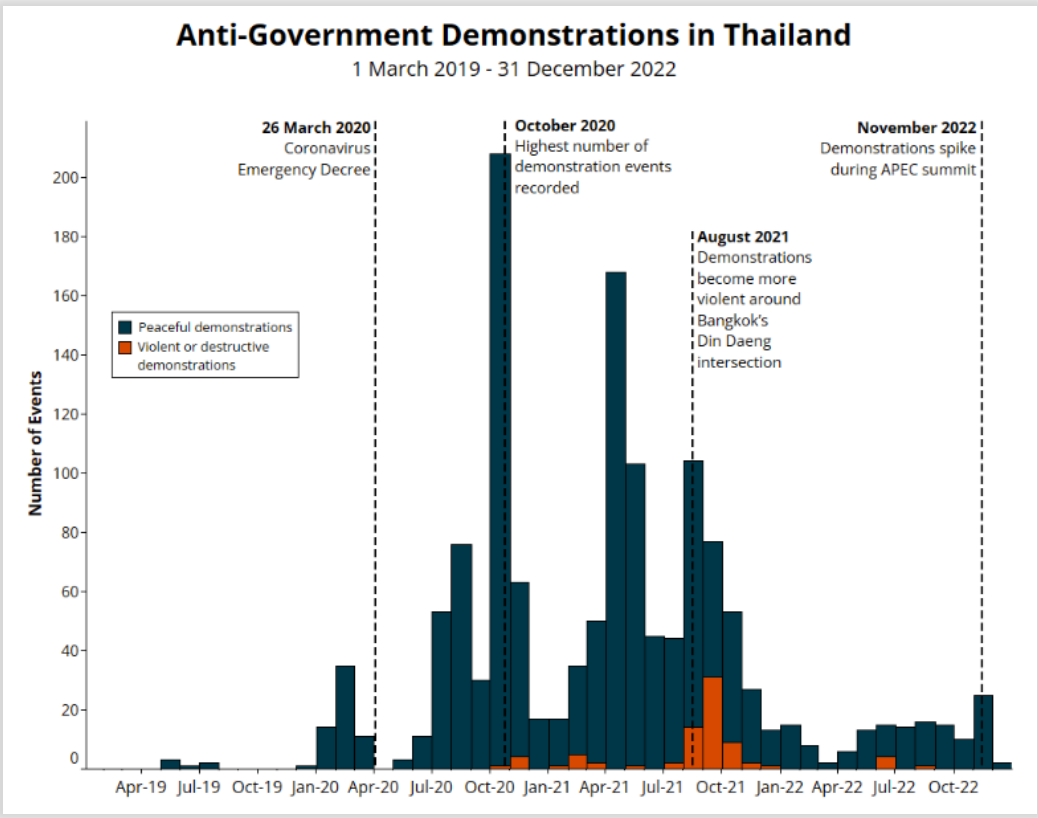

Figure 1. Anti-Government Demonstrations in Thailand. Illustration retrieved from ACLED (2023).

Summing up, the 2020 youth-led protests transformed into a large-scale national movement for democracy, in which the movement have three main demands: (1) dissolve the parliament and schedule new elections, (2) rewrite the constitution, and (3) monarchy reform. These demands will be discussed in more detail and in light of the thesis' main research question in Chapter 5.

2.3.2 Activist Groups

As the protests transformed into a large-scale movement across the whole country, it also brought together a broad spectrum of groups. Some student groups, such as United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration (UTFD) and Free Youth, existed since before the beginning of the movement. However, with the developments of the movement, new groups with various and extended demands were also formed. Towards the end of my fieldwork, I attended a court ruling where I met an activist who had, together with four other activists, written the unpublished report called "The Protests in 2019-2022 and Transitional Justice of Thailand" (Sirikittikul, Jaruariyanon, Ket-Udom, Phumphengphut, & Tajaroensuk, 2022). This report provides an updated overview of the activist groups that are currently in the spotlight. I have summarized the overview in the template below.

Group	Description
Free Youth and the Redem groups	The Free Youth group was established by the student union of Thailand. They first organized their protest to campaign their three demands. Another group then separated from Free Youth and reformed themselves as "Redem". The Redem group has no apparent "head leadership". There are no usual open public speeches in their protests. People can freely join the Redem protest to express their demands and it is regarded that those joining the Redem protest are those who are ready to face some form of physical clashes.
United Front of Thammasat and Demonstration (UTFD)	One of the longest established activist group. Most of the members are students from the Thammasat University, but some are also from other universities. Whenever there is a protest organized by the UFTD, there will be a large number of people from the public participating.
Ratsadon	The group was established by differing activist groups joining forces together under one party including the Free Youth and the UFTD groups. The joined group was then named "Khana Ratsadon" or "the Peoples' party 2022", for the reason that in 1932, there was the People's Party who freed the people. Therefore, the 2022 Peoples' Party was created to revolutionize the people from the unjust system.
Thalufah	The Thalufah group consist of members from the public from various different careers and students from a multitude of universities. The group was born from the "Thalufah march" covering the distance of 247.5 km from Korat city to Bangkok to campaign their 3 demands: 1. Release our friends; 2. Draft a people's constitution; 3. Abolish 112.
ThaluGaz	The ThaluGaz is an independent congregation of people that has no association to any groups. They precipitated from the effect of the Thalufah protest that was stopped at Dindaeng. ThaluGaz uses fireworks and ping-pong bombs as part of their demonstration to ask for justice.
Thalu-Wang	The group mainly conduct polls to ask the public to vote their opinions in issues related to the monarchy. The members were put in prison with pre-trial detention at the Special Womens' Correctional facility in Bangkok from doing the polls about the monarchy.
Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR)	TLHR helps the public with human rights issues and was established in 2014 after the military coup. Since the military coup, many people were remanded to the military camps for the purpose of "attitude adjustment" as directed by the NCPO. From this, a group of lawyers joined together to help and support those that had their human rights violated from being criminally charged by the state.
iLaw	The iLaw group educate the public on the knowledge about laws related with human rights violations. The group effectively summarizes information for the masses to easily understand and is one of the leading groups.
Free Feminist	A group of diverse people that campaign against the patriarchal system and culture.
Bad Students	A youth group that comprised by mainly high school students who came out to campaign for greater rights and freedom, with the focus to change the educational structure.

Table 1. Activist groups.

The movement consists of various groups with slight differences in their demands and different strategies. It is also often presented as leaderless, peaceful and organic, which to some degree is true. However, scholars such as McCargo (2021, p. 189) notes that "though not truly leaderless, the protests were extremely organic". This is because the very first campus protests in 2020 lacked obvious ringleaders, as these protests were organically organized and spontaneous, often due to mobilization on social media platforms. As the movement developed, several student activists were referred to as 'student leaders', much due to their radical public speeches and communication with the media. Additionally, these activist leaders encouraged every protester to be a 'core' protester and anyone to be a speaker (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 209). This backdrop of the developments and the structure of the movement provides a foundation for the later discussion on the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand.

3 Research Design and Methodology

This chapter presents an overview of the thesis' research methods that are used to explore and answer the research question. I will first provide an introduction of the research strategy, before I present the methods used in the data collection and analysis. Second, an overview of the sampling, sample size and recruitment will be provided. Third, I will explain the process of the data analysis that has been done in order to answer the research question. Lastly, there will be a discussion on establishing trustworthiness and of ethical considerations that has been taken.

3.1 Methods and Data Collection

The study of social movements and collective action has greatly expanded in the last decades. Many of the studies responsible for the advancement of social movement theory have relied on qualitative research techniques (Staggenborg, 1998, p. 353). Staggenborg (1998, p. 353) explains that "through methods such as participant observation, in-depth interviewing, and documentary analysis, researchers have developed theories about why individuals participate in movements, how movements emerge, develop, and decline, and why they succeed and fail". The objective of this study was to gain an in-depth understanding of how youth activists challenge traditional power structures in Thailand by exploring their experiences of participating in the pro-democracy movement. This requires an exploration into why they are protesting, how the government has responded, and the implications of their actions.
To best delve into these explorations and capture these processes, the study was inspired by Elisabeth Wood's description on the value of field work:

> Research based on personal interactions with research subjects in their own environment is particularly useful and important (inter alia) in situations where populations are marginalized or repressed, to study internal dynamics of groups, or under circumstances where actors have reasons to hide their beliefs and perceptions (Wood, 2006, p. 126, as cited in Malthaner, 2014, p. 173)

By utilizing both observational and conversational data collection methods during the field work, I aimed to produce interactional and observational data with different type of knowledge that are critical to understanding social movement dynamics (Staggenborg, 1998, p. 355). In-depth semi-structured interviews provided a space to fully explore the participants' narrated experiences of their participation in the pro-democracy movement, while observations provided me with an understanding of the context in which the protests and social movement activities were organized.

3.1.1 In-depth, semi-structured interviews

In the field of social movement studies, the relative scarcity of systematic collection of documents or reliable databases gives in-depth interviews a special importance (della Porta, 2014a, p. 228). Further, in-depth interviews are of fundamental importance for the study of motifs, beliefs, and attitudes, as well as the identities and emotions of the activists (della Porta, 2014a, p. 229) as they "bring human agency to the center of movement analysis" (Blee, 2013, as cited in della Porta, 2014a, p. 229). In order to bring human agency to the center of the study and to realize the research objectives, it was highly important that the interviews allowed the participants to openly share their experiences, thoughts and ideas. I chose to conduct semi-structured interviews, as this allowed me to not be fully dependent on the interview guide and it gave me the possibility of restructuring questions to the information that occurred, which gave the conversation a natural flow. This allowed the participants to bring up their own thoughts and topics that they perceived to be the most meaningful, while still ensuring that valuable themes were covered.

Before leaving for fieldwork, I developed two separate interview guides, one for student activists and one for experts (professors, NGOs, etc.). By interviewing both youth activist and experts, I aimed to provide valuable insights from different levels: The personal experiences and views of the activists, and the perspective from individuals and organizations who have specialized knowledge and expertise in the field being studied (Flick, 2018, p. 236). Moreover, as I gained more information and knowledge during the data collection process, the preliminary research questions changed depending on who I interviewed and their experiences. For example, for the activists who had been political prisoners, I added some questions about their prison experience and its effect on their activism and wellbeing. However, the thematically guided, open-ended structure remained the same. Furthermore, I found it helpful to ask the first participants for their feedback on the questions, as to improve the content and in shaping the questions for the upcoming interviews. In total, I carried out 11 interviews that each lasted between 45 minutes and two hours. All interviews were tape recorded and transcribed verbatim as the fieldwork progressed.

3.1.2 Observations

It is argued that participant-observation is an essential method for social movement researchers, as different forms of discourse can be observed in settings such as protests and meetings that cannot be replicated in one-to-one interviews (Staggenborg, 1998, p. 355). There are several reasons to why using observation was purposeful for my research; first, use of observation was motivated by the nature of my research inquiry. As Balsiger and Lambelet (2014, p. 232) explain, when in-depth interviews with activists are combined with participant observation, we develop a more holistic understanding of the emotional and cognitive dimensions in the creation of grassroots protest groups. Such emotional dimensions can include frustration and anger, passion and sense of community. The cognitive dimension includes elements such as perception of injustice, political empowerment and awareness of the political issues in which they are protesting against. By entering the spaces of where activism took place, such as meetings or mobs, I could observe and grasp the different dimensions and the energy of the people participating. This added a valuable dimension to the data collection process, as I was seeking to explore the congruence between the participants' actions and the narratives.

Secondly, utilizing observation was purposeful as it allowed me to experience the 'implicit meaning' of activists' practices. 'Implicit meanings' are defined as "the meanings that activists tend to take for granted as they are innovating explicit ideologies, identities, and rituals" (Lichterman, 1998, p. 402). Lichterman (1998) argues that this can help uncover meanings that researchers would not have understood through interviewing alone. For example, by attending mobs and talking to participants at these events throughout the fieldwork, I learned and observed how the different protest groups across ages were socializing and organizing the events together. During these events, I recorded as much as possible and aimed my attention at all aspects of the environment that seemed relevant for my research; interactions between protesters and activists, speeches, cultural symbols, posters with texts and/or pictures, songs that were performed, reactions from citizens not actively participating, the role of the police, and other organizational elements. Through seeing and experiencing these 'implicit meanings', I gained a wider understanding of the different political groups and the organizational processes that would not have been possible to articulate in one-to-one interviews.

Glesne (2006, pp. 49-50) describes that researchers engaging in observation may find themselves taking on different roles throughout the data collection process, fluctuating between states of pure observation to participant-observation, depending on the context in which the research is taking place and the nature of the research objectives. Throughout my fieldwork, I found myself taking on different roles along this participant-observation continuum, which often was dependent on the type of event. At mobs and rallies, I often obtained a role resembling the role of 'observer as participant', which is described as the researcher positioning themselves primarily as an observer, but has some interactions with the informants (Glesne, 2006, pp. 49-50). I attended all the mobs and rallies I could come across which had a connection to the pro-democracy movement, and I was engaging in small conversations with some of the participants that seemed interested in talking to me. After attending these mobs and events over a period of time, I started getting to know the people who participated in the mobs, as many of them always seemed to show up at everything that had a connection to the movement. These interactions slowly turned into relations, and some of these interactions also resulted in an interview. All in all, switching between different roles along the participant-observation continuum, allowed me to gain valuable knowledge and shed light on different aspects of my research inquiry.

3.2 Sampling, Sample Size and Recruitment

3.2.1 Sampling and Recruitment

When conducting research in a field, access to places or groups is gained through social networks and continuously negotiated in personal interactions. This means that the main source of information is the process of interacting with people and being part of social situations (Malthaner, 2014, p. 174). Based on my research inquiry, it was essential to gain access to protests and to get in touch with youth activist groups. In the early stages of fieldwork, it was challenging to find information about whether there were any ongoing protests happening or relevant events. I started the process by using social media such as Facebook to search for events which could be relevant to attend. After just a couple of days, I came across a relevant panel talk organized by a student activist group, which was about democracy and social movement in Taiwan and Thailand. Looking more closely into this, I discovered that one of the most prominent student activist leaders in Thailand was one of the panelists at this event. Excited, I signed up for the event and was hoping to get in touch with the student leader by attending this. When I was lucky enough to get a chat with the student

leader at the panel talk, I had to use my chance and ask if he wanted to participate in an interview with me. Surprisingly, he said he wanted to and gave me his contact information. In retrospect, I account this as the initial access to my contact network in the field.

As Malthaner (2014, pp. 181-182) explains, after initial access, the sample of interviewees and other research participants is mostly built by 'snowball sampling' through an evolving network of contacts. Through my first participant, I generated new contacts and was able to expand my relations. Moreover, expanding networks can also be facilitated by observations or simply by being present and interacting with people in the field, for example by attending meetings, rallies or demonstrations (Malthaner, 2014, p. 182). During the first weeks of my fieldwork, I used most of the time trying to find relevant events such as talks, webinars and cultural happenings, and attended the ones that seemed applicable to my research. On the 30th of September, I came across an article in the Bangkok Post describing the planned assembly in the center of Bangkok, in the event of the constitutional court's ruling on whether the prime minister Prayuth Chan-ocha's 8-year term in office had expired. By attending this assembly, I got in touch with an activist that later became a participant and an important source for further networking. This contributed to building my network, and several snowballs had been made.

It is important to note that in all 'snowball sampling' processes, the researcher has only partial control over the selection of respondents (Malthaner, 2014, p. 181). In my research, I was lucky enough to meet prominent student leaders at an early stage during the fieldwork, who all had enormous networks. These contacts were extremely helpful, and all were open to provide the contact information to whomever I wanted to talk to within their network. Furthermore, Malthaner (2014, p. 182) highlights that "researchers should strive to control for possible bias by being attentive to the selectivity of the networks they use, by trying to cover a broad variety of social and personal backgrounds in their interviews, and by including diverging or dissident positions". Because this study aimed to explore the role of youth activists in the pro-democracy movement, it was essential to gain variation within the sample population. This included taking factors such as gender, background, age, educational background, experience, and occupation into account. Additionally, the selection of a sample with participants representing different activist groups was motivated by the desire to get a better understanding of the organizational climate within the movement. Although I only had partial control over the selection of participants, I believe that this study can contribute to valuable research and provide the basis for valid qualitative insights.

3.2.2 Sample Size and Participants

Prior to my fieldwork, a tentative sample size had been set to recruit eight students and four experts as participants for individual interviews. I also had an idea of completing one or two focus groups with students, in addition to attending as many protests as possible. Some weeks into the fieldwork, I realized that Twitter was commonly used to find information about happenings and events related to the pro-democracy movement. I started following activists, NGOs, politicians and human rights advocates, and attended the events that I found relevant. All in all, I attended eight protests, six panel talks, three workshops and one court ruling. Additionally, I did not only complete individual interviews, but in some instances, the participants wanted to bring another activist to participate in the interview together with them. This resulted in two of my interviews having two participants. I carried out 11 interviews, in which six of the interviews were of students (nine participants), four individual expert interviews in which two of them represented non-governmental organizations and two of them were professors at two different universities. The last interview was with an activist who represented art and culture. An overview of the participants is listed in the table below. All the participants have been anonymized and the list thus consists of pseudonyms that I will be using to refer to the different participants throughout this thesis.

Participant	**Title**	**Age**	**Gender**	**Representing activist group/organization**	**Former political prisoner**
Somchai	Activist	24	Male	None	Yes
Apisit	Activist	28	Male	None	Yes
Ploy	Activist	24	Female	Activist group 1	Yes
Areeya	Activist	21	Female	Activist group 2	No
Narawit	Activist	22	Male	Activist group 2	No
Eve	Activist	27	Female	Activist group 3	Yes
Pim	Activist	21	Female	Activist group 3	Yes
Suthep	Activist	24	Male	Activist group 4	No
Malee	Activist	20	Female	Activist group 4	No
Kasem	Artist	33	Male	None	Yes
Ann	Professor	x	Female	Academia	No
Chaya	Professor	x	Male	Academia	No

Tao	NGO director	x	Male	Law organization	No
Kannika	NGO director	x	Female	Human rights organization	No

Table 2. List of participants.

As shown in this template, the participants of this study represent four different youth activist groups who are all currently active within the movement. The two activists that does not represent any current group have earlier been involved in activist groups and were highly active during the peak of the movement in 2020-2021. Also, five of the participants have been political prisoners due to their work with the movement. I did not include the age of the experts, as this is not relevant to the study.

3.3 Data Analysis

In qualitative research, analysis is an integral part of the research process from beginning to end (Moen & Middelthon, 2015, p. 356). This means that the analysis of data is not an isolated stage of the research process. It is rather a significant shaper of the process (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019, p. 356; Moen & Middelthon, 2015). In my case, I would argue that a process of analytical reflection was present and shaped throughout the different stages of my field work; during literature review, by observations in different study sites, when writing notes in my notebook, and by conversing with different people about the topic I was investigating. This is supported by Mattoni (2014, p. 29), who explains that researchers are supposed to begin their data analysis early in their investigation in order to refine the way in which they observe the data while they continue to collect them. Moreover, the way one approaches the data collected is also guided by the research inquiry itself. This means that there is no single formula or procedure that should be blindly followed when engaging in data analysis (Hammersley & Atkinson, 2019, p. 167). Although the data analysis often comes to dominate towards the end of a research project, I argue that the analytical thinking already started in the pre-fieldwork phase and continued throughout the fieldwork.

The data material was organized and analyzed in different ways. First, I arranged the different data in chronological order throughout the fieldwork. This made it possible to consider the chronology of events, interviews and protests that have taken place during the course of the study (Moen & Middelthon, 2015, p. 357). Second, the interviews were analyzed by utilizing

thematic analysis. Thematic analysis can be defined as “a method for identifying, analyzing and reporting patterns (themes) within data. It minimally organizes and describes your data set in (rich) detail. However, frequently it goes further than this, and interprets various aspects of the research topic.” (Braun and Clarke, 2006, cited in Flick, 2018, p. 474). I started mentally thematizing the concepts when I transcribed the interviews, constantly reflecting upon the themes that occurred. After transcribing the interviews, I conducted a manual procedure and color-coded the written material into main themes and sub-themes. Although I had generated some ideas about the main themes throughout the data collection process, I remained open to the emergence of non-previously identified themes from the written data material. Thus, the process of generating codes and themes was characterized by both deductive and inductive approaches (Moen & Middelthon, 2015, pp. 358-359). Through this process, central themes and sub-themes were identified and analyzed in order to clarify how they related to each other and their context. Additionally, the same process was utilized when I analyzed my own written material, meaning the field notes taken from observations of protests, activities, and meetings. By organizing and analyzing the data material in this way, I could identify patterns, diversities and nuances that carried much value for shaping this research.

The various thematic codes that emerged were classified into main-themes and sub-themes. The main themes consisted of the following topics: motivations, authoritarian culture- and systems, repression, power, activism, (national) identity, and culture. In my long list of sub-themes, the most important for my research were freedom of expression and free thought, laws, education, norms and values, strategies of protest, prison experiences, hope and fear.

3.4 Ethical Considerations

3.4.1 Informed Consent

There is a certain degree of risk in bringing activism under the spotlight in qualitative research. For example, it might expose activists to surveillance and repression, or subjecting them to personal threats. Therefore, it is important to take possible consequences into account when involving activists in a research project. It should also play a key role when designing and implementing a research project centered on political activism (Milan, 2014, p. 454). In this regard, the main priority in my research has been to follow the “do no harm” principle. As Flick (2018, p. 136) explains, principles of research ethics require that researchers avoid

harming participants involved in the process by respecting and taking into account their needs and interests. First of all, a central precondition for participation is *informed consent.* Informed consent implies that subjects know and understand the risks and benefits of participation in the research, and that their participation is completely voluntary (Flynn and Goldsmith, 2013, cited in Flick, 2018, p. 140). When I conducted my interviews, I always provided oral and written information as well as the consent form before starting the interview. The consent form (See Appendix B) included information about the project and what participation in the project involved, as well as a detailed description about their rights as participants. This way, they could make informed decision on whether they wanted to participate in my research.

3.4.2 Anonymization and Data Protection

Researchers have the obligation to protect the informants. In order to ensure protection, it is essential that researchers strive to protect the identity and privacy of activists by avoiding using real names and disclosing information that might facilitate identification by third parties (Milan, 2014, p. 454). Before conducting the interviews, all the participants were informed of potential risk of being identified, yet all of them responded that they did not mind being identified. However, they all requested to be anonymized in connection to their reflections about the monarchy. Despite this, I found it best to keep all participants anonymous to ensure their protection. One challenge that appears in this case, is the fact that some of the participants are prominent student leaders across Thailand who have been the reason for radical changes in the socio-political sphere due to concrete actions. In the interviews, they have provided reflections around their experiences that I account as essential information for the research. I will therefore include some of these reflections, which might make it possible to identify some activists. However, these reflections will contain information that is already shared publicly by the media. In some parts of the thesis, I may not cite the participant in some statements, but rather write “one of the participants” in order to de-identify where it is necessary as some of these statements consist of information that might put the participant at risk. This especially applies to section 5.2.3 Monarchy Reform and section 6.2 and 6.3 where I discuss the prison experience. Moreover, all the participants have been given pseudonyms. In sum, I have constantly kept in mind the core imperative of the “do no harm” principle” (Flick, 2018; Milan, 2014, pp. 143, 455), and sought to de-identify the participants and anonymize information that may compromise their anonymity.

To maintain the ethical principles of participant anonymity and security, it is essential to use platforms and data storage that are appropriate for this kind of research (Flick, 2018, pp. 142-143). There are several ways to reduce the risk of such data collection. First of all, I started by applying to the Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD) to ensure that my research was legally compliant and ethically sound in terms of storing data. This way, I ensured that my research, which involves personal data and sensitive information, comply with the Personal Data Act. In terms of recording the interviews, I used a platform that have been pre-approved by the Oslo Metropolitan University: the app Nettskjema diktafon. By using this platform, I ensured to complete recordings in compliance with the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). The data was also secured by encrypting the notes and by using an encrypted memory stick to store the interviews. In addition, I took notes during the interviews and when I attended protests and other movement activities, which I kept in safe places throughout the fieldwork. In order to make sure that the participants had all the information needed to make an informed consent, they were informed about how I intended to store the data, before the interview started. As sensitive issues were discussed in most of the interviews, it was crucial that these steps were done properly.

3.4.3 Power-positions and Interviewer Influence

Power-positions and interviewer influence are important ethical principles in social movement research. As Harrison (2006) explains, a key issue for 'foreign' researchers, defined as those who are not of the area or community under investigation, is that they are in a position of power, by virtue of their work, education and background. Since I am half Thai and can to a certain degree speak the language, I experienced that this contributed to balancing out the power-relation. By speaking the same language when conducting the interviews and not having a translator, the space felt more open and authentic. Still, it is essential to recognize that my age, sex, nationality, and/or education level, to mention a few, might have influenced the interviewer-participant relationship and affected the responses given (Sumner & Tribe, 2008, p. 119). In addition, the social, cultural and economic background of the researcher might shape the research because of one's perceptions of a certain topic. It is especially important to be aware of this in order to avoid bias. As noted by Sumner and Tribe (2008), it is helpful to reflect over positionality and how this, to an unknown extent, might affect the interview setting and the data analysis.

It is important to note that researchers rarely hold all of the power in the research process. Since the subjects of research can withhold information and possibly dictate the way the research is conducted, they are also in a powerful position. Therefore, we can understand the power relationship between the researcher and the researched as a continuum in which both parties impact and shape the research (Harrison, 2006). These elements of power must be taken into account in the different phases of the research process.

3.5 Establishing trustworthiness

Throughout this chapter, I have touched upon some of the procedures of this study that can help establish 'validity' or 'trustworthiness'. 'Validity' is defined by Mishler (1990) as "the social construction of knowledge by which we evaluate the trustworthiness of reported observation, interpretations and generalizations" (Mishler, 1990, cited in Flick, 2018, p. 544). For instance, engaging in triangulation by combining interviews and observation (Flick, 2018, p. 191), and providing a detailed description of my data collection and analysis process, are strategies that can be used to improve validity (Balsiger & Lambelet, 2014, p. 146; Flick, 2018, pp. 190-201; Malterud, 2001, p. 483). In addition, trustworthiness can be demonstrated by providing a thorough account of the process of 'reflexivity' and 'transferability' (Malterud, 2001), which will be discussed shortly in this section.

3.5.1 Reflexivity

'Reflexivity' is a concept of research which refers to "acknowledging the input of researchers in actively co-constructing the situation which they want to study" (Flick, 2018, p. 604). In regard to this, Malterud (2001) explains that reflexivity is a process that starts by identifying pre-conceptions or beliefs that the researchers might have that could shape the investigation. As the pro-democracy movement in Thailand is shaped by complex social, cultural, and political dynamics, I found it helpful to inhabit some pre-existing knowledge about the Thai culture and society. Since I have family in Thailand and have spent quite some time in the country throughout the years, I am well-known with societal norms and cultural aspects, to the point where I can say that it is "in my blood". Although I had an understanding of these aspects, I did not have adequate knowledge in terms of political structure and dynamics. My understanding of the political context was limited to what had been shared in the global news sphere, about the military's role and the endless cycle of coups. In addition to this, personal pre-conceptions and experiences also involved regarding Thailand as a place where politics

were not discussed amongst the general population. In relation to this, it is important to note that "pre-conceptions are not the same as bias, unless the researcher fails to mention them" (Malterud, 2001, p. 484). Rather, these pre-conceptions and beliefs contributed to increase the motivation for gaining more knowledge about the political landscape and youth activism in Thailand. On the other side, it is essential for the researcher to not confuse knowledge intuitively present in advance, with knowledge emerging from inquiry of systematically obtained material (Malterud, 2001, p. 484). Rather, I believe that these reflections must be recognized as valuable sources and insights for a research project.

Second, in the process of reflecting critically on the self as a researcher, I find it useful to highlight the topic of sympathy when bridging reflexivity and social movement research. In her book, della Porta (2014b, p. 3) describes that it has often been observed that social movement scholars have had a tendency to focus attention on social movements to which themselves are sympathetic. This means that social movement scholars often share the concerns of those they are researching. In this research, it is therefore important to mention that my reflections on actions and observations in the field become data in its own right (Flick, 2018, p. 8). For example, I fluctuated between feelings of hope and frustration when hearing about the activists' experiences of struggle and observing protest activities. The sympathy I have for their fight for basic human rights might influence the different steps in the research process, and also the interpretation of data. By being transparent about my emotions and sympathies, and by critically reflecting on how these may have influenced the research process and findings, I hope to demonstrate awareness of my own biases and limitations, and enhance the credibility and validity of this research. Moreover, Malterud (2001) adds to this when explaining that there is no such thing as a "neutral observer". Dependent on positions and perspectives, researchers might therefore access different, although equally valid, representations of the situation that is studied (Malterud, 2001, p. 484). In other words, the subjectivity of both the researcher *and* of those being studied becomes part of the research process (Flick, 2018, p. 8). Subsequently, my reflections on the activists' actions and observations in the field, must be accounted as data in their own right, and thus forming part of the interpretation.

3.5.2 Transferability

The issue of 'transferability' is another important element to consider when designing and carrying out a qualitative research study. The question to be considered is: to what degree are

the findings of the present study applicable to other contexts? Firstly, as Malterud (2001, p. 485) has noted, “no study, irrespective of the method used, can provide findings that are universally transferable”. However, it is important to consider the nature of the findings, and in what other context or settings, the findings can be applied.

In the case of research on the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand, I would argue that the study can be relevant in other contexts where youth-led movements for democratic change are emerging. Although this study does not provide a comparative analysis as such, it can nonetheless provide insights into how different cultural and political contexts shape social movements and the strategies they use to achieve their goals. For instance, as Thailand is part of the grassroot movement across Asia, the Milk Tea Alliance, I believe that this study can serve as a valuable contribution to the social movement research in Asia in terms of investigating the impact and/or need of cross-border activism. Moreover, there has been over 400 significant anti-government protests across the world since 2017. More than 132 countries have experienced protests, and 23% of these protests have lasted more than three months (Carnegie, 2023). As UNICEF describes, these “waves of protests around the world are a reminder that voices of children and adolescents must be heard and their rights protected” (Unicef, 2019). This study can therefore help to inform the development of more effective and impactful strategies for achieving democratic change in diverse contexts. Based on this, I would argue that research on the role of youth in the pro-democracy protests in Thailand can provide valuable insights into the potential transferability of the movement's goals, strategies, and outcomes to other youth-led movements for democratic change across the world.

3.6 Strengths and Limitations

As with any research study, it is important to be self-reflexive and transparent about strengths and limitations of this qualitative study. The first factor I would like to address is the reflection around language skills, and the decision of not using a translator. Since my mom is from Thailand, she has (luckily and thankfully) taught me the language since I was a child. This has left me with valuable Thai language skills. Although I am not fluent in my speaking, I am quite fluent in understanding. My oral skills are not great, but equal to a B2 level. After reflecting upon the benefits and limitations of acquiring a translator for the interviews, I chose to complete the interviews without using a translator. By doing it myself, I felt that I could

open up the space and flow of the interview, as it often ended up in a conversation-style, rather than a strict question-answer set up. Also, most of the participants understood English to some degree, which resulted in myself sometimes switching to English, while most of the participants mostly answered in Thai. A limitation to this choice is the fact that it was challenging, especially in the beginning, to understand the various political terms that the participants used in the interviews, as well as in speeches at protest sites. However, after some time, I was familiarized with the terms and could also ask better follow-up questions in the interviews. Although a translator could help clarifying these confusions, I am glad I completed the interviews myself, as I felt it helped to make the setting more natural and personal. Therefore, I would argue that by choosing to not use a translator, it might have sparked more personal answers, although this of course is only a subjective assumption and not an objective fact.

The second factor I would like to address is my position as a researcher, which I consider to be both a strength and a limitation for this study. As a researcher who is raised in Norway but half Thai, I might bring with me a perspective that may reveal other potential pieces of insights that may be normalized or hidden for other researchers. For instance, while being familiarized with Thai values and cultural customs, I also enter the culture with a somewhat 'outsider' perspective. This might have helped bringing forth a fresh glance on certain issues. However, my limited knowledge of the Thai political system meant that I had to spend a significant amount of time and energy in trying to comprehend the very complex political system and its actors. As my background is from the education sector, I might also have a shortcoming in understanding the different aspects and elements that might be obvious to a political scientist or a social movement scholar. As such, it has been important throughout the research process to place my participants' voices at the forefront of my research and let the data material guide the analysis.

Methodologically, this study has several strengths, particularly the use of both observation of protest activities in the field and semi-structured interviews that have allowed for deep exploration of meaning and concepts that emerged in the conversations. By getting to know some of the participants at an early phase of the fieldwork, I was able to follow the developments of their activism and experiences, to the point of which I was able to join a court hearing for one of the participants that I had known for several months. As is the case with many methodological approaches, this study has a large potential for selection bias,

especially given the use of convenience and snowball sampling. It is important to mention that most of the activists in this study are prominent student leaders representing different activist groups. Although they provide valuable insights, they cannot speak for those who are 'regular' movement participants. It is therefore likely that many of the findings cannot be generalizable to represent the attitudes and experiences of 'regular' activists. Additionally, one might argue that by interviewing other people, such as politicians that take a more conservative stance, it might have contributed to providing a more holistic view. However, there are still several important lessons to learn from the experiences and insights of the activists' experiences with activism in Thailand.

4 Theoretical Framework

This chapter will introduce the theoretical framework of the thesis. In this chapter, I will present the theoretical perspectives and concepts that underpin the study, and how they relate to the research question and objectives. The aim of this chapter is to establish a clear understanding of the theoretical basis for my research and to demonstrate how it informs the research design, data collection, and analysis. First, I will start by introducing Social movement theory and provide an overview of the essential concepts within this theory. Social movement theory will be essential in the analysis as it contributes to our understanding of the different processes of the pro-democracy movement in relation to social change and power relations. This will be followed by an overview of the thesis' approach to power. The work of Michel Foucault and James C. Scott on power and resistance will be used as a foundation to examine how the micro-foundations of movement mobilization has contributed to change in cultural values, by exploring how the youth activists have challenged traditional power structures in Thailand. By doing so, I aim to contribute to the existing body of knowledge in the field of social movements and to advance the understanding of the phenomenon under investigation.

4.1 Social Movement Theory

Social movement theory is a field of study that seeks to understand how and why social movements emerge, develop, and create change in society. In order to grasp the present understanding of social movement theory, it is useful to take a look back to its earlier developments. First, the reason to why people protest has occupied social scientists for several centuries (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, pp. 17-18). Around 1900, influential sociologists regarded street protests as deviant behavior, as participation in collective action was seen as unconventional and irrational. The classic paradigms held that deprivation, shared grievances and generalized beliefs were causes of protest. During this time, protest was depicted as the politics of the impatient. As times changed together with contentious politics and theoretical approaches, a huge growth in social movement activity were seen in the late 1960s: the student movement, the civil-rights movement, the women's movement, the peace movement and the environmental movement all flourished (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 18). With this change, a dissatisfaction with the classic paradigms of understanding social movements grew, and new ones emerged. Interpretations of collective action changed from being depicted as irrational, spontaneous outburst to movement activities with concrete

goals, rational calculations of strategies, and well-articulated values and interests. The new theoretical approaches that emerged were the structural and social constructivist paradigms. The sub-theories of resource mobilization and political process are examples of structural approaches. While resource mobilization emphasizes organizational aspects and resources, the political process approach concentrates on the political aspects of collective action.

The social constructivistic approach, on the other hand, is broadly organized around the concepts of framing, identity, culture and emotions. This approach concentrates on "how individuals and groups perceive and interpret these conditions and focuses on the role of the cognitive, affective and ideational roots of contention" (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 19). In other words, this approach maintains that to understand why people protest, it is necessary to grasp how they understand and interpret their world. To sum up, the past and present of social movement theory reveal different paradigms emphasizing various aspects of social movements. The different paradigms provide diverse answers to questions about why people protest, who protests and the forms of protests they are involved in. The table below provides an overview of the different paradigms and how they interpret the questions to aspects of social movements.

	Classical approaches	Contemporary approaches		
	Mass society collective behaviour	***Resource mobilization***	***Political process approach***	***Social con-structivistic approaches***
Why people protest	Grievances, discontent, anomie, class conflict	Resources, opportunities, social networks efficacy	Political opportunities (cognitive liberation)	Social con-struction of reality: - (meaning) construction - identity - emotions - motivation
Who protests	Alienated, frustrated, disintegrated, manipulated, marginalized people	Well-organized, professional, resourceful social networks; embeddedness	Coalitions between challengers / political elites; embeddedness	Countercultural groups, identity groups; embeddedness
Forms of protest	Spontaneous, irrational, expressive, violent (panics, fashions, mobs, crime)	Rational, planned, instrumental (institutional politics, lobbying, interest groups)	Rational, instrumental, polity-oriented (elite contention lobbying, indigenous minorities disruption i.e. sit-ins, strikes)	Ideological, expressive, identity-oriented (cultural and religious organizations, self-help groups, alternative lifestyles)

Table 3. Theories on participation and the emergence of social movements. Retrieved from Stekelenburg and Klandermans (2008, p. 20).

A general assumption in social movement research is that an integration of the structural and the social constructivistic paradigms can yield satisfactory explanations (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 19). Based on this, I will go into more detail on some aspects of the social movement approaches that are relevant for analysis in this thesis.

4.1.1 Political Process Approach

Political process theorists concentrate on external features such as changes in political and institutional environments in explaining the developments of social movements. The paradigm proposes changes in political structures as the main explanation for the rise and fall of social movements (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 26). There are three central ideas to the political process approach:

> First, a social movement is a political rather than a psychological phenomenon; second, a social movement represents a continuous process from its creation to its decline rather than a discrete series of developmental stages; and third, different forms of action ('repertoires of contentions') are associated with different spatial and temporal locations. (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 26)

Action repertories within this approach are normally referred to as specific actions such as riots, demonstrations, strikes, sit-ins, petitioning or other actions that are carried out by collective actors over a period of time. However, the form of action depends on factors such as the structure of the political system (i.e. democratic institutions, the existence and structure of political parties, and possibilities for direct participation), the level of repression, and cultural traditions (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 26). In other words, actions repertoires of social movements are shaped by structural variables and the cultural context in which they are a part of, which is important to have in mind when seeking to understand the rise of a movement and the strategies that are used.

A political process theorist who focuses on subjectivity while emphasizing structural aspects of the environment, is McAdam. He argues that there are two necessary conditions for turning social instability into political insurgency: (1) Available resources and open political opportunities, and (2) cognitive liberation (McAdam, 1982, p. 48). The former builds on resource mobilization approach in terms of considering resources such as money and access to media and technology in order to mobilize and sustain collective action. Political opportunities involve changes in the political structure or landscape which can create openings for social movements to push for change. These changes might be changes in government policies, shifts in public opinion, or disruptions in the power structures of a society. The second condition, that of cognitive liberation, involves a shift in how people perceive their social identities and their relationship to the broader social and political environment. As McAdam (1982, p. 48) notes, “mediating between opportunity and action are people and the subjective meaning they attach to their situation”. According to this view, the emergence of a social movement implies a transformation of consciousness among the aggrieved population (McAdam, 1982, p. 51). This suggests the importance of considering both subjective perceptions and the broader socio-political environment when exploring the research question.

4.1.2 Social Constructivistic Approaches: New Social Movement Approach

While structural approaches focus on resources and political opportunities, social constructivistic approaches concentrated on new constituencies with new needs, values and aspirations arising from developing post-industrial societies, producing what is called ‘New Social Movements’ (NSM) (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 29). This approach is social constructivistic in emphasizing social changes in identity, lifestyle and culture.

Scholars of NSM utilize identity as their core concepts, with Melucci in the front as the most explicit. He developed the concept of 'collective identity' which is explained as an "interactive and shared definition produced by a number of individuals (or groups at a more complex level) concerning the orientations of their action and the field of opportunities and constraints in which such action is to take place" (Melucci, 1996, p. 70). Simply put, it refers to the sense of belonging or shared identity that individuals have with a group or community. The introduction of this concept within constructivistic approaches was an attempt to bridge the gap between behavior and meaning, between 'objective' conditions and 'subjective' motives and orientation, between 'structure' and 'agency' (Melucci, 1996, p. 69). Hence, this perspective concentrates on questions of "how individuals and groups perceive and interpret material and socio-political conditions" (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 30). In order to understand why people protest, we need to comprehend how they perceive and interpret their social-political context.

Contemporary social constructivistic approaches emphasize four elements in studying social movements: Meaning (or construction), identity, emotions, and motivations (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 30). Although I will not go into full detail in explaining these elements, I will try to explain the connection between them and the importance for understanding social movements, according to a social constructivistic perspective. Most importantly, these elements are all related to questions of motivation. Demands for change are rooted in the notion of belonging (identity) and experienced grievances (constructed meaning) in combination with emotions related to a specific grievance (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 33). In terms of collective action, these elements are of particular interest for the following reason:

> "Participation in collective action depends not only on perceptions of structural strain, availability and the deployment of material resources, the opening up or closing of political opportunities or a cost-benefit calculation more generally but also on the way these variables are constructed and framed and the degree to which they resonate with targets of mobilization" (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 31).

Here, the process known as 'framing' is central. Through processes of collective action, for example social movement mobilization, activists intend to disseminate their definition of a situation to the wider public. By rendering events or occurrences meaningful, framing functions to organize experiences and guide action, both at an individual level and

collectively (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986, p. 464). Snow et al. (1986, p. 464) conceptualizes this by explaining that "frame alignment is a necessary condition for movement participation, whatever its nature or intensity". In line with this, they point out that 'micromobilization' is essential in explaining the various interactive and communicative processes that affect frame alignment. This refers to the process of organizing and mobilizing individuals at the grassroot level to participate in collective action. Connecting this, it is highlighted that the more individual orientations, values, and beliefs are congruent with social movement activities, goals and ideologies, the greater the level of sharedness (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 31). This can help provide a framework for understanding not only the collective identity of youth in the pro-democracy movement, but also the ways in which the demands and goals of the movement are communicated to the wider public.

Lastly, it is important to take into account that the socio-political context of contentious politics is rapidly changing due to processes of globalization and liberalization, which influences the processes of social movements and their collective actions (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 17). As new communication technologies are giving rise to the information society and contributing to the intensification and pace of societal change, networks have become the prime mode of organization and structure of society – baptized as the 'network society' (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 3). In these rapidly changing times, contemporary research agenda calls for "an integration of structural, political and sociological theories of movements with social constructivistic approaches rooted in social psychology and cultural sociology" (Stekelenburg & Klandermans, 2008, p. 37). With this in mind, to best utilize the different approaches of social movement theory in order to answer the research question, I will integrate both structural and constructivistic paradigms in exploring the aims and objectives of this research.

4.2 Foucault's Concept of Power

Michel Foucault has been highly influential in modern political and philosophical thought by analyzing power through discourses, practices and techniques, which penetrate all spheres of society. Before coming to the point in which he explicitly examined power, Foucault studied the various events and processes that shape our thought and knowledge. Power cannot be solely located in certain actors or institutions, as power creates knowledge and forms subjects who are restricted as well as enabled by its omnipresent force (Foucault, 1977). According to

Foucault, the identity and characteristics that forms the individual is "the product of a relation of power exercise over bodies, multiplicities, movements, desires, forces" (Foucault and Gordon, 1980, p. 74). Thus, Foucauldian analysis leads us not to the question of "who holds the knowledge" or "who has the power", but to questions of how knowledge is formed and what kind of practices that direct the course of action and behavior of individuals and societies. In social movement research, Foucault's analysis of power, with an emphasis on power as a productive force, help to improve the understanding of the appearance and boundaries of protest (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016, p. 13). In the vast majority of Foucault's influential work, I choose to pay special attention to his concepts on 'discourse' and 'governmentality' in enhancing an understanding of the concept of 'power' within the field of social movement.

4.2.2 Discourse

'Discourse' is a key concept in Foucault's work on power, knowledge, and social control. Foucault is interested in how knowledge is generated in societies. Among his most important questions are: "What is considered 'normal' and what is not? What can be thought of and communicated and what cannot? What (discursive) practices produce these restrictive as well as enabling structures?" (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016, p. 17). According to Foucault, each society has its 'regime of truth', also referred to as the 'general politics' of truth (Foucault and Gordon, 1980, p. 131). This concept is explained as:

> The types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true; the mechanisms and instances which enable one to distinguish true and false statements, the means by which each is sanctioned; the techniques and procedures accorded value in the acquisition of truth; the status of those who are charged with saying what counts as true. (Foucault and Gordon, 1980, p. 131)

The result of discourses is therefore that something is considered as true in a particular society, based on systems for the "production, regulation, distribution, circulation, and operation of statements" (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016, p. 17). Foucault's work highlight the question of what *governs* statements, and the way in which they *govern* each other in order to constitute a set of propositions which are considered acceptable (Foucault & Gordon, 1980, p. 112). Thus, every society has its own control mechanisms that distinguish 'true' from 'false' statements.

4.2.3 Governmentality

The concept of ‘governmentality’ is a central concept in Foucault’s work, which refers to the range of practices, techniques, and institutions through which power is exercised and social life regulated (Foucault et al., 2002) . Although the concept has developed throughout his work, the principal ideas can be traced back to Foucault’s groundbreaking book “Discipline and Punish” (1977). The book examines the historical development of modern systems of punishment and social control, by tracing the development of punishment from public torture and execution of criminals in pre-modern societies, to the more subtle and pervasive forms of discipline and control that emerged in modern prisons, schools, and other institutions. He argues that modern systems of punishment and social control are characterized by a shift from public displays of violence to more subtle forms of discipline and control that shape behavior in ways that are not directly clear. This subtle form of discipline and control involves techniques and strategies that operate at a more implicit level, often through language, norms, and cultural practices, rather than through overt forms of punishment (Foucault, 1977; Foucault et al., 2002). This constitutes the first central concept of ‘governmentality’: The techniques and strategies used by the state to govern and regulate individuals and populations through controlling institutions, and through a wide range of practices, such as surveillance, disciplines, knowledge, and technologies.

Tracing the development of the concept, Foucault and Rabinow (1997, p. 81) write that the notion of ‘government’ can be “understood in the broad sense of techniques and procedures for directing human behavior. Government of children, government of souls and consciences, government of a household, of a state, or of oneself”. This broad concept of government analyzes the “linkages between abstract political rationalities and empirical micro-techniques of everyday life” (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016, p. 25). This leads us to the second central concept of ‘governmentality’: ‘Subjectivity’. ‘Subjectivity’ involves the role of the governed individuals’ reflexivity and incorporation of the social, meaning the ways in which individuals and groups govern themselves through internalized norms, values, and beliefs. Among the questions concerning the concept of subjectivity are:

> How was the subject established, at different moments and in different institutional contexts, as a possible, desirable, or even indispensable object of knowledge? How were the experience that one may have of oneself and the knowledge that one forms of oneself organized according to certain schemes? How were these schemes defined, valorized, recommended, imposed? (Foucault & Rabinow, 1997, p. 87)

These questions connect to what Foucault terms the 'techniques of the self', which refer to the procedures suggested or prescribed to individuals in order to "determine their identity, maintain it, or transform it in terms of a certain numbers of ends" (Foucault & Rabinow, 1997, p. 87). In other words, it is the practices and techniques that individuals use to shape and transform themselves, often with the goal of achieving a particular ethical or moral ideal. Hence, Foucault's research concentrates on the power relations in which the subject's identity is formed.

In their work, Baumgarten and Ullrich (2016, p. 26) explains that it is central to explore the forms of subjectivity that are produced in connection with changing forms of power relation, in order to understand whether these subjectivities are conformist, resistant, or even hybrid. This is one way in which Foucault's concept of governmentality interlinks with social movement and protest research. The concept of subjectivity in governmentality studies may provide a micro-macro link between two centralities: Social structure and/or change on the one hand, and motivation to protest or to not protest, on the other. In the context of my research on the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand, Foucault's concept of 'governmentality' is useful in understanding how power relations are shaping the subjectivities of youth, and the ways in which youth are resisting or conforming to norms and values.

4.3 James C. Scott: Resistance

James C. Scott is a political scientist and anthropologist known for his work on resistance and subordination. His work explores the ways in which subjugated groups resist and challenge dominant power structures, often through hidden or everyday forms of resistance. In his classic book "Weapons of the Weak: Everyday Forms of Peasant Resistance" he explores the concept of 'everyday resistance', focusing on the ways in which subjugated groups challenge dominant power structures through small, subtle acts of defiance (Scott, 1985). The principal idea of 'everyday resistance' is understood as "the prosaic but constant struggle between the peasantry and those who seek to extract labor, food, taxes, rents, and interest from them" (Scott, 1985, p. xvi), in which Scott has in mind "the ordinary weapons of relatively powerless groups" (Ibid.). Examples of these 'ordinary weapons' are listed as foot dragging, dissimulation, slander, arson, sabotage, and so on. Thus, these forms of resistance are considered the weapons of the weak who lack formal power or resources, utilized as means to

assert their agency and challenge the power of the ruling elite in ways that are often overlooked or dismissed as insignificant.

As Scott (1985, p. 292) unravels the concept of resistance throughout “Weapons of the Weak”, he makes a distinction between ‘real’ and ‘incidental’ resistance. Real resistance is “(a) organized, systematic, and cooperative, (b) principled or selfless, (c) has revolutionary consequences, and/or (d) embodies ideas or intentions that negate the basis of domination”. In contrast, ‘incidental resistance’ is “(a) unorganized, unsystematic, and individual, (b) opportunistic and self-indulgent, (c) have no revolutionary consequences, and/or (d) imply, in their intention or meaning, an accommodation with the system of domination” (Ibid.). According to Scott (1985), an understanding of these distinctions is essential for any analysis that attempt to delineate the different forms of resistance and in showing how they are related, both to one another and to the form of domination in which they occur.

In "Domination and the Arts of Resistance: Hidden Transcripts" (2008), Scott expands on the idea of ‘hidden transcripts’. This term is used to characterize “discourse that takes place ‘offstage’, beyond direct observation by powerholders” Scott (2008, p. 4). In order to understand the importance of hidden transcripts, it is useful to first understand the notion of ‘public transcript’. The term ‘public transcript’ is used as a way of describing “the open interaction between subordinates and those who dominate” (Scott, 2008, p. 2). This concept builds on the public performance of power that has been imposed throughout history on the vast majority of people, meaning the performances required of those subjected to systematic forms of social subordination: the worker to the boss, the student to the teacher, the slave to the master. This connects to the topic of domination, as “the theatrical imperatives that normally prevail in situations of domination produce a public transcript in close conformity with how the dominant group would wish to have things appear” (Scott, 2008, p. 4). Thus, the dominant never control the stage wholly, but their wishes normally occur. The result is that the public transcript becomes systematically skewed in the direction of discourse that the dominant has shaped. In ideological terms, the public transcript will tend to provide persuasive evidence for the hegemony of dominant values. Following this thought, it is in this public domain where the effects of power relations are most manifest, and an analysis which only concentrates on the public transcript is likely to conclude that subordinate groups accepts the terms of their subordination and are willingly partners in that subordination (Scott, 2008, p. 4).

Beneath the public transcript lies the hidden transcript, the discourse that takes place 'off-stage', away from the gaze of the powerholders. According to Scott (2008, p. xii), subordinate groups creates a 'hidden transcript' that is critical of the power behind the back of the dominant. This encompasses attitudes, beliefs, and practices that are expressed by subjugated groups as forms of resistance and critique. This might include cultural expressions such as satire, jokes, carnival, dressing up and other forms of disguise that challenge dominant power structures (Scott, 2008, p. 138). The forms of hidden transcripts are important because they provide a means of resistance, allowing subjugated groups to maintain a degree of autonomy and agency. It also provides insights into to creative and resourceful ways in which subjugated groups resist and challenge oppression. However, hidden transcripts are derivative in the sense that it consists of those off-stage gestures, speeches, and practices that either confirm, contradict or inflect what appears in the public transcript (Scott, 2008, p. 4). In other words, the hidden transcripts are shaped by the public transcript, but it also provides a counterpoint to it. Despite this, through hidden transcripts, subjugated groups can challenge the dominant ideology, assert their own values and beliefs, and maintain a sense of dignity and self-respect in the face of repression.

Overall, Scott's work on resistance and domination provides a framework for understanding the ways in which youth are challenging dominant power structures in Thailand. His concepts of hidden transcripts, everyday resistance, and the dual culture of subjugated groups are especially important. For example, the pro-democracy movement in Thailand has involved a range of tactics and strategies that can be seen as forms of everyday resistance, such as social media activism, street protests and creative expressions of dissent. The dual culture of subjugated groups can be applied to the Thai context by exploring the ways in which youth in the pro-democracy movement are maintaining their own distinct culture and identity, while simultaneously being influenced by the dominant culture of the ruling elite. Lastly, as the movement has involved the use of coded language and symbols to communicate dissent, the concept of hidden transcripts is important in understanding how youth are challenging the dominant ideology and power structures without directly confronting them.

5 Mobilization and Protest

In the following chapters, I will discuss the data collected in light of my research question: *What role have youth played in the recent pro-democracy movement in Thailand in challenging traditional power structures?* To narrow the scope, this chapter will seek to answer two of the sub-questions: *What are the key factors that facilitated the mobilization of youth in the pro-democracy movement?* and *How do the demands of the movement and the forms of activism challenge traditional power structures?* The first part of this chapter will discuss the micro-level processes of mobilization and identity formation. In this part, I will provide insights into the activists' backgrounds and the motivation behind their activism. Then, I will move onto an examination of the key demands and goals before I discuss the various forms of activism and where the activists' strategies will be presented and analyzed. The last part of the chapter will address perceived weaknesses of the movement through the lens of the activists' own experiences.

5.1 Micro-level Processes of Mobilization and Identity Formation

Before leaving for my fieldwork, I was curious to know why youth in Thailand joined the massive movement to the extent that they might risk their lives. Having in mind the strict laws and the circumstances under the NCPO, I had many questions revolving around the motivations behind the activism. As explained in the background chapter, since the coup in 2014, progressive youth activists have mobilized and established network ties across Thailand that have resulted in spaces for young activists to network, learn, brainstorm, and organize mobilization (Horatanakun, 2022). The questions that arise from this more recent mobilization are the following: Why do some individuals join social movements? What are the catalyzing factors that contribute to youth raising their voices about issues that concerns them? These are fundamental questions to explore in terms of understanding why and how youth are recruited to join a movement, and thus address the 'individual' level of social movements (Almeida, 2019, p. 101). Following Foucault's 'new' way of analyzing power, which is depicted in his seminal work "Discipline and Punish", it is relevant to utilize the study of 'microphysics' to understand how power operates at the level of everyday social relations. This concept is more nuanced as it moves away from the traditional understanding of power merely being exercised by those in positions of formal authority. According to Michel Foucault (1977), the study of 'microphysics' enables an understanding of the forms and means of power with a specific focus on individuals and the details of their behavior and

conduct. This concept can therefore be used to understand how youth activists in Thailand are challenging traditional power structures through their actions and discourses in everyday life, and that may have a potential to create alternative forms of power and resistance. With this in mind, I will explore the different paths taken by students and youth in mobilizing on a micro-level.

5.1.1 Authoritarian Culture in Schools

Participants of social movements are mobilized "through different paths, perform different duties, develop different social ties, and are given different degrees of power and prestige" (Viterna, 2013, p. 41). In exploring the different paths of individual mobilization, Areeya explained the following in relation to why she became politically interested:

> *I was interested in politics and global affairs since I was in high school. I was really into socialism at that time, and still now, but it started in my high school. I was really sick of the authoritarian culture in high school. It was the first thing I felt that I hated, and I wanted to change it. That was my starting point.*

She further explained the 'authoritarian culture in school' like this:

> *The authoritarian culture is put down on the teachers and get down to us (students) as well. For girls, we have to wear the proper length of skirts and the correct type of socks and shoes, and we cannot do make up, and we cannot like…Yeah, this is just like the appearance and the freedom of your body, we don't have that in Thai schools. But boys, are more, like, more bullshit things. You have to wear a haircut like soldiers. If you observe Thai schoolboys, they have like very short hair. When there is something about your body, you cannot choose, you don't have freedom. And you have to wear a uniform.*

Areeya's perspective aligns well with Lertchoosakul's (2021) work where she interviewed Thai high school students as part of her research. One girl told her that "Instead of paying attention to teaching, our teachers spend one hour every morning measuring our hair-length and checking our hair, socks, and nail styles. We all have to untie our hair for measuring" (p. 212). Furthermore, the education system in Thailand is described by Lertchoosakul (2021, p. 212) as deploying "a top-down and unresponsive administrative structure, out-dated curricula, and authoritarian teaching methods based on rote memorization and a focus on forcing students to conform to strict rules and hierarchical structures have remained unchanged for a century". In relation to this, Apisit, one of the participants, told me about his school experiences as one of the reasons to his increased political interest:

> *I went to a school where the majority were yellow shirts. Very conservative. When I was a kid, I was quite rebellious and liked to challenge. If I asked too many questions and didn't behave, I was yelled at. And when I was yelled at, I started becoming more interested.*

In addition, three other participants referenced the 'authoritarian culture' in school as the main reason for their personal mobilization and interest in politics. Ploy highlighted an important issue and said that "It started with student rights in schools. I was wondering how we can solve the problems or if a kid like me can do anything". From the excerpts above, we can identify what is known as 'shared grievances', which is a central condition for social mobilization (Almeida, 2019, p. 8). Almeida (2019, p. 8) further explains that shared grievances means that "people collectively view some fact of social life as a problem and in need of alteration". In this case, the students view the 'authoritarian culture' in schools as the problem and in need of change. Somchai told me about how his activism started:

> *I started my activism from education reform issue. Back then, I thought that everything is political. Everything has something to do with politics, somehow. But those years, I was in high school and the most legitimate issue for high school students is to call for education reform. It's our basic rights. Like, hairstyle, uniforms, clothes in Thai high school, you have to wear it every day. For me, at that time, it was a practice to protest against authoritarianism. It is easier to protest against uniforms than to protest against the government itself. It's something touchable.*

For Somchai, he regarded his experiences with the authoritarian culture in school as a basis for protesting against authoritarianism in the wider society. According to early grievance theories of social movements, it can be argued that deprivation might lead to political participation (Grasso & Giugni, 2016, p. 34; Zald, McAdam, & McCarthy, 1996). However, in order for this to happen, the groups who are deprived must first be aware of their deprivation, and also see themselves as social agents who are able to mobilize and effect political change, generally through membership of a political group (Grasso & Giugni, 2016, p. 34). It is therefore useful to discuss whether the students in this study see themselves as social agents with the capacity to mobilize, and to what point they feel that they belong to a political group. With regards to this, I find Henri Tajfel's 'social identity theory' useful. This theory states that "individuals derive their identity and sense of self from membership within a particular social group, such as nationality or age" (Tajfel et al., 1971, cited in Mei, 2021, p. 151). According to Tajfel's theory, groups such as students, give their members a sense of belonging and the group identifications play crucial roles in how youth view themselves in relation to their environment. When applying this to my research, I find it relevant to

highlight what Areeya and Narawit told me when talking about their experiences in high school:

> *At that time, I think we were all the same, we didn't speak up when we were in high school.* (Narawit)

> *Yeah, because we felt alone, you know. When we talked to our friends then your friends were like "are you crazy", "don't be like a bad kid", or something like that. "Don't make a scene out of it" and something like that, so I wouldn't speak up.* (Areeya)

It was not until these students reached university level that they felt a sense of 'collective identity'. In the context of social movements, collective identity refers to "the shared sense of we-ness derived from shared beliefs and emotions among a group pursuing social and political change" (Mei, 2021, p. 152). Simply put, it refers to a person's sense of belonging to a group. In light of the above discussion, my data material reveals that all the activists in this study developed a shared grievance towards the 'authoritarian culture' in school, which served as a unifying factor in forming the activists' collective identity.

5.1.2 The Family Sphere

Based on what came forth in the interviews, the identity as an activist seem to have been shaped throughout childhood and youth, and thus it is worth noting their experiences within the sphere of the family. When getting to know the activists, I was interested in learning about their backgrounds and in what sense their families have supported them and/or contributed to shaping their identities as political activists. The overview below illustrates the political stance of the parents and to what degree they are aware of their child's activism.

Participant	**Age**	**Gender**	**Representing activist group/organization**	**Political stance of parents**	**Parents awareness of their activism**
Somchai	24	Male	None	Red shirts	Fully
Apisit	28	Male	None	Red shirts	Fully
Ploy	24	Female	Activist group 1	Conservative	Fully
Areeya	21	Female	Activist group 2	Conservative, Former yellow shirts	To some degree
Narawit	22	Male	Activist group 2	Conservative	To some degree

Eve	27	Female	Activist group 3	Yellow shirts	Fully
Pim	21	Female	Activist group 3	Yellow shirts	Fully
Suthep	24	Male	Activist group 4	No information	None
Malee	20	Female	Activist group 4	No information	To some degree

Table 4. List of participants and political stance of their parents.

By comparing the data material, I found that the two activists with 'red shirts'-parents had experienced more support than the other activists. The interviews with Somchai and Apisit reveal that their parents are scared and worried despite their support:

> *They are scared for me and fear for my safety. My family had a discussion with me in my early years of activism. One day, if I continue doing activism, I will end up in prison somehow. But whatever happens, they support me. They want me to get some scholarship and to get away from this country, but I said I have my friends here, my family is here, I cannot just leave* (Somchai).

> *My dad sees the movement in Hong Kong, and he is worried that the Thai government will do the same and be violent like China. He says "oh don't go", but he still lets me. My mom very worried, but she allows me. At home, they are very supportive, like all my grandparents. But they are worried about harassment, discrimination, and violence. So, they want me to be in public spaces where there are a lot of space* (Apisit).

Tao, the director of a law organization, explained that being involved in politics is considered 'bad business' in Thailand: "When I was a child, politics seemed to be distanced from the way of life. The value in this country is "stay away from politics", and that politics is something bad and dark. If someone want to be involved in politics, they look bad. They look too ambitious". A similar sentiment can be observed in the Thai society today. Four of the activists told me that they had not told their families about their activism, either not in detail or not at all, for different reasons:

> *I tell them parts of it, but not the serious parts of it, because I don't want them to be worried. They have been sympathetic with the yellow shirts in the past, but mine just changed now because the new king is like the lowest of the low, so they changed a bit. They have a sentiment that being involved in politics means risking your life.* (Areeya)

> *I don't want them to be more worried. Because they have a bad image about activism. We know that sometimes it's a risk, but it's not that much. As a student we don't have the price to pay much such as older people who are workers. Especially in Chulalongkorn university, we have the privilege, no police could charge us, you have never seen police charge a Chula-student.* (Narawit)

> *In my case, my parents still don't know that I'm doing anything or have any participation in terms of activism. I think they still don't know about what I am*

> *doing, but I'm not so sure. I don't think they can understand what I am doing that much.* (Suthep)

As family is highly valued and considered the cornerstone of society in Thailand, an understanding of family disputes is essential in understanding how the activists have been shaped. A recurrent topic that has sparked discussion and uprising on the family level is the topic of monarchy. Eve told me about her family conflict:

> *My father is a judge. So, he talked about politics in our house, but we had different perspectives and views. He was leaned more towards the conservative. (...) During the time when Rama 9 died, we fought a lot. My mom kicked me out of the house. I didn't get to be at home.*

When I asked her why she was kicked out of the house, she said that:

> *Because my mom loooved Rama 9, and still loves him, even now that he is dead. So, she loved him a lot and she meant that I couldn't not love him. So, we were fighting, and had a huge fight in the night.*

This portrays the extensive support and love for the much-revered King Rama IX. However, with the passing of Rama IX, the transition to the slightly more controversial Rama X has created increased discontent with the monarchical system (Waiwitlikhit, 2020, p. 23). The activist Areeya illustrates this when explaining that "They [the parents] have been sympathetic with the yellow shirts in the past, but mine just changed now because Rama 10 is like the lowest of the low". On the other side, it is important to note that the public sentiment about the Thai monarchy is difficult to measure as the lese-majeste laws prohibit the conduct of opinion polls about the King. Despite this, Waiwitlikhit (2020) argues that there is qualitative evidence that public reverence of the monarchy is deteriorating. In relation to this, Ploy illustrates the trajectory of the monarchical support and love for the King within the family sphere when explaining that "At the beginning, my sisters didn't know why I had to talk about the king, like what had he done wrong, my sisters were still fond of him". In other words, by raising their voices about monarchical issues, youth are challenging two parallels: The traditional structure of the family and the taboo issue of the political role of the monarchy.

A relevant topic to be discussed in this context, is the meaning of "Thai manners". In this thesis, manners are understood in a broad sense as "the written and unwritten rules that govern the way people manage themselves and their relations with other people"(Jory, 2020, p. 2). A remarkably high value has been placed on the performance of good manners in

Thailand, as conduct has been central in Thai society for a long time (Jory, 2020, p. 2). Models of appropriate behavior has been portrayed in a large corpus of literature by kings, prime ministers, senior monks, army generals, politicians, poets, novelists, education administrators and journalists. Such behaviors involve "how to stand, walk, sit, pay homage, prostrate oneself and crawl in the presence of high-status people, sleep, eat, manage bodily functions, dress, pay respect to superiors, deal with inferiors, socialize, use one's time, and how to work and play" (Jory, 2020, p. 2). Jory (2020) further explains that these modes of conduct have been taught or enforced by families, among other social constructs and institutions. This can be understood in light of the hierarchical orientation towards the social world in Thai society, in which the vertical structure and relations in the family sphere is essential (Vorng, 2017, p. 54). For instance, Areeya explained the structure of family this way:

> *We have a father figure in our family, and your father is the leader of the family, and your mom is the ones who always follow the father, and you can't really argue with them, because there is a sentiment that you owe them because they raised you. To show that you are grateful, you need to listen to them and not question them.*

When taking Areeya's words into account, Foucault's microphysics analysis becomes relevant. These expectations of behavior illustrate that power also "comes from below", meaning that global and hierarchical structures of domination within a society depend on and operate through local levels of power relationships (Foucault et al., 2002, p. xxv). In this case, Thai youth are contesting the power relationships on a local level within the family sphere by behaving in non-traditional ways and challenging the traditional narrative. Drawing attention to the role of hierarchical power relations therefore provides us with important tools for understanding how youth activists are challenging the traditional structure on a micro-level.

In this section, I have described and discussed the major motivations behind the youth's activism, by delving into micro-level processes of mobilization and identity formation. It is clear that the two main catalyzing mechanisms to the youth's political engagement are their experiences with the authoritarian culture in schools and their experiences in the family sphere in terms of support and political discussion. This examination of the micro-level of political and social life is crucial to the understanding of the origins of collective action and how movements build up into a critical mass (Almeida, 2019, p. 101). Foucault's analysis of 'microphysics' has contributed to understanding how power operates at the level of everyday life, and how it is produced and reproduced through various social practices and discourses.

Thus, power is not only a repressive force, but also a productive one that produces identities, knowledge, and social relations. This exploration has provided insights into how the identities of the activists have been formed and the ways in which they have contested traditional power structures on a societal micro-level.

5.2 Key Demands and the Goals of the Pro-Democracy Movement

In their edited book, Zald, McAdam and McCarthy (1996, p. 101) explains that "at a minimum people need to feel both aggrieved about some aspect of their lives and optimistic that, acting collectively, they can redress the problem". To thoroughly understand the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement, it is important to not only mention, but also discuss the demands of the movement. By examining the demands, we can gain insights into the issues that are most important for youth in Thailand. In the following discussion, I will explore the ways in which the demands are contesting traditional power structures.

5.2.1 The Three-Finger Salute

In the weeks following the coup d'état launched by the Royal Thai Army on May 22nd, 2014, student protestors appeared on the streets of Bangkok, raising three upright fingers in salute rather than 'traditional' clenched fists. In the months that followed, the salute was raised widely by pro-democracy protestors in mass demonstration and has since become the unofficial symbol of resistance against the military junta (Hui, 2020, p. 74). The activist Somchai explained the meaning of the three-finger salute in this way:

> *The meaning has changed over time. The salute was first used in defiance of the coup d'état in 2014. Not sure, but I think the first one to use it was Mr. …, who is in exile in the US. The original meaning was liberty, equality and fraternity. The ideology of the French revolution. Some people say that the three fingers are the three demands. But personally, I prefer the original meaning.*

Although the three-finger salute started as an anti-coup symbol in 2014, it has evolved to issue three core demands that became the mantra for the anti-government movement: (1) Dissolve parliament, (2) rewrite the constitution, and (3) stop harassing people for protesting peacefully (McCargo, 2021, p. 179). These were commonly known as the core demands of the student-led movement until August 10, 2020. On that day, a ten-point manifesto for monarchy reform was announced at a rally by the student activist group UFTD at Thammasat University in Bangkok (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). This manifesto demanded the monarchy accountable for the elected institutions, proposed decreasing the royal budget and

demanded that the monarchy refrain from interfering in politics. As Lertchoosakul (2021, p. 208) explains, “it was the first time in Thai history that students had organized mass protests against the monarchy, a previously untouchable institution”. On September 19th and October 15th, the same year, students mobilized Thailand’s largest political rallies in years, with the attendance of 50 000-100 000 people. This has resulted in a national network of student activists, in which the protestors’ have radicalized the three core demands: (1) dissolve the parliament and schedule new elections, (2) rewrite the constitution, and (3) reform the monarchy.

Photo 1 and 2 (Marisa Olsen). People showing the three-finger salute at a rally on October 31st, 2022. On the picture to the right, we see a woman driving by who has rolled down the window to show support. The salute is claimed by the people and has become a symbol synonymous with resilience against oppressive powers.

5.2.2 “Prayuth, Get Out!”

On September 30th, 2022, I observed a large rally in the center of Bangkok, where masses were shouting "Prayuth, get out!" and holding up large posters. The rally was a response to Thailand’s Constitutional Court ruling, which ruled that Prime Minister Prayuth Chan-o-Cha’s had not exceeded the maximum eight-year term limit in office. The court ruled that Prayuth’s tenure as PM should be counted from 2017 when the new constitution was promulgated. During my fieldwork in the fall of 2022, a new wave of protests was triggered by this verdict, although they were smaller in scale compared to the protests that took place in 2020-2021.

The revival of student activism as an engine for democratization began after the 2014 coup and the subsequent establishment of a military dictatorship (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208).

Student activists were the last opposition force remaining after the coup to publicly resist the military government. The students insisted (and still insist) that the ruling government is undemocratic and has not served the interests of the people, as the military rule have restricted civil liberties and democratic freedoms. To express their views, they used powerful cultural and symbolic actions to challenge military power such as wearing anti-coup shirts and reading George Orwell's 1984 in public (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). These actions may be seen as one of the manifold strategies by which subordinate groups manage to insinuate their resistance, in disguised forms, into the public transcript (Scott, 2008, p. 136). It is important to take these actions into account when discussing the ways in which the demands of the movement are challenging the powerholders, as the vulnerability of the youth protestors requires us to learn their codes of resistance. This is especially important considering the NCPO's tight control since 2014, suppressing all dissenting voices and critique of the ruling government. Thus, since the 2014 coup, the student protestors have placed significant emphasis on their first demand of dissolving the parliament, and it has remained a central focus of their anti-government actions.

The 2020 youth protests arose from a specific political context with the 2014 military coup as a foundational cornerstone: the subsequent suppression of political activity by the ruling NCPO and the flawed election of March 24th, 2019 (McCargo, 2021, p. 177). This election was deemed flawed as the conservative forces "won" by manipulating the voting system and suppressing opposition parties. Additionally, Prayuth himself did not deign to run for election: he was nominated for the position of prime minister and re-secured the premiership thanks to the votes of 250 senators Prayuth himself had appointed. Suthep, one of the participants in this study, reflected upon this and explained the demand of dissolving parliament in this way:

> *We have our three demands. The first one is the "Prayuth, get out", to get Prayuth out from the authority and also in this demand it is the agenda of the dictator, it doesn't only mean Prayuth gets out of his dictator position and another takes place of his position and still be dictator, that's not what the demand is about. It's about to get rid of the dictator of the authority. (Suthep)*

In addition, another participant, Eve, emphasized that "We need more democracy than we have at the moment. Not a government that comes from a dictatorship". Thus, the protestors believe that dissolving the parliament and holding new elections under fair and transparent conditions is a crucial step towards restoring democracy in the country.

Looking more closely into this, it is interesting to note that according to the EIU Democracy Index 2022, Thailand recorded the biggest overall score improvement in 2022, jumping 17 spots on the global scale, ranking 55th out of 167 countries, at a score of 6.67 out of 10 (EIU, 2022). The report states that "The improvement is due to widening political space for the country's opposition parties, greater popular political participation and a receding threat from secessionist movements" (EIU, 2022, p. 47). Exploring this in light of my interviews and observations conducted in the field, it should be remarked that the "greater popular political participation" is evidenced by the several protests across the country. However, it is questionable that the report refers to the "widening political space for the country's opposition parties" while simultaneously remarking that "any parties that seek to form governing coalition will have to secure the backing of the military establishment" (EIU, 2022, p. 49). We can therefore conclude that despite the potential for a more democratic future, the military government still plays a crucial role in the Thai political system.

5.2.3 Monarchy Reform

> *If I am going to be direct, it is the monarchy to be reformed. If the monarchy will be reformed, then we will get democracy. I want the power to be in civil control. And I want Thailand to have a strong civil society, to have political participation.*

The above excerpt is a description by one of the activists in this study who described their goals. As briefly explained in the background chapter, the most radical demand of the movement is monarchy reform, by advocating for limitations on the power of the monarchy. When looking into these limitations, I found that all the participants in this study mentioned the monarchy in relation to their goals, either as (1) a hindrance in achieving other goals (such as freedom of speech, social justice and achieving a welfare state), (2) monarchy reform with the aim of limiting their political, social, economic and cultural power, (3) abolition of the monarchy. One activist in this study explained that "He is the richest king in the world. We want reform because no one can verify how the money is used. It is our taxes. It is not for the benefit of the people". Among the range of issues within the demand of monarchy reform, several of the participants highlighted the national budget and the interference with political affairs through coups as the most problematic. For instance, King Rama X currently holds 43 billion dollars in assets (Waiwitlikhit, 2020). In this regard, another activist explained that "Power is heavily, heavily, heavily centralized and monopolized. We need to decentralize and redistribute these resources and power to the common". These participants reflect the

movement's dissatisfaction with the royal institution's lack of accountability and transparency.

For the first time in Thai history, we can now witness protests across the country that are openly critical of the King. For the ordinary public, the monarch has been the object for their ultimate royalty, respect, and love, as the royal institution is seen by many Thais as the embodiment of the nation-state (Heng, 2019, p. 87). The movement's radical demand of monarchy reform has therefore presented particular implications for the movement. Since the support of the monarchy was a major determinant in forming popular support for earlier movements, some argue that the current anti-monarchy actions may be detrimental to the success of the current movement (Waiwitlikhit, 2020, p. 23). One of the activists in this study shared the same line of thoughts in her reflection of the "anti-monarchy" movement:

> *The "abolish the monarchy" movement, is getting…At first, it's like, it was just a demand for Prayuth to get out, and to reform the military institutions. But then, it broke the ceiling and was trying to demand more, and like, address the monarchy issue, uhm, it kind of like breaks apart in the movement, because people were like, it's too far, and we have to go step by step. But the supporter of abolish the monarchy side would argue that we can't really fix anything if we don't address the monarchy and the budget, and the forced disappearance, the act 112, or these kinds of things that if you don't talk about these issues you cannot really fix other problems either, because it all leads to the monarchy. You can't fix the military if you don't tackle the monarchy.*

In relation to this, Anon Nampa, a human rights lawyer and activist, claimed in an interview that the movement leaders with more moderate demands – focusing on ousting Prayuth while leaving out calls for reform of the monarchy – had been sidelined (McCargo, 2021, p. 189). Ordinary protestors had insisted that the monarchy issue must remain on the agenda, partly for the reason that any protest that ignored the monarchy question would only attract a small crowd. This explicates clearly the complexity and sensitivity related to the issue of monarchy reform as well as its implications for the movement.

5.2.4 Constitutional Reform

> *We want to write a new constitutional law that comes from the people and we want to make an end to 112, the code 112. When we speak the truth, we always get charged with 112.* (Suthep)

The third aspect of the demands is constitutional revision, which includes the repeal of pro-monarchy laws such as the Lèse-majesté (Waiwitlikhit, 2020, p. 22). Section 112 of

Thailand's Criminal Code states that "Whoever, defames, insults or threatens the King, the Queen, the Heir-apparent or the Regent, shall be punished with imprisonment of three to fifteen years" (Thailand Law Library, n.d.-b). The law carries a maximum penalty of 15 years' imprisonment for each offence, which means that one might risk decades in prison. In June 2020, General Prayuth had publicly declared that the king "instructed me personally over the past two to three years to refrain from the use of the law" (Macan-Markar, 2020). However, on 19th November 2020, General Prayuth issued a statement regarding the political situation and declared that it was necessary to "increase intensified suppressing measure by enforcing every law and section against protestors who violate the law and neglect other people's rights and freedoms" (TLHR, 2022b). It was stated that the prosecution would be in accordance with the national justice system, and the number of individuals charged with royal defamation passed 200 in just over 18 months in Thailand (TLHR, 2022b). This was stated on June 19th, 2022, which illustrates the trajectory and intensifications of the movement and subsequent charges from January 2020 until June 2022.

Arrests, detention, and prosecutions under Article 112 have mainly targeted protestors who have exercised their questionable right to freedom of expression (FIDH, 2022). According to Thai Lawyers for Human Rights, the accused circumstances have been divided into criminal cases, which I have summarized in the template below (TLHR, 2022b). This example portrays the acts and cases of 215 people in 234 lawsuits.

Act	**Number of Cases**
Delivering speech at rallies/protests	At least 46
Freedom of expression acts (apart from delivering speech), i.e., hanging banners, printing books, labelling stickers, etc.	At least 57
Online expression	At least 123
Unknown	8

Table 5. Criminal cases under Article 112.

Moreover, some lèse-majesté defendants face numerous prosecutions and prison sentences, ranging from 120 to 300 years. For example, two of the activists in this study are charged with at least 23 and 10 cases. In relation to this, the FIDH Secretary General, Adilur Rahman Khan, stated the following:

> At the current pace of prosecutions and given the traditionally high conviction rates in lèse-majesté trials, Thailand may soon become one of the countries with the highest number of political prisoners in the region. The Thai government must put an immediate end to this lèse-majesté epidemic and comply with its international human rights obligations (FIDH, 2022).

With this in mind, I find it relevant to highlight the connection between law and political culture. In relation to this, Foucault (in Foucault et al., 2002, p. xxix) formulates a critique of "the themes of law and rights as the established language in which much of our political culture continues to conceptualize the foundations of political sovereignty, the way power is exercised, and the terms in which it can be challenged". To elaborate, according to Foucault, law and political culture are not simply a set of rules or regulations that dictate behavior, but they are a part of a wider system of power relations that operates through various techniques of mobilization and discipline. For instance, the legal system may affect the political culture in establishing certain norms and values that are deemed 'appropriate' or 'acceptable' for a given society, and those who do not conform to these norms may be subject to punishment or exclusion. In explaining political culture and the socio-political effects of the law, the director of a human rights organization I interviewed put it this way:

> *It should be free to question or give recommendations [to constitutional revision] or when people try to submit some referendum or anything, it should be open and free without fear. For example, when some people are handing out leaflets with questionnaires, they already got charged. So, there's no free space in this country. The oppression of people and civil political rights it's just expanding and expanding, and shrinking the civic space so much.* (Kannika)

In light of Foucault's analysis of law and political culture, it can be argued that although the constitution and the Thai Criminal Code is used as mechanisms of power and control, we can also recognize the space as sites of resistance and social change (Foucault, 1977; Foucault et al., 2002). Scott (2008, p. 138) compares subordinate groups, in this case youth in the movement, with prudent opposition newspaper editors under strict censorship: They must both find strategies to convey their message while staying within the law. He also highlights that the degree of disguise – those hidden ways of resistance – will most likely increase if the political environment is threatening and arbitrary. This will be discussed in more detail in the next part of this chapter. Based on the above discussion, I argue that by challenging the dominant norms and values established by the legal system and political culture, youth activist and the pro-democracy movement can disrupt power relations and propose alternative ways of organizing society.

5.3 Forms of Resistance

Much of social movement literature has tended to conceptualize resistance as the act of opposing power (della Porta, 2014b; Zald et al., 1996). As the aim of my research is to understand how Thai youth are challenging traditional power structures, I find it important to understand the forms of resistance and attempts made to dissociate these structures. By investigating these forms, we can more easily understand what power structures are about (Foucault et al., 2002, p. 329). In regard to forms of resistance, Foucault et al. (2002, p. 294-295) highlights that "there are a thousand things that can be done, invented, contrived by those who, recognizing the relations of power in which they are involved, have decided to resist them or escape them". These 'thousand things' can be understood as strategies. According to Foucault et al. (2002), the word 'strategy' can be employed in three ways. First, to designate the means employed to attain a certain end; second, to designate the way in which one seeks to have the advantage over others; and third, to designate the procedures used in a situation of confrontation to deprive the opponent of his means of combat (Foucault et al., 2002, p. 346). Strategies can therefore be defined as the choice of solutions as the means of striving to win a confrontation or battle. Below I will discuss the forms of resistance made to dissociate existing power structures by analyzing the strategies of the youth activists.

5.3.1 Protests and Rallies

In this study, I follow Death's (2010, p. 237) definition of 'protests' as "performative, one-off demonstrations, and usually seen as merely one form of resistance within larger cycles of contention" , and Opp's (2009, p. xvi) description of protests as "any collective action aimed at influencing the decisions of others". I include both definitions due to the various forms of activism that Thai youth in this study are involved in, including both large demonstrations and 'everyday activism'. In this study, 'everyday activism' involves those actions that are done in support of the pro-democracy movement which are not planned on an organizational level, such as showing stickers connected to the movement on a computer, wearing t-shirts with slogans, sharing information on social media, etc. However, most often, protests are imagined as standing apart from, and in direct confrontation, with the power they oppose (Death, 2010, p. 237). When asking the activists in this study about their participation in the protests, they said that "Like two years ago, when the movement started, we actually went to, like, almost every time it was held" (Areeya) and "The number of protests I have been to is uncountable" (Somchai). As McCargo (2021) explains, anti-government protests in Thailand were

extensive and widespread in 2020, in which student-inspired protests took place in 62 of the country's 77 provinces. Tao, the director of a law organization, explained it this way:

> *2020 was heaven. Something no one can expect. Something no one can predict that is going to happen. It started at university campuses and schools, led by youth, and led by people that we didn't know at all, they just started themselves, everywhere. Hundreds and thousands of people joined each small protest. There was no clear leader who really organized things. It was led by youth. When youth lead something, it is beautiful. The power of youth was shocking.*

Although the figures remain incomplete in terms of tracking the protests from 2021-2022, the country director of a human rights organization, Kannika, explained the following:

> *The number is more than 3000 protest in the past two years. This year it is less, but it doesn't mean it's not happening, it's at least 600 protests, which is a lot. But there are small ones, and not big ones. And for the big ones, they are waiting for the opportunity like APEC and so on.*

This suggests that protests are still happening, despite the number being much lower than in 2020-2021. The reasons for this will be elaborated on in Chapter 6 and Chapter 7, where I will discuss state repression and implications of the movement.

One important dimension in analyzing protests is the particular technologies and apparatuses they mobilize (Death, 2010). Death (2010, p. 341) argues that "protests and contentious forms of politics invoke practices, techniques, and technologies: the mass march, the placard, the podium speaker, the emblazoned T-shirt, mask or costume, the barricade, and so on". During the first wave of protests in 2020, the authorities in Thailand were unable to cope with the prompt mobilization of the protests through social media, as the creativity and energy of the students took them by surprise. The demonstrations and flash mobs featured political speeches, dance routines, group singing, chanting, mock funerals and other impromptu performances. Additionally, anti-monarch motifs were evident from an early stage, cleverly encoded in hidden messages and cartoon images (McCargo, 2021, p. 178). For instance, the symbolic messages were seen through the use of the three-finger salute iconography from The Hunger Games as a symbol for their resistance against economic inequalities (Hui, 2020, p. 78). Youth in the pro-democracy movement were therefore providing points of comparison to the Thai political landscape, by adopting symbols in protests that reflects themes such as economic disparity, rebellion, community, and tyranny.

By exploring the notion of protest, one might understand how protests can bring new identities and subjectivities into being (Death, 2010, p. 241). Just as government operates through "technologies of the self" to create governable subjects, such as the liberal citizen, the poor, the dangerous and so on(Foucault, 1998), counter-conducts and protests subvert and reinvent these categories (Death, 2010, p. 241). In examining how new identities are brought into being through the Thai youth protests, one professor that I interviewed highlighted the following:

> *When we're talking about the movement during 2020 and 2021, the participants are very young. There were 16-18 years old that joined the protest, and they said that the Future Forward Party are not progressive enough. So, it is very interesting that even the party who claim themselves as the most progressive one, is not progressive enough for the movement.* (Chaya)

This description illustrates the 'progressiveness' of the youth in the movement. This 'progressiveness' may be linked to the norms of behavior and values of the youth in the pro-democracy movement. For instance, Death (2010, p. 242) explains that protests have their own discursive norms of behavior – of conduct – such as humility, imagination, and patriotism (p. 242). Somchai touches upon these norms of behavior in his reflection:

> *Those who are above 30-35, those who are starting to be "phu yai", they would be red shirts. But those who are under 30, they would be characterized as the three-finger group. The three fingers are a bit different to the red shirts, because those who are three fingers, they question everything. The younger they are, the more questions they have.*

From my own observations of protests during fieldwork, I have seen how the content at rallies (speeches, posters, T-shirts, etc.) is largely affected by this norm of behavior of asking questions and being critical to what the activists' regard as oppressive forces. This is not only evident in mass protests and demonstrations, but also existing in everyday life: "It is the culture of protest, not protest in the streets, but criticizing the boss or any authority and saying that this society is unfair!" (Chaya). We can therefore argue that by being critical and inhabiting a 'culture of protest', Thai youth are thus seeking to disrupt existing political structures, transcend hegemonic ideological trappings, and create new possibilities.

5.3.2 Hunger Strike

Hunger strike as a form of resistance that is understood in several predominant ways: (1) They are taken to be a form of suicide as a political weapon, (2) they are part of a prisoners' dilemma strategy by which to negotiate or 'harm' the state, (3) they are construed as a form of civil disobedience, as a demand for recognition, as well as a form of communicating with other prisoners or citizens, and (4) they are considered part of a biopolitics of resistance, in which 'bare life' is on strike (Zurn & Dilts, 2016, p. 123). In this study, out of the six activists who are former political prisoners, four completed a hunger strike in prison. Eve told me that "I was in jail and did a hunger strike, and I almost died at day 64 in prison". In explaining the reason behind their hunger strike, Pim shared that "Inside prison, we couldn't do much. Hunger strike was the way we could still show resistance". In a situation where a person does not have any other resource, it is argued that 'life' can be utilized as a resource and becomes the currency of communication or negotiation for those who are in abject political positions, such as long-terms prisoners or those who are subject to solitary confinement (Zurn & Dilts, 2016, p. 124). Hunger strike is therefore deployed as a means to battle sovereign power – even if not always successful.

In an examination of whether the hunger strike is perceived as successful or not, Zurn and Dilts (2016, p. 125) argues that it depends on the prisoner's ability to "harness external, public engagement in the spectacle of the strike". One of the participants in this study shared her thoughts on this:

> *The hunger strike, I think it is really interesting, because it impacted just once, just once. And after that, when other people also did it, it didn't have an impact. I don't know if it was because of who I am and all the attention around me during that time.* (Ploy)

Ploy joined Somchai's hunger strike 15 days after he started. Somchai announced the start of his hunger strike in court on the March 15th 2021, by posing the following questions:

> Why do the courts of justice, which are a place of truth that must establish the truth, then imprison the truth? Why do you not grant bail to the truth to prove itself? Or is it that you detest and fear the truth so much that you must lock it away to suffer, with the hope that this will crush and ruin the truth until it disintegrates on its own? (Haberkorn & Winichakul, 2021)

The duo further launched their hunger strikes to the press demanding the release of 21 detained political activists (Thai PBS, 2021). A week after Somchai's court statement, activists gathered outside the Supreme Court every evening in silence to call for the release of those detained without bail. In addition, every Saturday afternoon, the mothers of the imprisoned, led by Somchai's mother, protested outside the detention facility. In a statement about her son, the mother of Somchai who shaved her head in her own protest as a response to her son's treatment by Thai authorities, had a request to people in her statement: "Please be witness to this. I am just a woman, a mother. My child has not committed a crime, he just thinks differently. He has not received justice, and he is now seriously ill" (Thepgumpanat & Setboonsarng, 2021). This illustrates how the strike mobilized groups of sympathizers and other activists to fight their cause. In this context, the hunger strike can be understood as a form of political resistance, wielded by vulnerable populations against sovereign powers: the system of law, police officers, and the state.

5.3.3 Art and Culture

Through artistic representation social movements identify and communicate who they are, what they are for, and what they are against (Eyerman, 2015, p. 549). According to Eyerman (2015, p. 550), "movements bind individuals together in common projects through collective identification and forms of social interaction, such as public demonstrations and other collective rituals". He further argues that "there is no better mechanism for this than collective singing and visual displays of solidarity through dress and other symbolic forms" (p. 549). Cultural symbols such as the three-finger salute from the dystopian Hunger Games novels, Harry Potter dress-ups, the Japanese hamster Hamtaro, dressing up as dinosaurs, and the use of rubber ducks are some of the symbols have been used by the protestors in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand (Handley, 2020; McCargo, 2021). To elaborate, Harry Potter dress-ups have been featured to make a point about "He Who Shall Not be Named", which is a thinly veiled reference to the king. The Hamtaro hamster has been used to mock the government as hungry hamsters feasting on taxpayer cash, by adapting the lyrics of the cartoon's song to "The most delicious food is the people's taxes" — a reference to alleged corruption. The oversized T-Rex dinosaur costumes were also a recurring symbol in the protests, referring to an outdated way of thinking. Finally, the rubber duck has a history of being used in political protest as an anti-corruption symbol, having been featured in the Hong Kong pro-democracy movement, as well as in Brazil, Serbia, and Russia (Handley, 2020). Dr. Sinpeng, an expert in digital politics in South-East Asia who was interviewed by Handley,

clarifies that it is partly the atmosphere of repression that has birthed the creativity in the protest movement. She further explains that Thai people have grown up with censorship all their lives, and that the idea of using coded language and symbols is not new (Handley, 2020). According to Scott (2008, p. 19), coded versions of the hidden transcript are always present in the public discourse of subordinate groups. It can therefore be argued that the youth-led movement have created their own culture of resistance through symbols and language. These cultural symbols with their 'hidden' meanings have played a significant role in the construction and maintenance of forming collective identities and internal cohesiveness, and in opening the public debate around their demands.

Music is characterized as an establish form of social movement repertoire, also evident in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand. Among the many bands and artists who are portraying the ideas of the movement, the controversial rap group Rap Against Dictatorship (RAD) have sparked uprising across the country with its defiant music, symbolizing and addressing controversial government policies, poverty and inequality in society (Patanasophon, 2022). Since the group emerged in 2017, they have been labeled as a threat by the military government. During the interview with Kasem, he showed me the music video of RAD's song 'Reform' and explained that "This music video was banned after hitting ten million views on YouTube". The news organization Thai Enquirer also points out that the music video that was released in November 2020, was banned after it had been watched over 9.7 million times on YouTube in 24 hours (Patanasophon, 2022). In this regard, Eyerman (2015, p. 550) argues that collective singing and music can provide resilience and courage in challenging situations, such as being confronted by violent opposition or imprisonment. In line with this, Scott (2008) regards art and music as parts of his concept of 'everyday resistance', as songs might use humor, satire, and sarcasm as ways of expressing their grievances. He further explains that a dual culture is created alongside the official one: the official culture with its moralities and silences, and the unofficial culture that has its own history, music, poetry, literature, slang, humour, etc (Scott, 2008, p. 51). One of the paricipants in this study, Kasem, is a musician who was imprisoned while the decision of banning one of his famous songs was made. He explained that:

> *About two years ago, every pub in Thailand played my song. The lyrics that originally was "eihea tu" was changed by the public and protestors to "eihea toa"* (swearword for the king). *Everyone were singing "eihea toa", so they banned my song and announced that people cannot play my song. I was in prison during this*

> *time. I got the information from a police officer that told me "they banned your song, man".*

When I asked about his reaction to this, he told me that he was proud and happy. He also highlighted the 'soft power' of artistic and cultural representations, which refers to "the ability to shape the preferences of others through the use of culture, values, and ideas" (Matteucci, 2005). Kasem said that: "Art, music and culture is very powerful. It is peaceful. The fact that they decided to ban my song and imprison me, means that it is very powerful". In line with the arguments of Eyerman (2015, p. 551), it can be interpreted that the feeling of satisfaction or success comes from the demonstration of collective identity through collective singing, in which participants exemplify who they are and what they stand for.

Although some Thai artists have taken a step back for their own safety, RAD returned with a new song titled "Homeland" in 2022. The song does not hold back in its description of issues on corruption, nepotism, suppression of freedom of speech, poor welfare, and the inequitable distribution of vaccines (Patanasophon, 2022). In addition, the music video features a man in a golden bodysuit teaching nationalism in the classroom. The rhymes are touching on other political issues as well, such as same sex marriage, gender diversity, and the struggle of rice farmers among other things, which illustrates how the issues and demands of the movement have expanded since its originalities in 2020. As Ploy highlighted in terms of the trajectory of the movement:

> *At the beginning of the movement, we would mainly talk about the monarchy and the government. But as the movement evolved, many different sub-topics and issues arose. If someone wanted to raise an issue, they were all welcomed.*

'Homeland' addresses most of these issues with its clever rhymes, highlighting the Thai government's failure to manage the country and how "This state is a sinking ship" (Rap Against Dictatorship, 2022). The lines of the song describe issues concerning institutionalism, violence, nationalism, indoctrination, generational divide, human rights, the monarchy, freedom of expression, unequal share of power, inequalities and much more. When analyzing the song, I was shocked by the directness of the lines in the song: "The old and the new generation can never co-exist under a military government dictated by senile generals", "Listen with your ears not revolvers", "They tell us we're citizens when we're slaves under the monarch's authority", "All the corruption, entitlement and oppression, covered up by the spectacle of virtuous Buddhist prostration", "Happiness is still in the distant horizon,

dissidents still locked up in prison", "Indoctrinate loyalty and incriminate dissidents", "But our prison's full of citizens", "I protest against these rules that oppress, I choose rebellion over death" (Rap Against Dictatorship, 2022). As the song is meant to speak out on behalf of many young citizens, it clearly identifies and communicate three fundamentals: (1) Who they are: the struggling youth; (2) what they are for: liberation; and (3) what they are against: opposing powers and oppression.

5.4 Perceived Weaknesses of the Movement

During my fieldwork, I quicky learned that the peak of the protests had passed. People I met, both in formal and informal situations, told me that protests were happening almost every day in 2020 and 2021 with thousands of people in the streets. This left me with questioning the reasons behind the 'downfall', curious to find out where the current battleground was taking place. This led me to an investigation of the perceived weaknesses of the movement. I choose to define it as 'perceived weaknesses' for the reason that the information largely stems from the participants' experiences and perspectives portrayed in the interviews. It can therefore not be regarded as representative for the whole population of Thai activists, but it can rather provide insights into the trajectory of the movement from the participants' perspective.

5.4.1 Organizational Structure: Occurring Leadership in the Leaderless Movement

Several contemporary social movements are increasingly inspired by participatory democracy and applying a form of horizontal, leaderless organization (Hond, Bakker, & Smith, 2015). This is often applied in attempting to oppose corporate globalization and advancing social justice. First of all, the pro-democracy movement and the recent protests in Thailand have often been characterized as 'leaderless', 'organic', and 'peaceful'. As the director of the human rights organization, Kannika, described: "You can see that now they don't really have a proper or designate leader. It's more open in the way that if they want to do it, they just do it". However, literature on the student-led pro-democracy movement and when conducting the interviews, all referred to some activists as 'student leaders'. Lertchoosakul (2021, p. 209) explains that as protests continued nearly every day throughout the country, it developed into a hybrid movement of leaderless and long-distance guidance by off-site leaders. Activist leaders encouraged all protestors to be a 'core' protester and made it clear that anyone could be a speaker. Additionally, as Sutherland, Land, and Böhm (2014, p. 774) conclude from studying four radical, participative-democratic SMOs: "Although individual leaders were not

present, there was still evidence of leadership occurring" (cited in Hond et al., 2015, p. 297). It can therefore be argued that the movement is 'not truly leaderless' (McCargo, 2021, p. 189), but rather that the movement is striving to obtain a horizontal structure.

Taking an analyzing glance at the trajectory of the movement, it is evident that the 'leaderless' movement with its occurring leadership have presented some implications for the movement. As Ploy, a designated student leader, explained:

> *It is really clear when we compare 63, to 64 and to 65* (Thai year for 2020, 2021 and 2022)*. We can see it really clearly, that when there are no leaders, then suddenly, the people are gone. "Dek"* (children) *don't dare to show up.*

It can be argued that there are several reasons to why she believed that the leaders are gone. Firstly, many of the main leaders have been arrested and released on bail with subsequent bail conditions since 2020 and up until today. For example, four of the participants in this study are monitored twenty-four/seven and will be sent back to prison if they break the bail conditions. Secondly, as Somchai explained when I asked if he was still affiliated with a student activist group: "Now I have resigned. I am 24 now and I think the establishment should be run by younger generations". A common sentiment is that the movement should be run by youth who are 23 and below, which poses another set of challenges. Narawit, who is 22 years old, said the following:

> *People are still interested in politics and knows that politics matters in their lives, but I mean…this year, the political movement kind of…all the leaders are arrested, and there are some restrictions. And to be honest, now we don't have the leaders to lead the movement.*

Based on this, it can be argued that both the presence and absence of organizational elements, such as having designated leaders to lead the movement, may be associated with tensions and conflict (Hond et al., 2015, p. 292). For instance, having leaders to lead the movement can have both positive and negative impacts on the movement's effectiveness. Designated leaders can provide a clear direction and facilitate decision-making, but it may also lead to issues such as power struggles and hierarchy. On the other hand, the absence of leaders can promote a more decentralized and participatory structure, but it may also result in a lack of cohesion, coordination, and accountability. At the current point, this presents a challenge for the future direction of the movement, as the effectiveness of the movement's organizational structure depends on finding a balance between having designated leaders while also promoting decentralized decision-making and participation.

5.4.2 Alliance Building

Although social movements are not regarded as organizations per se, it is recognized that social movements need a form of organization, albeit not necessarily in the form of 'formal' organization (Hond et al., 2015, p. 292). In terms of understanding the structure of organization in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand, McCargo (2021, p. 187) highlights the challenge of "mapping the structure of an organic and unstructured movement comprising a loosely improvised alliance". As the overview of the different activist groups illustrated (see Chapter 2), many groups have different demands and structure. Some groups focus mainly on the original demands of the three-finger salute, while other groups campaign for more specific demands such as school rights and patriarchal reform. On this matter, Areeya noted that "The movement is not organized. Some have their own demands, their own topics, their own methods, so it is quite various". Eve explained the following:

> *We just have to gather people. It's okay that there are many cases, but we have to have a point where we can gather. There must be one time when we can strike all together. That's how we can really push the government. Not just, Thaluwang does this, Thalugaz does that, Thalufah does another thing.*

Additionally, Areeya claimed in frustration that "I think it's too messy to really hold anyone or anything together". On this note, another central issue in terms of alliance building is the unification of demands. Ann, one of the professors, explained that:

> *The thing is that the kids in Din Daeng* (slum area in Bangkok) *who are apart of ThaluGaz don't have patience for the demands of the university students. They need to see change now. And they are so poor and live in such bad conditions in the slums that they have nothing to risk. That's why they are using violence. They are desperate.*

These different means of mobilization and struggles has led to internal conflicts within the groups and between the groups. In terms of the organizational structure, Areeya said that "It's not like a united front like we want it to be. There are some internal conflicts here and there, it's not really incorporated in solidarity". The director of a law organization, Tao, claimed with frustration that "The problem of the movement is that they don't have any consensus together on anything". In line with this, it can be argued that it is much easier to see what the protestors are against than what they stand for, and that there is no evident coherent ideological agenda behind the protest movement (McCargo, 2021, p. 182). However, from my own data material, it is evident that the youth activists are aware of this, not feeling hopeless but rather looking for solutions. The law director Tao, who has worked extensively with youth

in the movement, was nonetheless hopeful in his assessment: “But these days, when I say to the kids “don’t do this, do this instead”, they listen more than before. So, in two years a lot has changed”. This illustrates the wishes and efforts in organizing a ‘united front’, despite the power struggles within and between the groups.

5.4.3 “The Fight is Won”

One compelling interpretation of the movement’s ‘downfall’ is the observation of student leaders claiming that their fight is won. I was surprised when Ploy answered my question about her goals:

> *I think that I have reached my goal already. The truth is that I had little hope. We thought that it would take at least five years to change the society to talk more about the monarchy in public. We thought it was impossible to change in the short-term. But suddenly, it did. I don’t know why and how, but it shifted, like, overnight. The only goal I had at that time, is reached. After that, it was like, what else can I do, and what more?*

According to McCargo (2021, p. 182), other student leaders have also insisted that their fight is won. By saying the unsayable and by opening up the discussion of the political role of the monarchy, they had achieved a massive victory. However, for most of the activists that I have interviewed, the fight is not over – it has rather just begun. This illustrates a power struggle within the movement, in terms of finding a common path for the movement’s future.

Another contested strategy is the so-called ‘losing means winning’ strategy (McCargo, 2021, p. 182), which can be understood to present implications for the movement. Several activists and protest leaders have expressed their willingness to be jailed or even lose their lives in order to advance their cause. Eve fearlessly stated:

> *For us who work with the issue of monarchy, there is a level where we have to make up our minds in terms of risk. We might experience life threatens, or to the level of death. But if I die it’s okay, because if it makes people open their eyes, it is worth dying.*

It is argued that threats can encourage activists to seek new strategies such as coalition formation (McCammon & Moon, 2015, p. 330). Recent events show that campaigns and protests have been utilized and organized across activist groups as a response to protestors imprisonment, which illustrates a type of coalition formation. From another perspective, closed political opportunities can also fragment movements (della Porta, 1995, cited in McCammon & Moon, 2015, p. 330). On this note, the “losing means winning” strategy has

shown to have severe limitations in terms of mobilizing young people, who seem to not have the patience to wait months, years or even decades to advance their causes (McCargo, 2021, p. 182). As Areeya stated, in line with most of the participants' perceptions: "After all the student leaders was jailed, the movement kind of died". Thus, the 'losing means winning' strategy presents a contested approach, as it has limitations in terms of mobilizing groups who may not have the patience to wait long to achieve their goals.

6 State Repression

The aim of this chapter is to investigate the measures that have been used by the government to suppress the pro-democracy activists and the youth-led movement. Elements that will be explored are state measures of repression, the aim of utilizing repressive measures, and the power struggles that arises between repression and resistance. The question I seek to discuss is: *What are the forms of repression used against the youth protestors, and how have they responded to this repression?* In this exploration, I will discuss the activists' experiences with repressive forces and discuss the attempts of the activists to take advantage of the paradox of repression. According to Scott (2008), repression often has a paradoxical effect of strengthening the commitment of subjugated groups, rather than suppressing their dissent. When the dominant group uses repressive measures to silence or punish dissent it might actually increase the level of solidarity and resistance among the subjugated group, and thus lead to the development of more creative and resourceful forms of resistance. Below I will turn to a closer examination of the interaction between repression and resistance, and the attempts made by the activists to take advantage of the paradox of repression.

6.1 Repressive Measures, for What Cause?

Brad Adams, the Asia director at Human Rights Watch, stated the following in relation to the release of the World Report on Human Rights in 2021: "The Thai government has responded to peaceful demands from youth for sweeping political reforms by making Thailand's human rights crisis go from bad to worse", followed by: "The Thai authorities have prosecuted dissenters, violently dispersed peaceful protests, censored news and social media, and punished critical political speech." (Human Rights Watch, 2021). These are some of the repressive measures that have been utilized by the ruling NCPO in response to the nation-wide protests that have occurred since 2020. First of all, Kurtz and Smithey (2018a, pp. 2-3) observe that most scholars of repression define 'repression' as:

> Actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions (Kurtz and Smithley (2018a, pp. 2-3)

To provide a thorough understanding of repression, I choose to go beyond the understanding of repression as physical threats or sanctions, and thus utilize Kurtz and Smithey (2018b)

'Continuum of Demobilization' that stretches from overt violence to hegemony. By analyzing repression from this broad perspective, I seek to include cultural approaches in understanding the state repression that Thai authorities have carried out. This perspective, I argue, might serve to go beyond the narrow understanding of repression, which Davenport and Inman (2012, p. 621) argues has been "predominantly rationalist and structuralist in orientation, with cultural approaches being more recent and less mainstream" (Kurtz & Smithey, 2018a, p. 3).

TABLE 8.1 A Continuum of Demobilization

Overt Violence	*"Less-lethal" Methods*	*Intimidation*	*Manipulation*	*Soft Repression*	*Hegemony*
Executions	Pepper spray	Indirect threats	Co-optation	Framing contests	Latent repression
Shooting unarmed demonstrators	Active Denial System	Harassment	Selective facilitation	Ridicule	Spontaneous consensus
Assassinations	Laser and acoustic devices	Surveillance	Dilemma actions	Stigmatization	Self censorship
Beatings	"Non-lethal" munitions	Intrapsychic wounding	Resource depletion	Defamation	Election fraud
Torture	Tasers		Information suppression	Silencing	
Arrests			Thwart recruiting efforts	Diversions	
			Disinformation	Media manipulation	
			Making faux concessions	Arranged counterprotest	
			Divisive disruption		
			Censorship		

Table 6. Continuum of Demobilization, retrieved from Kurtz and Smithey (2018b, p. 191).

I will not go in chronological in detail on all categories, although my research reveals that Thai authorities to some extent have used a variety of these mechanisms to control dissidents and protests. Rather, I will present concrete examples that can be placed along this continuum and discuss the measure of repression in light of this theoretical framework.

6.1.1 Limiting Freedom of Expression and Silencing Dissidents

From the first days following the coup in 2014, the NCPO has sought to limit freedom of expression and circulation of information that challenges the official story (Haberkorn, 2018, p. 936). In order to exercise authority to control the society, it is argued that NCPO camouflages its 'draconian power' in the form of law and the judiciary system (TLHR, 2017). NCPO's spokesperson, General Piyapong Klinphan, made the following statement in describing the meaning of "law" for the NCPO:

> One day in the future, if we no longer have Article 44 or the NCPO in the future, how will we exist together? And what kind of future will we have? The use of mob rule without respect for law and the judicial process will lead us into the greatest chaos and hardship … The NCPO maintains that we will safeguard the security of the nation and the fair and equal enforcement of the law. (TLHR, 2017)

Furthermore, Section 44 of the Thai constitution states the following:

> In the case where the Head of the NCPO is of opinion that it is necessary for the benefit of reform in any field and to strengthen public unity and harmony, or for the prevention, disruption or suppression of any act which undermines public peace and order or national security, the Monarchy, national economics or administration of State affairs, whether that act emerges inside or outside the Kingdom, the Head of the NCPO shall have the powers to make any order to disrupt or suppress regardless of the legislative, executive or judicial force of that order. (Thailand Law Library, n.d.-a)

This section gives the NCPO sweeping power to override laws and regulations, by giving the Head of the NCPO, Prayuth Chan-o-Cha, the free rein to issue any order in the name of national security, reforms, or unity. In relation to this, Haberkorn (2018, p. 936) highlights that anyone who dares to articulate and circulate a dissenting opinion – journalists, writers, students, lawyers, politicians, and ordinary citizens – are all treated as potential enemies. It can therefore be argued that the NCPO's primary tool of repression is active and expansive use of the law to silence its critics.

In seeking to understand why those who challenge the depiction of the 'official story' are considered enemies, it is useful to take a historical glance. Kurtz and Smithey (2018b, p. 207) explains that "regimes often rely on nationalism to connect political agendas with deeply held collective identities". As Suthep, one of the participants, explained: "Thainess comes from the nationalistic ideology that have had a position in Thai government since, I think, 80-90 years ago. The authority tried to tell us what it means to be Thai.". To contextualize this, Thai nationalism was first popularized by King Vajiravudh (Rama VI) as he defined "preserving the Thainess of the nation" (*raksa khwam pen Thai haeng chat*) as the responsibility of all, duty-bound to "love the King, love the nation, love the religion" and to protect all three from enemies aiming to destroy them (Ferrara, 2015, p. 68). The survival of the Thai nation was understood to be dependent on the unity of the Thai people and their commitment to loving the nation more than themselves. In addition, their willingness to follow 'duties' in accordance with their position on the country's social hierarchy was a large part of this. On this basis, King Vajiravudh classified dissidents – those who think only of themselves and those who believe themselves to be better than their superiors – as enemies of the group's harmony, and subsequently deserving harsh punishment (Ferrara, 2015, p. 68). Applying this to a more recent framework, I asked Eve and Pim about their understanding of what it means to be Thai:

> *Thai people are easy to teach, like people do what they are told. They are tame. They accept the situation as it is. They are hard-working. If there are any problems, Thai people blame themselves because of karma. The common belief is that older people have more knowledge than young people. Seniority is very important. They teach you to do well and to not move out of your "zone" and to move in the right direction. To not think too far or too much. It's like they have made the frame for you already, and you have to behave inside the frame. And because of this you feel oppressed. You shouldn't be too much or stand out in any way.* (Pim)

> *You have to behave and be polite. If you are a girl, you will have it stricter. They will make an even stronger "fence" for you. You have to be proper. You can't dare too much, but you can't be too quiet either.* (Eve)

This might suggest that the ('civilized') customs and traits that form the concept and ideology of Thainess is deeply embedded in the Thai population. Theorists such as Michel Foucault (1977) have revealed the subtle ways in which elites wield power by instituting and privileging certain narratives. These narratives become so deeply internalized that they obscure alternative narratives and make the thinkable unthinkable, or critical thought out of reach (Kurtz & Smithey, 2018b, p. 206). Thus, one may describe soft repression through hegemonic measures utilized by the Thai state as a way of controlling the population by limiting freedom of expression and silencing dissidents.

The pattern of targeting selected individuals who challenge the status quo is worth a reflection in terms of understanding repressive state measures. Haberkorn (2018, p. 936) observes that the NCPO does not, and perhaps cannot, silence every dissenting voice, and thus selected individuals are targeted in a constellation that may appear to be fully arbitrary. However, this logic of targeting may not be as random and arbitrary as it seems. To exemplify, the case of Jatupat Boonpattararaksa, known by his nickname "Pei", who to this day is one of the leading figures of the movement, may serve as an illustration: Pei shared a BBC biography of the new king, Maha Vajiralongkorn (Rama X), who became king on October 13th, 2016. The BBC biography was straightforward and highlighted the king's string of wives, his four abandoned sons, his recent bike rides for charity, and his conferral of a military rank on his pet dog (BBC Thai, 2016). While over 2600 people shared the BBC link, Pei was the only person to be arrested in December 2016, making him the first person to be arrested for violating Article 112 of the Thai Criminal Code, under the reign of Rama X. The complaint that led to his arrest was filed by Lieutenant Colonel Phitakphon Chrusri, a soldier from the North-East region who had followed Pei closely (Haberkorn, 2018, p. 935). In this case, Haberkorn (2018, p. 936) presents the following questions:

> If the BBC Thai news article was deemed to insult the monarchy, why was Pai prosecuted and not the other several thousand who shared the article? Why not the BBC reporters and programmers who authored and disseminated the article, which are actions that were judged to be crimes in earlier Article 112 cases?

This form of selective targeting of few individuals is argued to be an instance of "killing the chicken to scare the monkey" (Haberkorn, 2018, p. 936), in which an example is used to threaten others. It creates fear by sending the message to critics and would-be critics that one is doubly vulnerable: one may or may not be arrested for dissenting. In this incident, several forms of demobilization were into play at once: Overt violence in making the arrest of Pei, intimation of activists with indirect threats, and silencing through the use of defamation laws.

6.1.2 Surveillance and Monitoring

In 2022, harassments against activists by government officials continued and intensified. The use of intimidation tactics was ranging from arbitrary visits at residences, workplaces, and educational institutions, surveillance and photographing, to summons for talks at private and governmental premises without a warrant or any documents (TLHR, 2023a). According to Thai Lawyers for Human Rights (TLHR), an organization working to raise awareness about human rights violations and provide free legal support to people whose rights have been violated, there were at least 349 individuals who were subject of harassment and monitoring by government officials in 2022 (TLHR, 2023a). Below is data of reported cases to the organization, as December 29th, 2022:

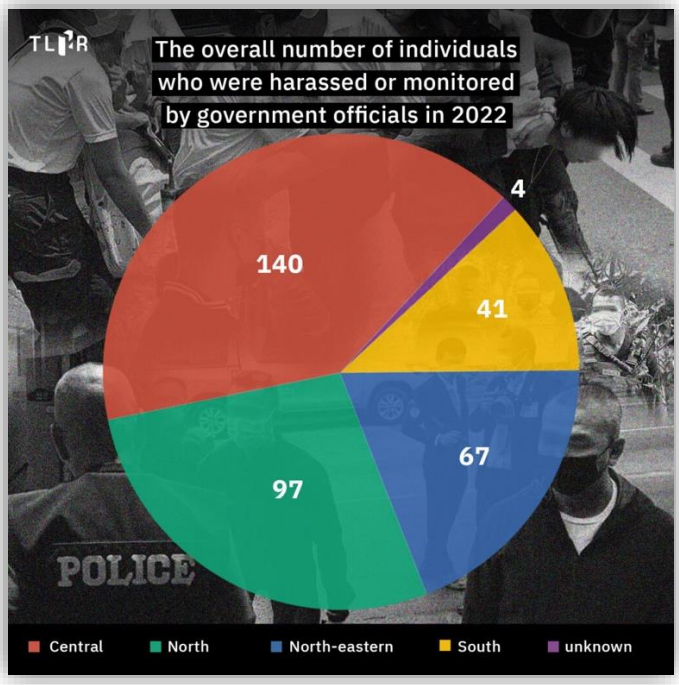

Table 7. Retrieved from TLHR (2023a).

These numbers do not include incidents where officials carried out arrests or presented individuals with summons. It is also important to note that these numbers only represent cases reported to TLHR, meaning that the exact number may be higher (TLHR, 2023a).

'Intimidation' often amounts to the threat of direct violence, which includes the tactics of harassment and surveillance; efforts to demobilize activists without the use of direct violence (Kurtz & Smithey, 2018b, p. 195). Nelson (2013, p. 170) highlights a less robust form of intimation; overt surveillance (meaning direct, open surveillance). For instance, vehicles with agents parked in front of a target's residence, place or work, can strike fear into the heart of a target. Malee, one of the activists, told me about her experience with overt surveillance:

> *Since I joined* (activist group 4), *the police has gone to my house out in the district, they have visited and taken pictures of my mom. My mom was so confused because since she was born, she has never had any issues with the police, and they took pictures of everything, like my mom and my house. And then my mom called me and said like "today the police was at our house, to see me and asked if they could take a picture of me", so then I was so confused, like why were they there? At that time, it was the day before a big event, and they followed me out to the village. I was so confused, like "why me?". I have always just worked behind the house and I haven't done anything wrong. I was so confused because they visited two people in our group, me and "…" who has been charged with 112, but I haven't been charged with anything. But because I am the content creator in* (activist group 4), *I have ended up as one of the people that they keep their eyes on. So, it's very dangerous because they follow me around and they keep an eye on me.*

According to TLHR (2023a), such harassment incidents have been a common phenomenon in all regions. It is reported that government officials visit targeted individuals to question them about political activities and the movement, to report to their 'superiors'. This illustrates the broad powers afforded by the martial law, which is later replaced by bringing into force Article 44 of a new constitution, that sets the stage for ongoing harassment and intimation.

Technology is a crucial factor in what the law director Tao described as "the era of resistance against state power", in which electronic tracking devices are commonly used as a mechanism to control individuals with oppositional ideas to the hegemonic narrative. In a seminar organized by Cross Cultural Foundation (CrCF) in June 2022, titled "Thailand the Land of Surveillance: From Enforced Disappearances to EM, Digital, and Biometric Surveillance", the director of CrCF stated the following:

> I think we have to raise a question on how the police, attorneys, and court have introduced multiple surveillance systems, eventually leading to the use of EM

> (Electronic tracking device) on citizens practicing their freedom of expression. It looks like they are trying to dictate our thoughts by the use of this technology that is increasingly becoming an integral part of our life. What frightens me the most is that the Thai public does not even know that their rights are being restricted. (TLHR, 2020)

In March 2023, TLHR reported the number of individuals and activists who were ordered to wear the EM bracelet, finding that at least 94 individuals were required to wear the tracking device between March 2021 and March 2023 (TLHR, 2023c). In this study, five of the youth activists were wearing an electronic tracking ankle bracelet at the time of the interview. For these activists, it is part of their bail conditions which presents certain restrictions. Somchai and Eve related their experiences this way:

> *I can't organize activities and I can't join mobs. I can't be active on social media in different ways. For example, if there's information about mobs, I can't promote that. And I can't go out of my house after 9 pm. (Somchai)*

> *I always have a monitor on, 24/7. I can no longer work at my job, and I cannot apply for a job anywhere. They won't accept me with this thing on. (Eve)*

Moreover, EM bracelets limit travel options (for example by plane to other provinces), the ability to pursue certain careers, it causes the person to be unfairly judged by the society, and it also affect their mental well-being (TLHR, 2023c). However, Eve interestingly pointed out that by having to wear the electronic device, she has gotten much more attention and respect in the movement community. She distinguished between the 'inside', referring to within the movement, and the 'outside', referring to the wider society in her description: "It's actually almost funny. It's like I'm more respected on the inside now, and suddenly all these media houses want to talk to me. But on the outside, I don't have any rights or respect". The use of electronic monitoring device can therefore be understood as a means of limiting and excluding ideas and identities from the public forum, in order to "steer the conduct of civil society" (Peterson & Wahlström, 2015, p. 634).

6.1.3 Limiting the Right to Peaceful Protest

On 25th of March 2020, Thai authorities had an external reason to crack down on demonstrations when a national emergency decree was issued to control the spread of Covid-19 (McCargo, 2021, p. 179). The implementation of the *Emergency Decree on Public Administration in Emergency Situation* as a Covid-19 response provided, according to Human Rights Watch (2020a), the government with unchecked powers to suppress fundamental

freedoms and civil liberties, and thus presented the movement with certain implications. In mid-March, campus protests were temporarily suspended due to the lockdown (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208). During the lockdown, students started an online campaign with the hashtag #MobFromHome, and protests moved off campus and became more radicalized, extensive, and dynamic (Lertchoosakul, 2021, p. 208; McCargo, 2021, p. 179). This rapid mobilization of the protests through social media presented a challenge for the authorities who were unable to control. Protests resumed in mid-July and escalated on September 19th and October 15th, when students mobilized Thailand's largest political rallies in years. At 4 am on October 15th, 2020, the government made a declaration of a 'severe' state of emergency, threatening to use new control measures including detention, high-pressure water cannons, and tear gas. From this point, demonstrations evolved into becoming more violent, as the government started utilizing water cannons, rubber bullets, and tear gas as measures to control the demonstrations and the protesters (Bangkok Post, 2021) (See table 1 in Chapter 2 for the development of violent demonstrations).

According to Kurtz and Smithey (2018b, p. 193), "many military and domestic police forces are increasingly interested in what the US military calls 'non-lethal' or 'less-lethal' methods for controlling dissidents". These methods include plastic bullets and baton rounds, tasers, pepper spray, and the act of moving individuals or groups of people. On October 16th, 2020, the day after the 'severe emergency' was announced, police forcibly dispersed a demonstration in Bangkok's Pathum Wan shopping district. Human Rights Watch observed the police using water cannons and teargas to break up the protest, as well as batons and shields to disperse the protesters. After the crackdown, twelve protest leaders were being sought on arrest warrants (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). In terms of the circumstances of potentially lawful use, I find it useful to highlight the 2020 United Nations guidance on less-lethal weapons in law enforcement which states that "The use of less-lethal weapons to disperse an assembly should be considered a measure of last resort" (United Nations for Human Rights, 2020, pp. 23-24). Participants in the assembly should also be given time to obey the warning and a safe space or route for them to move to shall be ensured (Ibid.).
In the interview with Kannika, the director of a human rights organization, I was informed that their organization has worked to negotiate with the police in terms of improving the way of handling the protests and the pro-democracy movement in general. She said that:

> *I would expect more of them* [the police], *they are the ones who make it escalate. We just call them "crowd control". I don't think they care about international standards*

> *at all. I remember one time, when the commissions agreed to meet us, I went to talk to them about the forms of harassment. They would say that "oh, we don't have a choice, because, if we don't do this we will be in trouble because our supervisor or our boss ordered it". They always use this "we do as a duty" sentiment.*

In several interviews and announcements, police spokesmen have urged that "After repeated warning we needed to enforce the law by using high water pressure that follows international standards" and that officers had "only fired the water cannon at the sky and did not intend to harm anyone" (BBC, 2020; Reuters, 2021). When applying a new look on the international standards set by the United Nations, there are some limitations to the use of less-lethal weapons such as water cannons: "Water cannon should only be used in situations of serious public disorder where there is a significant likelihood of loss of life, serious injury or the widespread destruction of property" (United Nations for Human Rights, 2020, pp. 38-39). It is also important to note that in 1996, Thailand ratified the protection of rights to freedom of expression and peaceful assembly, as reflected in the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR) (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). It can therefore be argued that the act of invoking the Emergency Decree has given the police 'a green light' to commit rights abuses with impunity.

Not only did invoking the Emergency Decree provide Thai authorities with power to use less-lethal methods to suppress the protests, it also resulted in the authorities imposing broad censorship in violation of the right to free expression and media freedom. On October 16th, 2020, the police issued several warnings against news reporters who reported critical comments about the monarchy, the government, and the political situation in the country. Livestreaming pro-democracy protests was declared illegal, as well as posting selfies at a protest site (Human Rights Watch, 2020b). Nelson (2013, p. 168) identifies this manipulation tactic as "resource depletion," which is the opposite of resource mobilization. However, this type of suppression of information flow is argued to provide a short-term tactical advantage for agents, but impossible on large scale and in the long-term (Nelson, 2013, p. 165). During my fieldwork, I observed media coverage at all protests and pro-democracy sites, as well as reports and information on social media before, during and after each event. However, it is important to note that most of the protests and events I attended, were happening after the Emergency Decree was upheld on September 30th, 2022.

6.1.4 Prosecutions and Arbitrary Detention

The most dramatic forms of repression that attract media and popular attention include instances of what Kurtz and Smithey (2018b) refer to as 'overt violence'. This type of violence includes the actions we usually think of when we consider repression, such as torture, beatings, shooting unarmed demonstrators, prosecutions, and arrests (Kurtz & Smithey, 2018a, p. 3). Two days before the coup, on May 20, 2014, Haberkorn (2018, p. 937) explains that:

> Martial law was declared and provided the military with an expansive range of powers, including warrantless search and seizure, authority to set a curfew and limit movement, and detention of individuals for up to seven days without any requirement to appear before a judge or otherwise present evidence.

A year later, on March 31st, 2015, martial law was lifted but immediately replaced with article 44, that authorized military officers to "prevent and suppress" offences that was a threat to national security. These offenses included lèse-majesté, sedition, and violations of announcements or orders of the NCPO or the head of the NCPO (Haberkorn, 2018). The military officers were subsequently granted the power to interrogate, arrest, and summon any individual to report back to them. These are also defined as 'peacekeeping officers', which adds to the argument that the echoes from the martial law are still highly present in terms of prosecutions and arbitrary detention.

Two months into 2023, the situation related to political prosecution of pro-democracy activists continue to be in full swing. According to the TLHR statistics, at least 1895 people in 1180 cases have been prosecuted due to political participation and expression since the beginning of the protest organized by 'Free Youth' on 18 July 2020 until 28th of February 2023 (TLHR, 2023b). The illustration below shows an overview of these prosecutions and are grouped according to key charges:

Table 8. Numbers of people politically prosecuted in various cases (TLHR, 2023b).

In this study, six of the youth activists have been charged with several offenses and faced prosecutions and arrestations. Four of these activists have been arrested and faced imprisonment several times, either because of being charged with new cases or because of breaking bail conditions. Their offenses include a variety of acts that I have arranged in the following list:

- Holding speeches at rallies
- Publishing letters to the King on Facebook
- Tweeting about banning the bank
- Publishing and sharing a Facebook post about “the land of compromise” and water cannon trucks
- Partaking in controversial parades
- Burning a king portrait of King Rama X in front of one of the main prisons in Bangkok
- Throwing dog food in front of the prison while holding a speech

- Conducting a public opinion poll on the topic “Is royal motorcade causing a trouble or not?” at the area in front of Siam Paragon mall
- Sharing a post that questioned the 2022 monarchy budget
- Conducting a public opinion poll on whether they agree with the government allowing the King to use his power as he pleases

McCargo (2021, pp. 183-184) argues that “the government began engaging in relentless ‘lawfare’, producing endless essentially bogus and politically motivated legal charges against protest leaders”. He further explains that the courts seemed initially reluctant to play along the government’s measures, and generally bailed out the demonstrators at the earliest opportunity. However, one of the participants, Ploy, explained that there is a common perception that “Some courts are better than others. Some are very conservative, and some are not”. When I attended the court ruling for one of the participants, Eve was there in support and whispered to me that “That one is the worst judge of them all” and pointed at the judge who entered the court room. According to TLHR’s analysis, court litigation is likely to become an important ‘scene’ for the political struggles in the following years, as activists and citizens are in the process of defending themselves while advancing their political agenda (TLHR, 2022a). On this matter, Scott’s (2008) concept of the paradox of repression can shed light on the potential unintended consequences of repressive measures against activists who engage in court litigation. These consequences may involve mobilizing public support, exposing state repression, and highlighting the need for legal reforms. This ‘lawfare’ can therefore be accounted as one of the effects of the government’s crackdown on the movement, that may result in court rooms potentially becoming sites for resistance in the following years.

6.2 The Prison Experience

> What does it mean to struggle against a system that is capable of crushing you? A system whose resources far outmatch your own: armed with weapons, with state power, and with multiple discourses of justice, security, and efficiency? What does it mean to struggle against a system that is beyond accountability, in part because it claims the right to hold individuals accountable for their own actions and choices? What does it mean—and what role does meaning play in this struggle? (Guenther, 2016, p. 225)

These are questions for anyone who finds themselves in a society that is structured by control and domination, and particularly significant for people who are incarcerated. These are the ‘dangerous individuals’ from whom ‘society must be defended!’, who must be contained,

controlled, and incapacitated so that the rest of the population may be safe and prosperous (Guenther, 2016, p. 225). In this section, I seek to discuss what it means to organize individual or collective resistance from the position of being incarcerated. To understand this in the context of the pro-democracy movement in Thailand, it is relevant to examine the activists' experience with the prison system and thus provide a basis for the individual and collective resistance within an institution whose purpose, according to Buck (2000, p. 25), is to warehouse and 'disappear' the 'unacceptable'.

In my interview with Eve, she was quick to say that "Outside of prison, Thailand is bad. But in prison, it's 10 times worse", when sharing her experience with the prison system. She was incarcerated for 94 days, accused and sentenced for raising a poll in public that questioned people's opinion about the royal motorcades. Describing the prison, she said that "Inside it's very bad. It's dirty, the way the food is…, it's not okay at all. Thai prisons are like the worst in the world. It must be". According to Buck (2000, p. 25), "prisons exist to deprive their captives of their liberties and human agency, as well to punish them". In this sense, my understanding of human agency is the thoughts and actions taken by people that express their individual power. In Foucault's analysis of the modern penal system, the notion of punishment in the form of imprisonment – mere loss of liberty – has never functioned without an element of punishment that concerns the body: sexual deprivation, corporal punishment, solitary confinement, and rationing of food (Foucault, 1977, pp. 15-16). One participant highlighted the quality of food and drinking water, the showers, and the way of sleeping as some of the most problematic parts in terms of her imprisonment:

> *At the beginning when I just arrived, I had to be in the cell at first, I wasn't allowed to go anywhere. And in the room, it was a "cooler", a tank of water, but this cooler had never been taken anywhere. It was like a small container, the ones you use to wash your clothes, a black one, and you would have to take water from this one and put it in the cooler. So, it was never cleaned or anything. And in the container, you could still smell the fragrance of dishwater soap. So, people would drink this water and get a sore throat. At the beginning, I drank this, I didn't know any better.*
>
> *And then it was the thing with showers. They only gave us 15 seconds to shower. They counted 1-15. The first 10, you had to shower. The last 5 was to get dressed. They were standing there, watching and counting. And like, for me, I am quite big, so I didn't have enough time, and my hair is long, so in any way I didn't have enough time.*
>
> *And when it comes to sleeping, you just sleep right on the ground. You get three thin blankets, and you have to choose yourself which one is going to be the pillow, the cover, and if you are going to use one of them as a mattress.*

In assessing the meaning of imprisonment, one central criticism towards the penitentiary system in the nineteenth century, was the critique that imprisonment is not a sufficient punishment. This was based on the observation that "prisoners are less hungry, less cold, less deprived in general than many poor people or even workers" (Foucault, 1977, p. 16). The central argument was that a condemned person should suffer physically more than others. Eve shared her reflections on this type of punishment and the consequences on the individual level:

> *It's not a system that works to make people better, to prepare them to go back to society. It's the punishment, it's oppressing them, like they're not human, to the point where they themselves think that "I am wrong, I am wrong" and make them take responsibility.*

United Nations human rights mechanisms have expressed concern over prison conditions in Thailand for more than a decade. The 2017 report 'Behind the Walls' looks at conditions in Thailand's prisons after the coup, and it makes clear that Thailand's government have "failed to make any progress in the implementation of the UN's recommendations and to uphold their own commitments to improve prison conditions" (FIDH, 2017, p. 4). In relation to this, Ploy said that "In Thai, they have a phrase that's like 'return the good people back to society', but I don't trust this". I think that there is no direction at all, especially when you think about how people evolve in prison because of the conditions". This stands in stark contrast to the Thai Department of Corrections' motto "Caring Custody, Meaningful Rehabilitation, International Standard Achievement" (FIDH, 2017, p. 4). It can therefore be argued that Thailand's prison conditions fail to meet international standards and to create a rehabilitative environment for prisoners.

6.3 The Prisoner's Movement

The former prisoners in this study have been removed from the society and put behind bars because they have been accused of breaking one or more of the laws designed to exert tighter social control. They can therefore be categorized as 'political prisoners'. Political prisoners are "those who have consciously or politically resisted, opposed, or attacked the injustices and inequalities" of the state system of social control (Buck, 2000, p. 25). These prisoners are historically seen as among the most feared and despised by those who wield state power. Therefore, I want to emphasize a question that concerns the effect of imprisoning these 'feared and despised': How do activists continue their struggle behind the bars, and what are

the results of this struggle? In this exploration, I would like to highlight the prominent human rights lawyer and activist, Anon Nampha's, first meeting with the prison:

> Thinking back on his time in prison, Anon recalls the moment when he first stepped inside the narrow concrete corridors he was forced to call home for six months. As he entered the complex, a wave of people shouted in his direction from their cells. When he glanced up, he saw a row of prisoners raising the three-finger salute through the bars. (Quinley, 2022)

The description above shows how prisoners were acknowledging the democracy movement and Anon's struggle for justice on 'the outside'. In this study, the collected data reveals that although the penal system is incarcerating activists to crack down the movement, the fight is fully alive inside prisons. Kasem highlighted an example of his time in prison:

> *In the prison, I had to stand up for the king song, but I was holding up the three-finger salute, so they didn't allow me to stand up anymore. They were afraid that other prisoners would copy it.*

Not only is the fight for the movement well alive inside the prisons, but for some activists, the experience with the prison system affected their activism in terms of directing the focus to prisoner's rights. Antoine Lazarus, a former prison doctor and participant in Foucault's work on the Prison Information Group (GIP), highlights the significance of prisoners demanding the "little things": "What is surprising...is that they ask for basic comfort: nourishment, bed-clothes . . . Detainees display, sometimes at the risk of their own lives, an enormous need to change things, to be heard, and simultaneously they demand all the little things." (Foucault, 1977, cited in Guenther, 2016, p. 234). In relation to 'the little things', one participant told me that there was a clear difference between her first and second round in prison. Her first round, she was observing 'how thinks worked'. In her second round however, her focus was directed at affecting the 'little things' inside the prison:

> *But when I went in the second round, I started talking a lot to the prison officers. I said that "the water isn't clean, and all the people in here have sore throats because of it, we can't drink it". And the officers were like "okay, okay, we can see what we can do for you". So, after that, they washed all the buckets and put clean drinking water inside of it.*
>
> *I told them that they had to change it. I didn't want to eat. It wasn't good at all, so I didn't eat. And then the prison officer came to me and asked me why I didn't eat, and I said: "it's not possible, it's so bad". Then the police officer said: "of course you can eat it, why can't you eat it?". And then I reached the food to them and said "okay, you want to eat this?" and they didn't. So, after that day, everything changed. It changed to the better. We got more meat, and the rice was much better. I was so shocked. So that day I ate so much.*

The UN Standard Minimum Rules for the Treatment of Prisoners states that "Every prisoner shall have the opportunity each day to make requests or complaints to the prison director or the prison staff member authorized to represent him or her," and that such a prisoner "must not be exposed to any risk of retaliation, intimidation or other negative consequences as a result of having submitted a request or complaint." (United Nations, 2015, p. 6). When the participant realized that the prison officers were listening to her, she adopted a strategy of raising these issues:

> *I complained a lot, if I could complain about something, I did. But I complained in a sweet way. Like, "why does it has to be like this?" and so on. I feel like by being kind and sweet, everyone opened their hearts to me. Like, when I had any issues or needs and said it to the police officers, they listened. And then they actually changed it for me.*

In defense of the 'little things', Foucault points that "these are not merely details or rather every detail is essential when one struggles to obtain, against a boundless arbitrariness, a minimum of juridical status; when one struggles to have the right to demand." (Foucault, 1977, cited in Guenther, 2016, pp. 235-236). This implies that the struggle itself functions as capacity-building, movement-building, and community building. Using Guenther's (2016, p. 235) term, it is the "accomplishment of meaning in the making". What, then, are the outcomes of this particular struggle? The participant excitedly told me about the things that changed:

> *For example, when it came to food, people that where stuck in prison with me, still come to me today and say that "thank you so much for raising this issue, the food became so much better". So, then I was really proud and happy. Because the food in prison were really fucking bad.*

A Foucauldian understanding of the ultimate goal of these interventions – such as requesting the 'little things' - is to question the social and moral distinction between the innocent and the guilty (Guenther, 2016, p. 235). In this sense, the humanist would say: "The guilty are guilty and the innocent are innocent. Nevertheless, the convict is a man like any other and society must respect what is human in him" (Guenther, 2016, p. 235). This brings us back to the common consensus of the way in which the activists in this study perceive prisoners: as human beings, citizens of the society, who deserve to be treated that way. Their critique of the non-existent approaches of rehabilitation and the lack of preparation of return to the society, illustrates the way in which the prisons are modelling the 'society of control'. For one

participant, the hands-on experiences with the prison system have motivated her in a way that is wholly different from the other participants:

> *And there is one thing that I want to share with you. The truth is that I have a plan of getting myself into prison again. I have already talked to my ajarn* (professor), *like "ajarn, I want to go back to prison because I want to do research". Like, research that is dependent on only the prison officer, you don't see how the life is behind bars. If you are a prisoner yourself, you will see everything. It's a big piece of work that will benefit all Thais. So, I really want to do this. When I have finished my studies, if they don't charge me with anything before that, I will turn myself in. And for minimum 3 months, more that I have been at one round before. Ideally, I want to be there a full year, because then it becomes a full circle. Then I can see how they work for a whole year.*

This form of solidarity is recognized as 'radical prisoner-led resistance movements' (Guenther, 2016), which refers to the collective efforts by prisoners to resist and challenge the power structures within the power system, typically organized and led by the prisoners themselves. Although the example above is a radical one in showing how agency and resistance can be linked, there are also other examples of how participants in this study has shown resistance and mobilization while being incarcerated. Hunger strikes and creating art are other forms of expression that builds a sense of empowerment and agency within a system that is designed to strip them of both. By collectively challenging the power structures of the prison system, prisoners are able to exercise agency and assert their own autonomy, even in a highly controlled and oppressive environment.

7 Implications

This chapter seeks to explore the implications and consequences of the movement and its potential for bringing about social, cultural and political change. Since the late 1990s, scholarship has focused on three broad types of outcomes of collective mobilizations and protest activities that may generate social and political change: 1) Personal and biographical consequences which centers on the effects on the life-course of individuals who have participated in movement activities; 2) cultural change, or changes in social norms and behavior; and 3) political outcomes, meaning those effects of movement activities that in some way alter the movements' political environment (Bosi, Giugni, & Uba, 2016, p. 4). As the pro-democracy movement from 2020-2022 is a recent and ongoing phenomenon, the emphasis is placed on short-term social and cultural outcomes rather than long-term political outcomes.

The structure of this chapter is divided into three sections which are connected. The first section explores the personal and biographical consequences of the activists who have participated, or are still participating, in the movement. The next section discusses the cultural impacts of the movement, as my data reveals that there are significant changes on the 'cultural battleground' since the start of the movement in 2020. Then, the last section explores the potential for lasting political change, discussing how the cultural impacts of the movement may lead to political change in Thailand. By discussing the biographical, cultural, and political outcomes, I aim to discuss the various interrelated effects of the movement and provide valuable insights into the conditions and processes through which the pro-democracy movement in Thailand has succeeded or failed.

7.1 Personal and Biographical Consequences

Studying the outcomes of the pro-democracy movement is important if we want to elucidate certain forms of collective action in society. While most of the literature on these topics have addressed aggregate-level political outcomes of a particular social movement, such as changes in laws or new policies, a relatively small but substantial body of literature deals with the consequences of social movement at the micro-level (Giugni & Grasso, 2015, p. 85). Addressing these consequences at the micro-level involves paying attention to "the effects on the life-course of individuals who have participated in movement activities (Giugni & Grasso, 2015, p. 85). In this study, this entails considering the short-term consequences of political

engagement, which includes discussing positive outcomes and costs of engagement for the activists.

7.1.1 Sense of Belonging – The Self in Collective Identity

Studies of the consequences of social movements suggest that attending demonstrations can change people (Giugni & Grasso, 2015, p. 100). The interviews conducted in this study reveal that most of the participants have undergone a transformational process by being involved in the pro-democracy movement. Half of the participants stated that "I have changed" when I asked about their personal consequences. The activist Apisit highlighted the "culture of the movement" as the central reason for his personal evolvement:

> *I have changed. During the time when I first was an activist, I was very masculine, actually the most masculine in the movement. Like hard masculinity. But after a while, and after the community got bigger, I could be who I really am more easily. At the beginning, I was very stressed when I had to hold speeches, I felt that had to be a certain figure, but I got more relaxed after a while. The activism got more fun. This was one way I changed, after year 63* (year 2020). *It wasn't fun just because of the mobs itself, but because of the people. Our ideologies were very different, but in the way that we cared about change, it was the same.*

Apisit felt that he had to fit into a certain 'narrative' of how to be a male, until he joined the movement and felt that he could "be himself". This illustrates the importance of community and the liberating force of being involved in a movement. In line with this, McAdam emphasizes that attending protests and being involved in a social movement might work as an initiator of 'cognitive liberation' (McAdam, 1982, cited in Giugni & Grasso, 2015, p. 100). This means that the involvement often allows for individuals to realize the importance of political engagement and action to improve the context or the world we live in. Another effect may be more 'structural': Attending demonstrations and movement activities allows for meeting other politically engaged and like-minded people. These interactions may work as a reinforcing mechanism stimulating the deepening of one's political beliefs, often contributing to making the participant more politically aware and committed (Giugni & Grasso, 2015, p. 100). This deepening of political awareness can be understood as one of the biographical ripple effects of attending movement activities. It can therefore be argued that a sense of belonging to an activist community is a significant factor for personal empowerment.

Following this line of thought, I find it useful to bring back the notion of collective identity. In the previous chapters, the focus has been to grasp how a collective identity has been formed in the mobilization processes. However, in the process of dismantling the notion of

collective identity in order to understand the biographical effects of being a part of a movement, it is important to highlight the ways in which the formation of collective identity continues to shape an individual's sense of self (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 296). For example, Giugni and Grasso (2015, p. 101) argues that "attendance at a demonstration can initiate one to a new 'protest life' that leads to further, more wide-ranging personal changes". This has been the case for Eve, who told me about how her life was mainly about activism:

> *90% of my life is about activism. I always go around and think about what I should do next and how we can win. Sometimes, I think about if I should use my life to go travel, work, start a family, etc, but this is something that I can just forget.*

She further told me that she has devoted her life to fight her case, which means that she has forsaken certain personal freedoms: "I can no longer work as a teacher, and I cannot apply for a job anywhere. And I always have a monitor on, 24/7.". This example demonstrates the way in which macrostructural processes affect microprocesses in identity formation, for the reason that the 'protest life' has shaped the individual's interests and behaviors. Correspondingly, Polletta and Jasper (2001, p. 299) provides insights into the dynamic relationship between macrostructural processes and micro-interactional processes:

> The most interesting recent work on identity has inquired into the macrostructural processes by which new collective identities develop and into the micro-interactional processes by which people come to see themselves as obliged to protest. It has emphasized organizers' capacity to redefine old identities and create new ones.

In this particular excerpt, the 'organizers' refer to participants involved in social movements activities. Eve also told me that "I have only been active in the movement for two years", which exemplifies "that movements promote new identities as a way to gain power as well as transform selves" (Polletta & Jasper, 2001, p. 299). Further, this can be understood as 'empowered outcomes' which include situation-specific perceived control and resource mobilization skills (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995, p. 570). Given the above, it can be argued that the formation of collective identity on a macro-level continues to shape individuals' sense of self on the micro-level, with empowered outcomes in terms of increased self-efficacy and political engagement.

7.1.2 Educational Benefits

The youth activists in this study report educational outcomes as one the central benefits from participating in the movement. The work of Conner et al. (2023, p. 129) emphasizes what

youth learn as a result of participating in activism: Civic knowledge, such as deeper understanding of how change happens and how different governmental agencies work; civic skills such as communication skills; time management and planning skills; and leadership skills (Conner et al., 2023, p. 129). In this regard, Suthep and Malee reflected on their skill development as a result of their involvement in activist group 4:

> *Actually, I feel like I can answer you very straightly and say that the consequences have been very positive for me. I have already graduated with a bachelor's degree, and my family doesn't have any dept and I have siblings who help out at home, so I have very low responsibility. So, by joining (activist group 4), I can just focus on my master's degree that is also connected to the movement. I also have the opportunity to learn about how to be a content creator, and also how to communicate to media and within the organization, so I think it's very positive for me. But it's still dangerous.* (Suthep)

> *By being with (activist group 4), I have gotten a lot of experience. I have been able to do things that I'd never thought I would get to do. And it's fun as well.* (Malee)

These reflections substantiate the argument that young people develop collective problem-solving and leadership skills by being involved in activism that challenges oppressive conditions (Conner et al., 2023, p. 129). On this note, it is worth mentioning that all youth participants in this study are university students, which means that they represent a group who might already posit certain capabilities in terms of educational prospects. However, most of the members of activist group 4 come from lower-socio economic backgrounds with less access to higher education. The interview with Tao, the director of the law organization provided insights into their work with underprivileged youth activists, who he categorized as "those who sit in the back of the classroom":

> (Activist group 4) *is the main group we conduct training for, because they have many people. They have a lot of young activists that stay together and don't know anything, so they asked us to organize something, and we did. We try to teach them communication skills, how to talk calm and easy and not just attack what they don't like. For example, if they don't like the king, they should not just go out and say rude words against the king, but they should go into details about the structure, like the budget that is provided for the monarchy institution this year, and how they think it should be changed, not just reduce it to zero. We have done 18 training camps this year where we try to teach them these mechanisms.*

This is one example of the educational processes of political education happening in activists' spaces. Moreover, Conner et al. (2023, p. 129) argues that activism that challenges social injustice can be associated with "the development of civic efficacy or empowerment as well as greater critical reflection or analysis of inequalities". Thus, Thai youth may be engaging in

self-education on politics and active citizenship through their engagement in the movement, suggesting a new form of learning is emerging.

Beyond the benefits of developing skills, some youth activists might find new professional pathways as a result of their activism. Several participants explained that they wanted to pursue a Bachelor or Master's degree that would be beneficial for their future political engagement. One participant explained how she wanted to continue her studies in the field of law and criminology after finishing her current studies:

> *I have a dream, like now I want to be ministry of justice. I think that if I reach this position, I can spread justice to all levels of society. At the beginning, I didn't know about these things, I had never thought much about things about prison or ministry of justice, before things happened to me. So, then I realized that there are issues here and there, and I want to change that.*

Similar to this instance is the study conducted by Conner (2011), who found that former youth activists credited their experiences with organizing movement activities as the catalyzer for making them committed to empowering others through their careers. A Foucauldian understanding emphasizes the experience of participating in social movements as a means of transforming individuals' subjectivities and identities (Baumgarten & Ullrich, 2016). This illustrates how youth involvement in the pro-democracy movement has enforced certain attitudes and ideas that leads to the desire of repeated political participation. In conclusion, the pro-democracy movement in Thailand has not only served as a means for challenging traditional power structures, but also as a platform for youth activists to develop new skills, explore potential career paths, and reinforce their commitment to future political engagement.

7.1.3 Effects on "Casual Participants"

The biographical consequences affect not only those who are active participants in a cycle of protests but might also affect those who stand close to the individual. As Rochon notes, "The ripple effects of movement activism also have an impact on family, friends, and fellow members of a group" (Rochon, 1998, cited in Bosi et al., 2016, p. 7). These are defined as "casual participants" by Polletta and Jasper (2001), meaning those who are not active participants in a cycle of protests, but who still are affected by its repercussions. The musician, Kasem, opened up about how his activism has affected his relationship with his girlfriend who he explained is an actress:

> *We cannot open up about our relationships because many directors and many producers are right-wing. If people know that she has a relationship with me, she will get banned too. Like, we don't follow each other on Instagram. Only close friends know that we are in a relationship.* (Kasem)

In addition, he told me about his desire to be close to his daughter, after experiencing being away from her when he was imprisoned: "When I got out of prison, she came and stayed with me, and I swore to myself that I will be a good father. I am afraid. I fear that if I have to go to prison again, I cannot see here. I just want my daughter to be proud.". In addition, research on the effects on family and friends finds that activists can suffer social consequences, such as more strained relationship with family and the fraying of friendships as a result of their activism (Conner et al., 2023, p. 130). For two of the activists in this study, their near-death experience in prison was the turning point in terms of support from their parents. Eve explained the following:

> *Now my parents support me. Because I was in jail and I almost died at day 64 in prison because of the hunger strike. At that point, my mother realized that there is something really wrong with the legal system. So, she took turn and fully supported me.*

Although her parents support her today, her activism has had vital impacts on not only her, but also her closest family:

> *It has also impacted my family and my sisters. Like, my dad who is a lawyer, they didn't allow my dad to join the management board and they didn't allow him to be in the secretary of judges, so it really impacted him as well. For those who stand very close to me, they all get monitored.*

This example illustrates the unintended ways in which social movements affect both participants and casual participants. As noted by Sherkat and Blocker (1997, p. 1054), if activism widens the gulf between children's and parents' values, it could contribute to disrupting intergenerational affective solidarity, meaning the degree of closeness and support between the generations. This particular emphasis on values leads us back to the traditional view on "what it means to be Thai". In Thailand, demanding individual autonomy has historically been dismissed as a way to seek rationalization for doing as one pleases, without taking the collective good into account. Claiming the "Western right to personal freedom" has been perceived as an excuse for the lack of discipline in Thai society (Ferrara, 2015, p. 68). On a micro-level, this may create tensions within families and between generations, as

younger activists challenge traditional values and norms by claiming their personal freedoms. In other words, the personal becomes politicized (Sherkat & Blocker, 1997, p. 1054).

In this section, the discussion has evolved around how social movements are transforming activists on a personal level. In social movement literature, these outcomes are often presented as "unintended outcomes", as social movements typically claim policy changes (Bosi et al., 2016, p. 7). However, it is argued that social movements contest cultural values, opinions and beliefs through their everyday resistance, with the aim of self-changing societies through "educating as well as mobilizing activists, and thereby promoting ongoing awareness and action that extends beyond the boundaries of one movement campaign" (Meyer, 2003, cited in Bosi et al., 2016, p. 7). Therefore, I argue that individual transformations might lead to broader cultural changes in Thailand as societal values and norms evolve.

7.2 Cultural Consequences – Changes on the 'Cultural Battleground'

The aim of this section is to discuss the cultural changes as subsequent effects of the pro-democracy movement. The term *culture* is often considered both imprecise and intuitively apparent at the same time. Common denominators of culture are customs, beliefs, values, artifacts, symbols, and rituals (Johnston & Klandermans, 1995, p. 3). More precisely, Wuthnow's (1987) definition of culture as the "symbolic expressive aspect of social behavior" will be used as the foundation for the following discussion (cited in Johnston & Klandermans, 1995, p. 3). As a starting point for understanding the relationship between social movement and culture, I find it useful to highlight the following description in the edited book *Social Movements and Culture*:

> Probably more than any other field of study, social movement research can elaborate the relationship between cultural change and stasis because movements arise out of what is culturally given, but at the same time they are a fundamental source of cultural change (Johnston & Klandermans, 1995, p. 5).

Culture can therefore be understood as essential in the processes of social movements. As mentioned above, it is argued that social movements contest cultural values, opinions and beliefs through their everyday politics, meaning the ways in which people engage in political activities and express their political beliefs and values in their daily lives. This chapter will discuss the ongoing awareness and action that extends beyond the movement campaign in Thailand. These effects can be understood as unintended cultural impacts. However, it is

perhaps precisely in being able to altering the broader cultural environment that movements can have their deepest and lasting impact (Giugni, 2008, p. 1591).

7.2.1 Questioning the Dominant Culture

In terms of understanding the current battleground of struggle in Thailand and the impacts of the movement so far, I asked the participants about what had changed since 2020 and whether they thought the movement had reached its post-protest phase. The answers I got were all connected to the topic of culture. The activist Suthep described his thoughts, reflecting on the cultural issues:

> *I don't think we have to change our culture, but I think the first step is to question the culture. I think we can still "wai" and have a nice greeting, but it should come from the idea of why we do this. We have done this because we feel the oppression from someone who has more power, so we have to act small and be polite. Or do we do this because we agree together that this is the greeting? I think we still can do the greeting, and we can still do the traditional things if we agree upon why we do this. We take out the authority and the power that oppresses in the traditional ways and make it just an action that express the identity of the culture.*

Suthep highlights the need of questioning 'culture' in terms of understanding the oppressive forces in the traditions. The action of *wai*, the traditional Thai greeting where the palms of the hands are taken together, is used as an example. Vorng (2017, p. 55) explains that "In everyday life, height gradations of the *wai* gesture (such as below the chin, at nose level, or at the forehead level) depends on the status of the person who is receiving the *wai*". For example, a *wai* at the forehead is used for those who are worthy the utmost respect, such as Buddha or the king, while a *wai* around the nose area is used for elders, and so on. The same 'rules' applies to the height at which one carries oneself in the presence of others, distinguishing between how to appear in front of elders, equals, or juniors. This shows how the status distinctions are embodied, based upon the "tendency for the Thai to judge the movement of others according to what might be termed 'motoric morality', in which one's pattern of physical movement serves as a crucial indicator of one's social status and moral state" (Basham, 2001, p. 131). The concept of 'motoric morality' can be linked to a Foucauldian understanding of culture and power as it describes how culture is located in public symbols and rituals. Foucault argued that power is not just exercised through explicit domination, but also through the creation and maintenance of social norms and practices (Foucault et al., 2002; Swidler, 1995, p. 31). The use of *wai* as an example of this motoric morality illustrates how cultural practices can serve as a mechanism of power and control.

The way language is used also highlights as the way Thai culture is structured and maintained, as hierarchical differentiation is also expressed in the various levels of speech. As Vorng (2017, p. 53) points out, proper speech shows knowledge of status-appropriate behavior. To speak properly demonstrates respect and manners, and shows how to address people according to their rank – when to use royal language, polite language, and when to shift to words stressing politeness and social equality. Kannika, the director of the human rights organization, explained the hierarchical structure of the Thai language:

> *The Thai society has a very big hierarchy, especially in the way that language is used. "Pi and nong, khun, tam", there are classifications in the language. The way we speak is contributing to framing how we are thinking. The words we use, it has a lot of effect.*

In this citation, Kannika is reflecting upon the notion of culture as semiotic codes. She highlights some of the words that are used to refer to others, dependent on the recipients age, status, etc. The idea of semiotic codes in cultural studies refer to the deeply ingrained and inescapable relationships of meaning that shape the possibilities of utterance (Swidler, 1995, p. 32). In other words, this refers to the deep structures that organize language. In everyday life, for example, the Thai word for 'mouse' (*nu)* is widely used by children as a pronoun when addressing parents or seniors, the latter of whom will also address the youngsters as *nu. Nu* or *nong*, as Kannika said, are also used as terms to imply inferior social status, and can be used when referring to younger relatives, unrelated subordinates such as service people, etc (Vorng, 2017, p. 54). In terms of the movements' impact on culture, my data material reveals that youth activists in Thailand are affecting language in several ways. The activist Apisit reflected upon the way in which youth are trying to build a new culture through affecting the construction of language:

> *I think that the "dek" (children) in the new generation are trying to build a culture in terms of respect for each other. We still have the same framework in terms of language, but nowadays, it's a bit more dynamic. We are trying to push each other up instead of pulling each other down. And now, we have more words to use if we want to "da" "phu yai"* (yell at adults/elders). *Before year 63* (2020), *there were never anyone yelling at "phu yai", but now we have gotten more words for this.*

By taking into account one of Foucault's main ideas, the suggestion that "where there is power, there is also resistance" (Foucault & Kritzman, 2013, p. 122), we might identify a form of agonism in the way the new generation are trying to re-construct the language. One

example is how new words of opposing adults have emerged in Thai society, as explained by Apisit. Another example is the observation of youth and many young adults using the neutral English word "I" to refer to oneself instead of the traditional pronoun "chan", in which the latter tends to express a position of superiority on the part of the speaker (Vorng, 2017, p. 54). In addition, during my fieldwork, there were several occasions where I was corrected because of the way I spoke, both during and after interviews, or in other more informal situations. They all told me same thing: "You can't use *nu* to refer to yourself". One person even said that "You make yourself small by doing that". These reflections highlights changes that lie outside activists' strategic agendas: ideas, categories, values, and language produced by movements sometimes gain a place in people's everyday talk, interaction and decision-making (Amenta & Polletta, 2019, p. 292). By creating new meanings and associations with language, youth activists are challenging the status quo in Thailand and promoting a more inclusive and democratic society. However, it must be noted that the impact of their linguistic innovations on the wider Thai language use and construction is still limited, and it remains to be seen how successful they will be in creating lasting change.

In terms of cultural change, both Suthep and Kasem highlighted a specific public ritual when addressing the effects of the movement: the ritual of standing up when the royal anthem is played. The royal anthem pays respect to the king of Thailand and is widely used before movies at cinemas, sporting events and concerts, and when members of the royal family is present at state events and functions. When I asked Kasem about what had changed after 2020, he said that:

> *In terms of culture, we are winning now. People do not stand up for the king song that much anymore. About five years ago when you didn't stand up for the king song, people would stare at you, shout at you, and be angry. But now, no one stands up. We are changing, the culture is changing.*

Suthep also highlighted this particular change on what he termed 'the cultural battleground':

> *If we talk about the cultural battleground, I think most people have started to question and have awareness about the problem of the culture. Like, nowadays, when you go to the cinema, before the movie start, we have the monarchy anthem. And normally, we have to stand up and take about three minutes to be quiet and listen to the anthem. But nowadays, people start to have awareness and start to question why we are doing this, like "is it necessary to stand up to this anthem in the theatre?". So now, most of the cinemas that I have been to, I hardly see people stand up in the cinemas anymore.*

From these descriptions, we can understand that change is truly happening on some levels. However, Kasem explained that their struggle is still evident in institutions such as schools and prisons: “In schools you have to stand up. In the prison, I had to stand up too, but I was holding up the three-finger salute, so they didn’t allow me to stand up anymore. They were afraid that it would start a snowball-effect and that others would be copycats”. This can be linked to Scott’s concept of hidden transcript (2008), as Kasem used a symbol to communicate his dissent, and thus challenging the dominant ideology and power structures without directly confronting them. By showing the three-finger salute while the royal anthem was played, prison officers had to choose between two, in their regard, ‘unpleasant’ options: either let the prisoner stand and show the three-finger salute, or make the prisoner sit, which was what the prisoner wanted in the first place. Nonetheless, this illustrates the concrete effects of the ‘everyday resistance’ against dominant social norms and practices that are happening on ‘the cultural battleground’ in public spaces in Thailand.

7.2.2 Seniority-ism

Seniority, the state of being older or higher in rank or status, is deeply embedded in the Thai culture. McCargo (2021, p. 178) explains it as a “radical concept in Thailand, where both verbal and non-verbal communication is deeply encoded with reference to age and gender”. The hierarchical structure based on seniority influences various aspects of life, including family, work, education, and politics. Apisit described how ingrained “seniority-ism” is in everyday life:

> *It’s a high level of seniority-ism. How old you are, where you are from, your last name, the work of your family, high or low status, everything affects. It is pre-learned. If someone has higher status, then one would invite them to sit next to you. And the way Thai people sit, they would not sit on the chair fully compared to how the “phu yai”*(adults/big people) *sit on the chair, like they sit in the way that they don’t know how to think. It goes very deep. And some people might see that the “phu yai” are sitting on a full chair, and then they don’t sit on a full chair.*

This description of ‘how to sit on a chair’ portrays the power of seniority-ism and how deeply the ‘culture of seniority’ is engrained in the body. In her work, Swidler (1995, p. 31) clarifies that “most culture theory assumes that culture has more powerful effects where it is deeper – deeply internalized in individual psyches, deeply integrated into bodies and habits of action, or deeply embedded in taken-for-granted ‘mentalities’. However, one might argue that in the evolving Thai society, these taken-for-granted ‘mentalities’ in terms of seniority-ism might

not be as taken-for-granted anymore. Several participants reflected on the changes in Thai society since the start of the movement in 2020, and they all highlighted seniority-ism as a change:

> *Another thing I see is changing is the topic of the "phu yai" and "dek"* (adults and children)*. Children in this generation, they are more independent now, they see topic of seniority less important. But phu yai, they think the same, about hierarchy and seniority, everything. Therefore, there is a clash.* (Ploy)

> *Before, we never saw this. If it was a child dare talking back, or dare to do anything, directed at "phu yai"* (adults/big people)*, they would be yelled at. But right now, we see this, in social media, there is one direction when it comes to seniority. It's still a lot in Thailand, but it's less now, it's less and less.* (Eve)

> *The junior always has to respect the senior, then you will have a better future or have a better life. It's like in schools, like to be good students you have to be loyal and listen to the teachers. It's power and patronage. At least the younger generation are more critical and skeptical to the norms now.* (Narawit)

The activist Narawit highlights the relationship between students and teachers in schools to portray the dynamics between the junior and the senior in society. Kasem, the artists who has a daughter, reflected upon the changes and said that "The conservative school cannot control their students anymore". Moreover, awareness of the power that lies in the cultural traditions were explicated by many of the participants in the interviews. Eve and Areeya related it this way:

> *Seniority is, in Thai it is "amnat niyom", like authoritarianism. It means one way of power, just because you are older, you can oppress the ones who are younger. Is this right?* (Eve)

> *It is a kind of sentiment that makes us feel that we are powerless. Thai society always makes us think that we don't have power to do anything, and we have to always respect the social rules and norms. So, the power is within the ruling class because they make us, like, decapitated, and we would rather suppress ourselves than question the authority.* (Areeya)

> *I think it's the product of power, not that Thais are being backward in themselves. I would face it that way. I think it's the way of the ruling class to make you think that Thai society can't be fixed, because authoritarian culture is rooted in ourselves, and I don't think that is true. It's the product of power that they use on us.* (Areeya)

These activists point out that the sense of powerlessness is not an inherent characteristic of Thai society or culture, but is rather a product of the way in which power is wielded by the ruling class. Along these lines, I find it useful to highlight Scott's work on cultural hegemony. Scott (2008) argues that the dominant groups in society uses their control over cultural

institutions such as schools and media to promote their own ideas and values. Although he acknowledges the powerful tool of cultural hegemony for maintaining social order and political stability, he also recognizes its limitations. In this regard, he argues that cultural symbols and practices can be contested and reinterpreted by subordinate groups, leading to new forms of resistance and social change. With this in mind, one might argue that there is a sense of 'political awakening' among the younger generation in Thailand, sparking some sort of optimism among the youth activists. However, when I asked Tao, the director of the law organization, about seniority and the likeliness of change, he said: "No, not soon. This is stronger than Prayuth or monarchy.". In this regard, Swidler (1995, p. 39) argues that in order to think more powerfully about culture, one must embrace the possibility that culture's power is independent of whether or not people believe in it. This argument suggests that the power of culture is derived from its broader social and institutional contexts, which shape individual's experiences and interactions with cultural practices. In contrast to Scott, it can therefore be argued that his focus of everyday forms of resistance may fall short in obscuring the broader systemic injustices that underpins social relations. It can therefore be argued that while small acts of resistance may be important, they might be insufficient in challenging the larger structures of power that perpetuate inequality. This understanding highlights the complex interplay between individual agency and cultural structures, and emphasizes the need to critically examine the broader social and institutional contexts that shape cultural power.

7.2.3 "Global Citizen" and Transnational Social Spaces

As the aim of this section is to examine the cultural impacts of the pro-democracy movement, one might ask if the new generation Thais are constructing a new understanding of Thai national identity. As noted in Chapter 2, the National Identity Board defined national identity as 'land, people, independence and sovereignty, government and administration, religion, monarchy, culture and dignity (pride)'. These characteristics refer to "the people-body within the geo-body, rather than any individual person" (Connors, 2003, p. 144). Identity, in this case, can be argued as a projection of the nation as a subject. Connors (2003, p. 144) refers to this as "a process of democrasubjection in which governmental technology works on the subjective orientations of citizens such that they sustain the political imaginary of Thainess, hegemonically present as democracy with the king as head of state". The developments of a national identity can therefore be understood as a political project, in the process of turning towards democracy. In this regard, I found it compelling to explore the youth activists' own perception and connection to Thai-ness.

The questions “are you Thai?” and “are you still human?” capture the core identity markers of distinct protest movements in Thailand. The first question – “are you Thai?” – are widely used by the pro-royalist, conservative ‘yellow shirts’, accusing the other side of a lack of patriotism. The premise of this question is that “criticizing the state, monarchy or broader hierarchical sociopolitical order is a threat to the nation which warrants punishment” (Wongngamdee, 2020). The second question – “Are you still human?” – has been raised only recently by pro-democracy protestors, urging those who criticize the movement to reconsider if protecting “Thai-ness” can justify the sacrifice of basic human rights. A trending hashtag among supporters of the pro-democracy movement summarizes their argument well: “Decrease Thainess, Increase Humanness”. When I asked the director of the human rights organization about the perception of Thai-ness among youth, she said that “I don’t know if they consider themselves a Thai-Thai or if they identity themselves more with just being young. They don’t have much sense of Thai-ness, compared to people in older generations.”. Suthep said that also ‘normal people’, referring to those who are not activists, are increasingly aware of the concept of Thai-ness:

> *I think people are starting to have awareness about the definition of the Thainess and also the definition of why we have to label ourselves as Thai people. Most of the people in my generation that I have met, not necessarily activists, like my friends who are just normal people who live a normal life, they start to have awareness about the Thainess already. They talk about it be more and more.*

Drawing on the previous discussion on grievances, several participants pointed to the “suppressive school system” that compels a one-sided narrative. In the rise of school students protesting across the country, one might argue that youth in Thailand are self-teaching themselves in other spaces outside of the traditional school. One of the most important spaces in which progressive ideas are flourishing, is social media. Eve explained how they are using social media to convey what she refers to as ‘the truth’:

> *For example, if we are making a poll, we are asking in our social media accounts as well. And our questions seem to really hit their hearts. It seems to touch the heart of those who wants to speak the truth, and who wants the truth to be out there. So, then it becomes viral.*

In their book, McCargo and Chattharakul (2020, p. 102) refer to this generation as “digital natives”, characterized by the generation who have “grown up with smartphones and had higher English proficiency levels than previous generation”. They highlight that this

generation have a more global view, and are much better skilled at "accessing information on how democracy had been repeatedly suppressed by the Thai military through decades of violent crackdowns and power seizures" (McCargo & Chattharakul, 2020, p. 102). The director of the human rights organization draws a line between social media and how it affects their identities:

> *They have more sense of being a global citizen. Social media has quite an impact, because the digital world makes it borderless. You can see people taking actions across the world, like in Ukraine and the Milk Tea Alliance, for example.*

She emphasized the notion of 'global citizens' as a result of the globalizing forces thriving on social media, highlighting the Milk Tea Alliance as a primary example. Named after a popular beverage in the following countries, activists from mainly Thailand, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Myanmar have joined forces in the so-called #MilkTeaAlliance. This is a loose, transnational network of youth who are engaged in similar fights against authoritarianism which have risen amid China's growing influence in the region (Shum, 2022). Although it started from a meme war in April 2020 between Chinese nationalists and democratically like-minded youth, it has spilled into something much bigger. Shum (2022) recognizes the potential in the alliance becoming a long-term transnational network building project that reshapes how citizens from the region build a collective pro-democracy consciousness. This can be understood as a process in which a transnational identity is constructed in the Asian context.

In examining the developments of 'global citizens' in light of the cultural impacts on the Thai society, I find it reasonable to consider the contrasting perceptions of the 'good' versus the 'bad' global civil society which has been present in academic debates. On the one side, the most celebratory works link global civil society to democratization (Thörn & Moksnes, 2012, p. 4). From this perspective, global civil society is conceived as grassroot organizations of transnational social spaces, who are potential carriers of democratic learning processes. By widening the meaning and practice of democracy beyond the nation state, they initiate public debates in which marginalized issues and social groups are made visible, and might functions as guardians of human rights. This is the case for the left-wing, progressive NGO's supporting the pro-democracy movement, such as Amnesty Thailand, iLaw and TLHR. On the other side, there is also a critique of the global civil society, often coming from the perspective of the global South. This side argues that "global civil society actors are instruments in a neo-colonial exercise of power over countries and peoples in the global South". The foundation in

this argument is the imposing of certain Western values that serves certain economic or political interests (Thörn & Moksnes, 2012, p. 4). Although this argument might be more relevant in terms of analyzing economic interests, one might argue that it can provide insights in terms of cultural perspectives. In short, the state actors' attempt to define democracy while promoting Thai-ness can be seen as a desire to maintain traditional Thai national identity in a globalizing world with pressing democratic values, while progressive youth struggle to reconstruct Thai-ness amidst the influence of global democratic forces.

7.3 The Potential for Lasting Political Change

Although the main focus of this chapter has been to examine the biographical and cultural outcomes of the youth-led pro-democracy movement, I find it necessary to shed light on the potential for lasting political change. In identifying the cultural impacts of the movement, a question emerges: Has the movement had any major political consequences, and what is the potential for cultural changes leading to political change? Unlike mobilizing movement members and supporters, creating collective identities, or increasing individual and organizational capacities, political consequences are external and not under direct control of social movement organizations (Amenta, Caren, Chiarello, & Su, 2010, p. 288). Political change includes a spectrum of variables, and can be broadly defined as "those effects of movement activities that alter in some way the movements' political environment" (Bosi et al., 2016). This involves social movements' influence on policymaking, electoral processes, legal decisions, political parties, democratic rights and state bureaucracies (Amenta et al., 2010, p. 288). As the pro-democracy movement emerged in response to political grievances with the aim of bringing about political change in terms of their three demands, it seems relevant to examine the success or failure of the movement by taking into account the political outcomes.

The 2020 movement encompasses a central paradox in terms of its successes and failures. Although it marked a dramatic shift in the country's political landscape, it must be noted that, at this point, three years into the protests, the movement has failed to achieve any of their formal demands. Eve explained that "It might be changing in the normal life, but when it comes to the government and government bodies, it's still the same". A shortcoming might be that beyond their demands, the protestors never articulated a clear agenda for either reform or revolutionary change (McCargo, 2021, p. 189). This suggests the importance of demonstrating how their demands relate to specific policy changes or political outcomes that

they hope to achieve. A clear agenda might have enhanced the movement to focus on its efforts and resources on specific goals and strategies, rather than dispersing their energy and attention among a range of demands that may not be mutually reinforcing.

In line with the above, there are certain issues and policies that may be difficult for movements to influence, including policies that are "(a) closely tied to the national cleavage structure, (b) for which high levels of political or material resources are at stake, (c) regarding military matters, or (d) on which public opinion is very strong" (Amenta et al., 2010, p. 295). For the latter, although the public reverence of the monarchy is slightly deteriorating, Waiwitlikhit (2020, p. 23) argues that the anti-monarchy actions may be detrimental to the success of the movement. As my empirical data reveals, the vast focus on monarchy reform among the progressive youth might have contributed to the lack of support among the general population. On the other hand, this is also a topic that the majority of the participants regarded as successful in terms of the effects of the movement since 2020. Anon Nampha, one of the leading activists, said in an interview two years after the birth of the protests: "Discussing the monarchy has caught on", "We might not see a radical change like a revolution … but one thing is for sure: Thai society will not backtrack." (Sasipornkarn, 2022). In line with this, McCargo (2021, p. 189) emphasizes that the success achieved by the youth-led movement cannot be measured in terms of conventional goals. This implies that the radical shift in the political landscape in terms of liberalizing the public discussion of the long-standing, previously untouchable topic of monarchy, is viewed by the pro-democracy movement as a success in itself. It is also important to note that direct influence over policies is extremely difficult to achieve in such a short-term perspective (Amenta et al., 2010).

In their work, Amenta et al. (2010, p. 289) highlight the formation of new political parties and the extension of democratic rights as the main potential political consequences of movements at the structural level. On this note, it is necessary to bring the Move Forward Party into light. The opposition party Move Forward is a social democratic and progressive party that opposes the influence of the military junta, and is considered the de facto successor of the dissolved Future Forward Party that sparked the birth of the movement (McCargo & Chattharakul, 2020). As part of the party's policy pledges, they recently launched a new push to reduce the harsh penalties and prevent the use of the lèse-majesté law for political purposes. It is currently the only party that has requested such changes, resulting in the only eligible party capturing the votes of the youth on the basis of the pro-democracy and pro-royalist reform

movement (Sasipornkarn, 2022). However, the party's proposal to amend Article 112 (lèse-majesté) stops short in terms of the movement's demand to repeal the law. Despite this, it may be considered as the 'first step' in reducing the number of people charged for political purposes and putting an end to its arbitrary use. Taking into account one of the professor's statements that "The political parties are not progressive enough for the protestors" (Chaya), I argue that the formation of the Move Forward Party and its continuation of the Future Forward Party's and their progressive ideology, can be considered a landmark for the movement's political impact on a structural level.

The upcoming election in May 2023 was a consistent topic in my interviews, in terms of explaining the current state of the movement and the future prospects. The director of the law organization shared his valuable insights on this matter:

> *Next year there is going to be an election. In terms of the election, it is much more difficult for general Prayuth to win, or to find his way back to power. So, there can be three scenarios happening: according to the law, there must be an election in the early phase of next year or the mid of next year. But those generals are not ready, so there might be some legal mechanisms to delay the election. If so, people need bigger and better protests. Second: they can cheat the election. For example, they can dissolve the opposition parties. They can change the results, even if people vote for something, they can change before they actually announce it. If that's so, people will go on the streets again, and then we need bigger and better protests. Third: if something bad happens and people turn to the streets with bigger protests, we might witness the next coup. But if there is no coup, there might be stronger violence used against protestors, more legal charges, and yeah. Next year is very challenging.*

What is especially interesting in this reflection is the fact that Tao mentions the need and likeliness of "bigger and better protests" after each scenario. This shows a consistent belief in the power of protests as a mechanism for change, despite his statement of the protests currently being in 'depressed mode'. The outcome and likeliness for change after the upcoming election also depends on the party that wins the election. As Amenta et al. (2010, p. 299) describes, if the political regime and the domestic bureaucrats are supportive, protest is likely to be sufficient to provide influence. In contrast, achieving collective benefits through public policy is likely to be more difficult without a supportive authority, and more assertive collective action is therefore required. The latter might involve similar actions of resistance as those of 2020-2021, and a willingness to take risks to confront those in positions of authority. In line with this and in terms of the future of the movement, Pim described that it "depends on whether there is anyone left after they have imprisoned everyone". Moreover, Eve reflected

on the need of gaining wider public support in order to affect policies and broader political changes:

> *Right now, people are waiting for the election. They are waiting for change in the parliament, but the problem is that people aren't thinking any further. Because the laws will still be there, and everything is the same as before, so we're still in the same place. So, I think it's important that people request to write a new constitution or to have a referendum. It's not just the election, but about all the other things as well. But we are just activists. The people are the majority.*

Her reflection implies that although things are changing in everyday life in terms of cultural issues, "everything is the same as before" in terms of laws and policies. A rather optimistic counter-perspective is to look at how cultural outcomes might 'spill over' political ones. Bosi et al. (2016, p. 23) distinguishes between the short-term and long-term political effects as results of cultural changes: In the short term, cultural changes can introduce new problems generated from the private realm to the public agenda, while in the long run, cultural changes can be translated into different policies. Therefore, movements that win victories in terms of changing the political culture, even where they have suffered immediate defeats on policy issues, can obtain policy victories in the long-term. Strong and clear changes in public opinion that supports the movement's 'message' may provide the opportunity to indirectly influence the process of public policy change. Despite the potential loss of supporters as a result of the movement's radical demand for monarchy reform, it must be noted that a slight majority of the Thai population supports the students in the movement (Waiwitlikhit, 2020, p. 22). The upcoming election in May 2023 might reveal the degree of nation-wide support of progressive ideas, suggesting whether the cultural changes have spilled over political ones.

8 Conclusion

The aim of this research has been to explore youth activism in the context of Thailand. In this paper, I have attempted to answer the following research question and sub-questions:

What is the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand (2020-2022) in challenging traditional power structures?

Sub-questions:

- What are the key factors that facilitated the mobilization of youth in the pro-democracy movement?
- How do the demands of the movement and the forms of activism challenge traditional power structures?
- What are the forms of repression used against the youth protestors, and how have they responded to this repression?
- How has involvement in the pro-democracy movement impacted the activists?
- What are the broader cultural and political implications of the pro-democracy movement?

8.1 Summary and Main Findings

Chapter 5, 6 and 7 have covered the findings from my fieldwork and discussed the data collected in light of the research question. The chapters have followed the trajectory of the movement, from mobilization on the individual level to the peak of the movement (Chapter 5), followed by a discussion of state repression (Chapter 6) and implications of the movement as a whole (Chapter 7). By following the trajectory of the movement, I have been seeking to explore the power struggles that have arisen in the different phases of the movement. Identifying these power struggles has allowed me to discuss the ways in which youth have challenged power structures through their actions and involvement in the movement, by discussing the different sub-questions of this thesis.

Chapter 5 first discussed the factors that have facilitated the mobilization of youth in the pro-democracy movement. By delving into micro-level processes of mobilization and identity formation, the discussion revealed that the two main catalyzing mechanisms to Thai youth's political engagement were their experiences with the authoritarian culture in schools and their

experiences in the family sphere in terms of support and political discussion. By raising their voices about monarchical issues within the family sphere, youth have challenged two parallels: The traditional structure of the family and the taboo issue of the political role of the monarchy. I argue that the exploration of micro-level processes and mobilization has provided insights into how the identities of the activists have been formed and the ways in which youth have challenged traditional power structures on the micro-level by raising their voices about issues with the education system and acted in non-traditional ways within the family sphere.

This chapter also examined the ways in which the demands of the movement and the forms of activism have challenged traditional power structures. I argue that the demands of the movement (dissolve parliament, constitutional reform, and monarchy reform) challenge power structures in several ways. By contesting the dominant norms and values established by the legal system and political culture, i.e. demanding the appeal of the lèse-majesté law of article 112, Thai youth are disrupting existing political structures by transcending ideological trappings and suggesting new ways of organizing society. They are also challenging the status quo by calling for the monarchy to be held accountable and transparent for its actions and for its role to be redefined as an institution with limited powers. This demand challenges the notion that the monarchy is above scrutiny and criticism. By inhabiting a 'culture of protest' and criticizing their national leaders, their elders and their teachers, the youth protestors have exercised the power of national narrative disruption.

The different forms of resistance with its 'hidden' and less hidden meanings have played a significant role in the construction and maintenance for forming collective identities in their fight for democratic change. The forms of resistance, from street protests and rallies, to hunger strikes and the power of art and culture, have cleverly shaken Thai society and culture at its core. The movement has utilized social media to mobilize and coordinate actions, bypassing traditional gatekeepers of information and communication. This has challenged the government's ability to control the flow of information. By utilizing creative forms of protest, such as music performances and dressing up in costumes with underlying anti-government meanings, they have drawn attention to their demands and created a sense of community among activists. The state's ability to control public space and public discourse has thus been challenged.

Chapter 6 discussed the measures of repression used to suppress the movement and the youth protestors. I explored the aim of utilizing repressive measures, the forms of repression, and the power struggles that arises between repression and resistance. The government has used various forms of repression against youth protestors, including surveillance, arrests, legal actions, and arbitrary detention. Despite this repression, youth protestors have continued to mobilize, forming networks of support and solidarity to amplify their voices and protect their safety. As the state utilized new measures including detention, water cannons, and tear gas to control the protests, some protestors adopted new strategies of 'flash mob' protests, where they quickly gathered in a public space and dispersed before the authorities intervened. Although the level of resistance has reduced in the public space, the forms of expression might have triggered the development of more creative forms of protest, as they are forced to come up with new ways of protest that outsmart the laws.

The discussion of the prison experience revealed that some of the former political prisoners showed their ability to take advantage of the paradox of repression. The activists continued their fight for democratic change behind bars, by articulating the issues of the prison conditions and demanding change of the 'little things'. As they stood up against authority by requesting change and protesting in different ways, i.e. the hunger strike, they were able to exercise agency and assert their own autonomy, even in a highly controlled and oppressive environment.

Chapter 7 explored the effects of the movement through a discussion of the biographical, cultural, and political implications of the movement. The aim of this chapter was to convey the interrelated effects of the movement and provide insights into the conditions and processes through which the movement has succeeded or not. Involvement in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand has had significant impact on the activist. Many have experienced personal benefits in the form of educational outcomes, developing stronger emotional regulation and self-management skills, and finding a sense of community and purpose. However, the involvement has also had negative consequences, especially in terms of the activists' well-being and effects on 'casual participants'. In this chapter, I have argued that the individual transformation carries the potential for leading to broader cultural changes as societal norms and values evolve.

In addressing the effects of the movement, there are several identifiable changes on the 'cultural battleground'. The collected data reveals a new consciousness among youth in terms of understanding the power that is embedded in cultural practices and customs. The participants exemplified how youth are trying to build a new culture through affecting the construction of language. The discussion also revealed that many Thai (progressive) youth identified more with being a 'global citizen', being increasingly affected by global, democratic forces and thus challenge the traditional notion of 'Thainess'.

Lastly, I have explored the potential for lasting political change. The discussion highlights the central paradox in terms of the movement's successes and failures. Although it has marked a dramatic shift in the country's political landscape, the movement has failed to achieve any of their formal demands. However, I have argued that the success of opening up the public debate on sensitive issues as well as the formation of the Move Forward Party can be considered a landmark for the movement's political impact on a structural level.

8.2 Recommendations for Future Research

In this study, I have interviewed youth activists and experts who are sharing the concerns of the movement in terms of democratic change. This can be considered a limitation in this study, as it falls short in including different perspectives, such as the perspectives of pro-royalists or government authorities. It is also necessary to reflect upon the complexity of the phenomenon, and to which extent this study have included relevant aspects to fully grasp the research topic. As this study concentrates on recent and current events, the outcomes are still unfolding, especially having in mind the upcoming election in May 2023. Although this thesis aims to answer questions regarding the role of youth in challenging traditional power structures in Thailand, it also gives rise to new ones.

There are several aspects that needs further investigations. Based on what came forth in my interviews, a further analysis of the role of gender in the movement would be interesting. Future research could explore how gender identities and experiences have influenced participation and leadership in the movement. As events occur and time goes by, a deeper understanding of the long-term impact of the movement on Thai politics and governance should be researched. Also, as the pro-democracy in Thailand has been influenced by and continue to influence other political movements around the world, i.e. the Milk Tea Alliance,

it would be fruitful to explore the transnational dimensions of the movement, including the role of transnational actors, networks, and ideas. Lastly, as the upcoming election is coming closer, it would be very interesting to gain insight of how the movement has affected the election, and how the election affects the dynamics of the movement.

8.3 Concluding Remarks

The aim of this study has been to explore the role of youth in the pro-democracy movement in Thailand (2020-2022) and the ways in which youth are challenging traditional power structures. As Thailand's traditional power structures are complex and multifaceted, I have chosen to narrow the scope and mainly focused on societal and cultural power structures. As my collected data has guided the analyses in this thesis, I found this focus to have been the most tangible. This research shows that Thai youth who are involved in the pro-democracy movement are challenging power structures on different levels. First, on the micro-level as they are contesting the traditional family structure and the education system by behaving in non-traditional ways and raising issues that are regarded as taboo, such as the topic of monarchy and engaging in no-uniform campaigns. Second, on the societal level as youth are challenging social norms and the value system that emphasizes respect for authority, hierarchy, and social order. Third, on the cultural level as they are challenging long-standing traditions and building blocks of the Thai culture, such as questioning the 'motoric morality' of Thai customs and the way the language is constructed. Fourth, on the political level as they have succeeded in mobilizing national support and attention for their fight for democratic change, and in the way they have succeeded in opening up the public debate on issues that have never before been discussed in the public sphere in Thailand. Thai youth activists have shaken Thai society by disrupting traditional ways of thinking and introduced new narratives of what it means to be Thai. The question is whether this will lead to lasting political change, or only remain a disruption of the status quo.

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Appendices

Appendix A: Assessment Letter from Norwegian Centre for Research Data (NSD)

Sikt

Vurdering av behandling av personopplysninger

eferansenummer	Vurderingstype	Dato
901746	Standard	05.08.2022

Prosjekttittel
Student-led movements in Thailand: Its influence on democratization processes

Behandlingsansvarlig institusjon
OsloMet – storbyuniversitetet / Fakultet for lærerutdanning og internasjonale studier / Institutt for internasjonale studier og tolkeutdanning

Prosjektansvarlig
Benedikte Victoria Lindskog

Student
Marisa Elena Olsen

Prosjektperiode
15.08.2022 - 30.06.2023

Kategorier personopplysninger
Alminnelige
Særlige

Lovlig grunnlag
Samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 bokstav a)
Uttrykkelig samtykke (Personvernforordningen art. 9 nr. 2 bokstav a)

Behandlingen av personopplysningene er lovlig så fremt den gjennomføres som oppgitt i meldeskjemaet. Det lovlige grunnlaget gjelder til 30.06.2023.

Meldeskjema

Kommentar
OM VU DE INGEN
Personverntjenester har en avtale med institusjonen du forsker eller studerer ved. Denne avtalen innebærer at vi skal gi deg råd slik at behandlingen av personopplysninger i prosjektet ditt er lovlig etter personvernregelverket.

Personverntjenester har nå vurdert den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at behandlingen er lovlig, hvis den gjennomføres slik den er beskrevet i meldeskjemaet med dialog og vedlegg.

VIKTIG INFO MASJON TIL DEG
Du må lagre, sende og sikre dataene i tråd med retningslinjene til din institusjon. Dette betyr at du må bruke leverandører for spørreskjema, skylagring, videosamtale o.l. som institusjonen din har avtale med. Vi gir generelle råd rundt dette, men det er institusjonens egne retningslinjer for informasjonssikkerhet som gjelder.

TYPE OPPLYSNINGE OG VA IGHET
Prosjektet vil behandle alminnelige personopplysninger og særlige kategorier av personopplysninger om politisk oppfatning frem til 30.6.2023.

LOVLIG G UNNLAG
Prosjektet vil innhente samtykke fra de registrerte til behandlingen av personopplysninger. Vår vurdering er at prosjektet legger opp til et samtykke i samsvar med kravene i art. 4 nr. 11 og 7, ved at det er en frivillig, spesifikk, informert og utvetydig bekreftelse, som kan dokumenteres, og som den registrerte kan trekke tilbake.

For alminnelige personopplysninger vil lovlig grunnlag for behandlingen være den registrertes samtykke, jf. personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a.

Behandlingen av særlige kategorier av personopplysninger er basert på uttrykkelig samtykke fra den registrerte, jf.

personvernforordningen art. 6 nr. 1 a og art. 9 nr. 2 a.

PERSONVERNPRINSIPPER
Personverntjenester vurderer at den planlagte behandlingen av personopplysninger vil følge prinsippene i personvernforordningen:

om lovlighet, rettferdighet og åpenhet (art. 5.1 a), ved at de registrerte får tilfredsstillende informasjon om og samtykker til behandlingen

formålsbegrensning (art. 5.1 b), ved at personopplysninger samles inn for spesifikke, uttrykkelig angitte og berettigede formål, og ikke viderebehandles til nye uforenlige formål

dataminimering (art. 5.1 c), ved at det kun behandles opplysninger som er adekvate, relevante og nødvendige for formålet med prosjektet

lagringsbegrensning (art. 5.1 e), ved at personopplysningene ikke lagres lengre enn nødvendig for å oppfylle formålet.

DE REGISTRERTES RETTIGHETER
Vi vurderer at informasjonen om behandlingen som de registrerte vil motta oppfyller lovens krav til form og innhold, jf. art. 12.1 og art. 13.

Så lenge de registrerte kan identifiseres i datamaterialet vil de ha følgende rettigheter: innsyn (art. 15), retting (art. 16), sletting (art. 17), begrensning (art. 18) og dataportabilitet (art. 20).

Vi minner om at hvis en registrert tar kontakt om sine rettigheter, har behandlingsansvarlig institusjon plikt til å svare innen en måned.

FØLG DIN INSTITUSJONS RETNINGSLINJER
Personverntjenester legger til grunn at behandlingen oppfyller kravene i personvernforordningen om riktighet (art. 5.1 d), integritet og konfidensialitet (art. 5.1. f) og sikkerhet (art. 32).

Ved bruk av databehandler (spørreskjemaleverandør, skylagring, videosamtale o.l.) må behandlingen oppfylle kravene til bruk av databehandler, jf. art 28 og 29. Bruk leverandører som din institusjon har avtale med.

For å forsikre dere om at kravene oppfylles, må prosjektansvarlig følge interne retningslinjer/rådføre dere med behandlingsansvarlig institusjon.

MELD VESENTLIGE ENDRINGER
Dersom det skjer vesentlige endringer i behandlingen av personopplysninger, kan det være nødvendig å melde dette til oss ved å oppdatere meldeskjemaet. Før du melder inn en endring, oppfordrer vi deg til å lese om hvilken type endringer det er nødvendig å melde:

https://www.nsd.no/personverntjenester/fylle-ut-meldeskjema-for-personopplysninger/melde-endringer-i-meldeskjema

Du må vente på svar fra oss før endringen gjennomføres.

OPPFØLGING AV PROSJEKTET
Vi vil følge opp ved planlagt avslutning for å avklare om behandlingen av personopplysningene er avsluttet.

Lykke til med prosjektet!

Appendix B: Consent Forms for Students and Experts

Consent Form for Students

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

"In what ways can student-led movements influence democratization processes in Thailand?"?

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to explore the following: In what ways can student-led movements influence democratization processes in Thailand? In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this master study is to explore the ways in which student-led movements can influence democratization processes in Thailand. The scope of the project is twofold; I am interested in learning about 1) The values and motivations behind students' activism in Thailand, and 2) The current status of freedom of expression in Thailand and to what extent youth feel/mean that they can discuss their ideas openly. By exploring this topic, I hope to learn more about the capabilities they inhabit and the obstacles students in Thailand encounter in their engagement in the current political process.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Oslo Metropolitan University is the institution responsible for the project. The study is part of a master's program in International Education and Development at the Faculty of Education and International Studies.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being invited to take part in this research because I believe that your experiences as a student/youth who are engaged in a social movement organization can contribute to my understanding of the ways that students seek to contribute to the democratization processes in Thailand.

The project aims to recruit eight students and four experts (academics, politicians, etc…). Participants will be recruited via online communities and student organizations in Thailand. I will not have any specific selection criteria other than being a student who is engaged in the youth-led movement.

What does participation involve for you?

I am inviting you to take part in this research project to help me learn more about life as a student who are engaged in the current political processes in Thailand. I hope to learn more about the values and motivations behind your activism, as well as how the current status of freedom of expression affect your activism.

If you accept you will be asked to take part in an interview conducted by me and a translator. I will make sure that you are comfortable and answer any questions you might have regarding the study. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview, you

can let me know and I will move to the next question. No one else but myself and a translator will be present, unless you would like for someone else to be there.

The discussion will take place in a location where you feel comfortable. The interview will be tape-recorded, but you will not be identified by name on the tape. The information recorded is confidential and will be anonymized. Once the recorded interview has been uploaded and transcribed, the recording will be deleted from the recording device. The transcriptions will be stored on a secure server at OsloMet. Any notes and the consent forms will be stored in a locked closet.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be made anonymous. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet) is responsible for management of data material.

To ensure your personal privacy, I will anonymize and make confidential any information that might identify you. This includes name, identifiable locations, and any other descriptive features that could be linked back to you. The only information about you that will be used is that you are a student, your gender, and your age. The information that is recorded about you will only be used as described in the purpose of the study. Any information about you will be coded with a number instead of your name. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored securely from the rest of the collected data.

When the data material has been transcribed, only I will have access to this.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?
The project is scheduled to end in June 2023. All personal data, including digital recordings, will be deleted once the thesis is submitted.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?
We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with Oslo Metropolitan University, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Oslo Metropolitan University via the writer of this master's project, Marisa Elena Olsen (s313488@oslomet.no), by telephone: +47 99503546. The supervisor to be contacted is Benedikte Victoria Lindskog (benedik@oslomet.no), by telephone: +47 98818637.
- Data Protection Officer, OsloMet: Ingrid Jacobsen (ingrid.jacobsen@oslomet.no).
- Data Protection Services, OsloMet, by email: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) or by telephone: +47 53 21 15 00.

Yours sincerely,

Supervisor Student

Consent form

Consent can be given in writing (including electronically) or orally. NB! You must be able to document/demonstrate that you have given information and gained consent from project participants i.e. from the people whose personal data you will be processing (data subjects). As a rule, we recommend written information and written consent.

- *For written consent on paper you can use this template*
- *For written consent which is collected electronically, you must chose a procedure that will allow you to demonstrate that you have gained explicit consent (read more on our website)*
- *If the context dictates that you should give oral information and gain oral consent (e.g. for research in oral cultures or with people who are illiterate) we recommend that you make a sound recording of the information and consent.*

If a parent/guardian will give consent on behalf of their child or someone without the capacity to consent, you must adjust this information accordingly. Remember that the name of the participant must be included.

Adjust the checkboxes in accordance with participation in your project. It is possible to use bullet points instead of checkboxes. However, if you intend to process special categories of personal data (sensitive personal data) and/or one of the last four points in the list below is applicable to your project, we recommend that you use checkboxes. This because of the requirement of explicit consent.

I have received and understood information about the project *[insert project title]* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

☐ to participate in interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. *[insert date]*

(Signed by participant, date)

Consent Form for Experts

Are you interested in taking part in the research project

Student-led movements in Thailand: Its influence on democratization processes

This is an inquiry about participation in a research project where the main purpose is to explore the following: In what ways can student-led movements influence democratization processes in Thailand? In this letter we will give you information about the purpose of the project and what your participation will involve.

Purpose of the project

The purpose of this master study is to explore the ways in which student-led movements can influence democratization processes in Thailand. The scope of the project is twofold; I am interested in learning about 1) The values and motivations behind students' activism in Thailand, and 2) The current status of freedom of expression in Thailand and to what extent youth feel/mean that they can discuss their ideas openly. By exploring this topic, I hope to learn more about the capabilities they inhabit and the obstacles students in Thailand encounter in their engagement in the current political process.

Who is responsible for the research project?

Oslo Metropolitan University is the institution responsible for the project. The study is part of a master's program in International Education and Development at the Faculty of Education and International Studies.

Why are you being asked to participate?

You are being invited to take part in this research because I believe that your experiences as a professional who are engaged in a social movement organization can contribute to my understanding of the ways that students seek to contribute to the democratization processes in Thailand.

The project aims to recruit eight students and four experts (academics, politicians, etc…). Participants will be recruited via online communities and universities in Thailand.

What does participation involve for you?

I am inviting you to take part in this research project to help me learn more about life as a student who are engaged in the current political processes in Thailand. I hope to learn more about the values and motivations behind your activism, as well as how the current status of freedom of expression affect your activism.

If you accept you will be asked to take part in an interview conducted by myself. I will make sure that you are comfortable and answer any questions you might have regarding the study. If there are any questions that you do not wish to answer during the interview, you can let me know and I will move to the next question. No one else but myself will be present, unless you would like for someone else to be there.

The discussion will take place in a location where you feel comfortable. The interview will be tape-recorded, but you will not be identified by name on the tape. The information recorded is

confidential and will be anonymized. Once the recorded interview has been uploaded and transcribed, the recording will be deleted from the recording device. The transcriptions will be stored on a secure server at OsloMet. Any notes and the consent forms will be stored in a locked closet.

Participation is voluntary
Participation in the project is voluntary. If you choose to participate, you can withdraw your consent at any time without giving a reason. All information about you will then be deleted. There will be no negative consequences for you if you choose not to participate or later decide to withdraw.

Your personal privacy – how we will store and use your personal data
We will only use your personal data for the purpose(s) specified in this information letter. We will process your personal data confidentially and in accordance with data protection legislation (the General Data Protection Regulation and Personal Data Act). Oslo Metropolitan University (OsloMet) is responsible for management of data material.

To ensure your personal privacy, I will anonymize and make confidential any information that might identify you. This includes name, identifiable locations, and any other descriptive features that could be linked back to you. The only information about you that will be used is your occupation (if not other is specified of you). The information that is recorded about you will only be used as described in the purpose of the study. Any information about you will be coded with a number instead of your name. The list of names, contact details and respective codes will be stored securely from the rest of the collected data.

When the data material has been transcribed, only I will have access to this.

What will happen to your personal data at the end of the research project?
The project is scheduled to end in June 2023. All personal data, including digital recordings, will be deleted once the thesis is submitted.

Your rights
So long as you can be identified in the collected data, you have the right to:

- access the personal data that is being processed about you
- request that your personal data is deleted
- request that incorrect personal data about you is corrected/rectified
- receive a copy of your personal data (data portability), and
- send a complaint to the Data Protection Officer or The Norwegian Data Protection Authority regarding the processing of your personal data

What gives us the right to process your personal data?
We will process your personal data based on your consent.

Based on an agreement with Oslo Metropolitan University, Data Protection Services has assessed that the processing of personal data in this project is in accordance with data protection legislation.

Where can I find out more?
If you have questions about the project, or want to exercise your rights, contact:

- Oslo Metropolitan University via the writer of this master's project, Marisa Elena Olsen (s313488@oslomet.no), by telephone: +47 99503546. The supervisor to be contacted is Benedikte Victoria Lindskog (benedik@oslomet.no), by telephone: +47 98818637.
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Yours sincerely,

Supervisor Student

I have received and understood information about the project *Student-led movements in Thailand: Its influence on democratization processes* and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I give consent:

☐ to participate in interview

I give consent for my personal data to be processed until the end date of the project, approx. *[insert date]*

(Signed by participant, date)

แบบฟอร์มยินยอมสำหรับนักเรียน

คุณสนใจที่จะมีส่วนร่วมในโครงการวิจัยหรือไม่

"ขบวนการที่นำโดยนักศึกษาจะมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการสร้างประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทยในทางใดบ้าง"?

นี่คือการสอบถามเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยที่มีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อสำรวจสิ่งต่อไปนี้:
การเคลื่อนไหวที่นำโดยนักศึกษาจะมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการสร้างประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทยอย่างไร?
ในจดหมายฉบับนี้เราจะให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการและการมีส่วนร่วมของคุณจะเกี่ยวข้องอย่างไร

วัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการ

จุดประสงค์ของการศึกษาระดับปริญญาโทนี้คือการสำรวจวิธีที่ขบวนการที่นำโดยนักศึกษาสามารถมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการทำให้เป็นประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทย ขอบเขตของโครงการเป็นสองเท่า ผมสนใจที่จะเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับ 1) ค่านิยมและแรงจูงใจที่อยู่เบื้องหลังการเคลื่อนไหวของนักเรียนในประเทศไทย และ 2) สถานะปัจจุบันของเสรีภาพในการแสดงออกในประเทศไทย และระดับที่เยาวชนรู้สึก/หมายความว่าพวกเขาสามารถพูดคุยแนวคิดของตนได้อย่างเปิดเผย โดยการสำรวจหัวข้อนี้ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับความสามารถที่พวกเขาอาศัยอยู่และอุปสรรคที่นักเรียนในประเทศไทยพบในการมีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบัน

ใครเป็นผู้รับผิดชอบโครงการวิจัย?
มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน*เป็นสถาบันที่รับผิดชอบโครงการ*
การศึกษานี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของหลักสูตรปริญญาโทด้านการศึกษาและการพัฒนาระหว่างประเทศที่คณะครุศาสตร์และการศึกษานานาชาติ

เหตุใดคุณจึงถูกขอให้เข้าร่วม
คุณได้รับเชิญให้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยนี้เพราะผม เชื่อว่า ประสบการณ์ของคุณในฐานะนักเรียนที่มีส่วนร่วมในองค์กรการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม สามารถนำไปสู่ความเข้าใจของฉันเกี่ยวกับวิธีการที่นักเรียนพยายามที่จะมีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทย

โครงการนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อรับสมัครนักเรียนแปดคนและผู้เชี่ยวชาญสี่คน (นักวิชาการนักการเมือง ฯลฯ ...)
ผู้เข้าร่วมจะได้รับการคัดเลือกผ่านชุมชนออนไลน์และองค์กรนักศึกษาในประเทศไทย
ฉันจะไม่มีเกณฑ์การคัดเลือกที่เฉพาะเจาะจงนอกเหนือจากการเป็นนักเรียนที่มีส่วนร่วมในขบวนการที่นำโดยเยาวชน

การมีส่วนร่วมเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไรสำหรับคุณ?

ผมขอเชิญคุณเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้เพื่อช่วยให้ผมได้เรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับ
ชีวิตในฐานะนักศึกษาที่มีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบันในประเทศไทย
ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับค่านิยมและแรงจูงใจที่อยู่เบื้องหลังการเคลื่อนไหวของคุณ
รวมถึงสถานะปัจจุบันของเสรีภาพในการแสดงออกที่ส่งผลต่อการเคลื่อนไหวของคุณอย่างไร

หากคุณยอมรับคุณจะถูกขอให้มีส่วนร่วมในการสัมภาษณ์ที่ดำเนินการโดยฉัน และนักแปล
ฉันจะตรวจสอบให้แน่ใจว่าคุณสบายใจและตอบคำถามใด ๆ ที่คุณอาจมีเกี่ยวกับการศึกษา หากมีคำถามใด ๆ
ที่คุณไม่ต้องการตอบในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์คุณสามารถแจ้งให้เราทราบและฉันจะย้ายไปยังคำถามถัดไป
ไม่มีใครอื่นนอกจากตัวฉันและนักแปลจะอยู่ด้วยเว้นแต่คุณต้องการให้คนอื่นอยู่ที่นั่น

ผมจะถามคำถามว่าคุณรับรู้และสัมผัสกับ
ชีวิตในฐานะนักเรียนที่มีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบันในประเทศไทยอย่างไร
คำถามนี้จะหมุนรอบประสบการณ์ของคุณในฐานะนักเคลื่อนไหวและมุมมองของคุณเกี่ยวกับบรรยากาศทางการเมืองในประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ เราจะมาพูดถึงการมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมืองโดยทั่วไปมากขึ้น
เพราะจะทำให้ผมมีโอกาสเข้าใจความเป็นจริงในชีวิตประจำวันของการมีส่วนร่วมของเยาวชนและการมีส่วนร่วมในการเมืองไทยมากขึ้น
ด้วยการถามคำถามเกี่ยวกับหัวข้อเหล่านี้ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับความสามารถและอุปสรรคที่นักเรียนต้องเผชิญเมื่อพวกเขามีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมือง
ฉันจะให้เวลาคุณแบ่งปันความรู้และประสบการณ์ความคิดและข้อกังวลของคุณ คุณไม่จำเป็นต้องแบ่งปันความรู้ใด ๆ ที่คุณไม่สะดวกที่จะแบ่งปัน

การสนทนาจะเกิดขึ้นในสถานที่ที่คุณรู้สึกสบายใจ การสัมภาษณ์ จะเป็นบันทึกเทปd แต่คุณจะไม่ถูกระบุด้วยชื่อในเทป ข้อมูลที่บันทึกเป็นความลับ และจะไม่เปิดเผยตัวตน
เมื่ออัปโหลดและถอดเสียงการสัมภาษณ์ที่บันทึกไว้แล้วการบันทึกจะถูกลบออกจากอุปกรณ์บันทึก
การถอดความจะถูกเก็บไว้บนเซิร์ฟเวอร์ที่ปลอดภัยที่ OsloMet บันทึกย่อและแบบฟอร์มความยินยอมจะถูกเก็บไว้ในตู้เสื้อผ้าที่ล็อคไว้

การเข้าร่วมเป็นความสมัครใจ

การเข้าร่วมโครงการเป็นไปโดยสมัครใจ
หากคุณเลือกที่จะเข้าร่วมคุณสามารถเพิกถอนความยินยอมของคุณได้ตลอดเวลาโดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผล
ข้อมูลทั้งหมดเกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกทำให้ไม่ระบุชื่อ
จะไม่มีผลกระทบเชิงลบสำหรับคุณหากคุณจะไม่เข้าร่วมหรือตัดสินใจถอนตัวในภายหลัง

ความเป็นส่วนตัวของคุณ – วิธีที่เราจะจัดเก็บและใช้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ

เราจะใช้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์ที่ระบุไว้ในจดหมายข้อมูลนี้เท่านั้น
เราจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณอย่างเป็นความลับและเป็นไปตามกฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูล
(กฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูลทั่วไปและพระราชบัญญัติข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล) มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน (OsloMet)
รับผิดชอบการจัดการเนื้อหาข้อมูล

เพื่อให้มั่นใจในความเป็นส่วนตัวของคุณฉันจะไม่เปิดเผยตัวตนและทำให้ข้อมูลใด ๆ ที่อาจระบุตัวตนของคุณเป็นความลับ
ซึ่งรวมถึงชื่อ ตำแหน่งที่ระบุตัวตนได้ และคุณลักษณะอธิบายอื่นๆ ที่สามารถเชื่อมโยงกลับมาหาคุณได้
ข้อมูลเดียวเกี่ยวกับคุณที่จะใช้คือคุณเป็นนักเรียนเพศและอายุของคุณ
ข้อมูลที่บันทึกไว้เกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกใช้ตามที่อธิบายไว้ในวัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาเท่านั้น ข้อมูลใด ๆ
เกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกเข้ารหัสด้วยตัวเลขแทนชื่อของคุณ
รายชื่อรายละเอียดการติดต่อและรหัสที่เกี่ยวข้องจะถูกเก็บไว้อย่างเยือกเย็นจากส่วนที่เหลือของข้อมูลที่รวบรวม

เมื่อเนื้อหาข้อมูลได้รับการถอดความมีเพียงฉันเท่านั้นที่สามารถเข้าถึงสิ่งนี้ได้

สิ่งที่จะ **happen** กับข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ ในตอนท้ายของ การวิจัย **project?**

โครงการมีกำหนดจะสิ้นสุด ในเดือนมิถุนายน 2023
ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลทั้งหมดรวมถึงการบันทึกแบบดิจิทัลจะถูกลบเมื่อส่งวิทยานิพนธ์แล้ว

สิทธิของคุณ

ตราบใดที่คุณสามารถระบุตัวตนได้ในข้อมูลที่รวบรวมคุณมีสิทธิ์ที่จะ:

- **เข้าถึงข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่กำลังประมวลผลเกี่ยวกับคุณ**
- **ขอให้ลบข้อมูล**ส่วนบุคคลของคุณ
- **ขอให้แก้ไข/แก้ไขข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่ไม่ถูกต้องเกี่ยวกับคุณ**
- **รับ สำเนาข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ (การเคลื่อนย้ายข้อมูล) และ**
- **ส่งเรื่องร้องเรียนไปยังเจ้าหน้าที่คุ้มครองข้อมูลหรือ**หน่วยงานคุ้มครองข้อมูลของนอร์เวย์เกี่ยวกับการประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ

อะไรทำให้เรามีสิทธิ์ในการประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ?
เราจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณตามความยินยอมของคุณ

ตาม ข้อตกลงกับ มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน **บริการคุ้มครองข้อมูล ได้ประเมินว่า processing ของข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลใน project นี้เป็นไปตาม กฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูล**

ฉันจะหาข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมได้ที่ไหน
หากคุณมีคำถามเกี่ยวกับโครงการหรือต้องการ ใช้สิทธิ์ของคุณโปรดติดต่อ:

- มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน **ผ่าน ผู้เขียนโครงการปริญญาโทนี้ Marisa Elena Olsen (s313488@oslomet.no) ทางโทรศัพท์: +47 99503546 หัวหน้างานที่จะติดต่อคือ เบเนดิกต์ วิคตอเรีย ลินด์สดอก (benedik@oslomet.no) ทางโทรศัพท์: +47 98818637**
- **เจ้าหน้าที่คุ้มครองข้อมูล OsloMet: อินกริด จาค็อบเซ่น (ingrid.jacobsen@oslomet.no)**
- **บริการปกป้องข้อมูล OsloMet ทางอีเมล: (personverntjenester@sikt.no) หรือทางโทรศัพท์: +47 53 21 15 00**

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

นักเรียนหัวหน้างาน

แบบฟอร์มยินยอม

*สามารถให้ความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษร (รวมถึงพันธมิตร*ทางอิเล็กทรอนิกส์*) หรือรับประทาน* ***NB!***

คุณต้องสามารถจัดทำเอกสาร/แสดงให้เห็นว่าคุณได้ให้ข้อมูลและได้รับ ***consent*** *จากผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการ เช่น จากบุคคลที่คุณจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล (เจ้าของข้อมูล) ตามกฎแล้วเราขอแนะนำข้อมูลที่เป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรและความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษร*

- *สำหรับความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรบน กระดาษ คุณสามารถใช้เทมเพลตนี้ได้*
- *สำหรับความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรซึ่งรวบรวมทางอิเล็กทรอนิกส์คุณต้องเลือก ขั้นตอนที่จะช่วยให้คุณแสดงให้เห็นว่าคุณได้รับความยินยอมอย่างชัดแจ้ง (อ่านเพิ่มเติมในเว็บไซต์ของเรา)*
- *หากบริบทกำหนดว่าคุณควรให้ข้อมูลปากเปล่าและได้รับความยินยอมด้วยวาจา (เช่นเพื่อการวิจัยในวัฒนธรรมปากเปล่าหรือกับผู้ที่ไม่รู้หนังสือ) เราขอแนะนำให้* ***you*** *ทำการบันทึกเสียงของข้อมูลและความยินยอม*

หากพ่อแม่/ผู้ปกครองจะให้ความยินยอมในนามของบุตรของตนหรือบุคคลที่ไม่สามารถให้ความยินยอมได้ โปรดจำไว้ว่าต้องรวมชื่อของผู้เข้าร่วมไว้ด้วย

ปรับช่อง ทำเครื่องหมายให้สอดคล้องกับการมีส่วนร่วมในโครงการของคุณ เป็นไปได้ที่จะใช้สัญลักษณ์แสดงหัวข้อย่อยแทนช่องทำเครื่องหมาย อย่างไรก็ตามหากคุณตั้งใจจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลประเภทพิเศษ (ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่ละเอียดอ่อน) และ / หรือหนึ่งในสี่จุดสุดท้ายในรายการด้านล่างมีผลบังคับใช้กับโครงการของคุณเราขอแนะนำให้คุณใช้ช่องทำเครื่องหมาย นี่เป็นเพราะข้อกำหนดของความยินยอมอย่างชัดแจ้ง

ฉันได้รับและเข้าใจข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับโครงการ *[แทรกชื่อโครงการ]* และได้รับโอกาสในการถามคำถาม ฉันให้ความยินยอม:

☐ **เพื่อ เข้าร่วม การสัมภาษณ์**

ฉันให้ความยินยอมสำหรับข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของฉันที่จะประมวลผลจนถึงวันที่สิ้นสุดของโครงการประมาณ *[วันที่แทรก]*

(ลงนามโดยผู้เข้าร่วมวันที่)

แบบฟอร์มยินยอมสำหรับผู้เชี่ยวชาญ

คุณสนใจที่จะมีส่วนร่วมในโครงการวิจัยหรือไม่

"ขบวนการที่นำโดยนักศึกษาจะมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการสร้างประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทยในทางใดบ้าง"?

นี่คือการสอบถามเกี่ยวกับการเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยที่มีวัตถุประสงค์หลักเพื่อสำรวจสิ่งต่อไปนี้:
การเคลื่อนไหวที่นำโดยนักศึกษาจะมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการสร้างประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทยอย่างไร?
ในจดหมายฉบับนี้เราจะให้ข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับวัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการและการมีส่วนร่วมของคุณจะเกี่ยวข้องอย่างไร

วัตถุประสงค์ของโครงการ

จุดประสงค์ของการศึกษาระดับปริญญาโทนี้คือการสำรวจวิธีที่ขบวนการที่นำโดยนักศึกษาสามารถมีอิทธิพลต่อกระบวนการทำให้เป็นประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทย ขอบเขตของโครงการเป็นสองเท่า ผมสนใจที่จะเรียนรู้เกี่ยวกับ 1) ค่านิยมและแรงจูงใจที่อยู่เบื้องหลังการเคลื่อนไหวของนักเรียนในประเทศไทย และ 2) สถานะปัจจุบันของเสรีภาพในการแสดงออกในประเทศไทย และระดับที่เยาวชนรู้สึก/หมายความว่าพวกเขาสามารถพูดคุยแนวคิดของตนได้อย่างเปิดเผย โดยการสำรวจหัวข้อนี้ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับความสามารถที่พวกเขาอาศัยอยู่และอุปสรรคที่นักเรียนในประเทศไทยพบในการมีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบัน

ใครเป็นผู้รับผิดชอบโครงการวิจัย?
มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน*เป็นสถาบันที่รับผิดชอบโครงการ*
การศึกษานี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของหลักสูตรปริญญาโทด้านการศึกษาและการพัฒนาระหว่างประเทศที่คณะครุศาสตร์และการศึกษานานาชาติ

เหตุใดคุณจึงถูกขอให้เข้าร่วม
คุณได้รับเชิญให้เข้าร่วมในการวิจัยนี้เพราะผม เชื่อว่า ประสบการณ์ของคุณในฐานะนักเรียนที่มีส่วนร่วมในองค์กรการเคลื่อนไหวทางสังคม สามารถนำไปสู่ความเข้าใจของฉันเกี่ยวกับวิธีการที่นักเรียนพยายามที่จะมีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทย

โครงการนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายเพื่อรับสมัครนักเรียนแปดคนและผู้เชี่ยวชาญสี่คน (นักวิชาการนักการเมือง ฯลฯ ...)
ผู้เข้าร่วมจะได้รับการคัดเลือกผ่านชุมชนออนไลน์และมหาวิทยาลัยในประเทศไทย

การมีส่วนร่วมเกี่ยวข้องกับอะไรสำหรับคุณ?

ผมขอเชิญคุณเข้าร่วมในโครงการวิจัยนี้เพื่อช่วยให้ผมได้เรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับ
ชีวิตในฐานะนักศึกษาที่มีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบันในประเทศไทย
ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับค่านิยมและแรงจูงใจที่อยู่เบื้องหลังการเคลื่อนไหวของคุณ
รวมถึงสถานะปัจจุบันของเสรีภาพในการแสดงออกที่ส่งผลต่อการเคลื่อนไหวของคุณอย่างไร

หากคุณยอมรับคุณจะถูกขอให้มีส่วนร่วมในการสัมภาษณ์ที่ดำเนินการโดยฉัน และนักแปล
ฉันจะตรวจสอบให้แน่ใจว่าคุณสบายใจและตอบคำถามใด ๆ ที่คุณอาจมีเกี่ยวกับการศึกษา หากมีคำถามใด ๆ
ที่คุณไม่ต้องการตอบในระหว่างการสัมภาษณ์คุณสามารถแจ้งให้เราทราบและฉันจะย้ายไปยังคำถามถัดไป
ไม่มีใครอื่นนอกจากตัวฉันและนักแปลจะอยู่ด้วยเว้นแต่คุณต้องการให้คนอื่นอยู่ที่นั่น

ผมจะถามคำถามว่าคุณรับรู้และสัมผัสกับ
ชีวิตในฐานะนักเรียนที่มีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมืองในปัจจุบันในประเทศไทยอย่างไร
คำถามนี้จะหมุนรอบประสบการณ์ของคุณในฐานะนักเคลื่อนไหวและมุมมองของคุณเกี่ยวกับบรรยากาศทางการเมืองในประเทศไทย นอกจากนี้ เราจะมาพูดถึงการมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมืองโดยทั่วไปมากขึ้น
เพราะจะทำให้ผมมีโอกาสเข้าใจความเป็นจริงในชีวิตประจำวันของการมีส่วนร่วมของเยาวชนและการมีส่วนร่วมในการเมืองไทยมากขึ้น
ด้วยการถามคำถามเกี่ยวกับหัวข้อเหล่านี้ฉันหวังว่าจะเรียนรู้เพิ่มเติมเกี่ยวกับความสามารถและอุปสรรคที่นักเรียนต้องเผชิญเมื่อพวกเขามีส่วนร่วมในกระบวนการทางการเมือง
ฉันจะให้เวลาคุณแบ่งปันความรู้และประสบการณ์ความคิดและข้อกังวลของคุณ คุณไม่จำเป็นต้องแบ่งปันความรู้ใด ๆ
ที่คุณไม่สะดวกที่จะแบ่งปัน

การสนทนาจะเกิดขึ้นในสถานที่ที่คุณรู้สึกสบายใจ การสัมภาษณ์ จะเป็นบันทึกเทปd แต่คุณจะไม่ถูกระบุด้วยชื่อในเทป
ข้อมูลที่บันทึกเป็นความลับ และจะไม่เปิดเผยตัวตน
เมื่ออัปโหลดและถอดเสียงการสัมภาษณ์ที่บันทึกไว้แล้วการบันทึกจะถูกลบออกจากอุปกรณ์บันทึก
การถอดความจะถูกเก็บไว้บนเซิร์ฟเวอร์ที่ปลอดภัยที่ OsloMet บันทึกย่อและแบบฟอร์มความยินยอมจะถูกเก็บไว้
ในตู้เสื้อผ้าที่ล็อคไว้

การเข้าร่วมเป็นความสมัครใจ

การเข้าร่วมโครงการเป็นไปโดยสมัครใจ
หากคุณเลือกที่จะเข้าร่วมคุณสามารถเพิกถอนความยินยอมของคุณได้ตลอดเวลาโดยไม่ต้องให้เหตุผล
ข้อมูลทั้งหมดเกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกทำให้ไม่ระบุชื่อ
จะไม่มีผลกระทบเชิงลบสำหรับคุณหากคุณจะไม่เข้าร่วมหรือตัดสินใจถอนตัวในภายหลัง

ความเป็นส่วนตัวของคุณ – วิธีที่เราจะจัดเก็บและใช้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ

เราจะใช้ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณเพื่อวัตถุประสงค์ที่ระบุไว้ในจดหมายข้อมูลนี้เท่านั้น
เราจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณอย่างเป็นความลับและเป็นไปตามกฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูล

(กฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูลทั่วไปและพระราชบัญญัติข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล) มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน (OsloMet) รับผิดชอบการจัดการเนื้อหาข้อมูล

เพื่อให้มั่นใจในความเป็นส่วนตัวของคุณฉันจะไม่เปิดเผยตัวตนและทำให้ข้อมูลใด ๆ ที่อาจระบุตัวตนของคุณเป็นความลับ ซึ่งรวมถึงชื่อ ตำแหน่งที่ระบุตัวตนได้ และคุณลักษณะอธิบายอื่นๆ ที่สามารถเชื่อมโยงกลับมาหาคุณได้
ข้อมูลเดียวเกี่ยวกับคุณที่จะใช้คืออาชีพของคุณ (ถ้าไม่ใช่ข้อมูลอื่น ๆ ที่ระบุไว้จากคุณ)
ข้อมูลที่บันทึกไว้เกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกใช้ตามที่อธิบายไว้ในวัตถุประสงค์ของการศึกษาเท่านั้น ข้อมูลใด ๆ เกี่ยวกับคุณจะถูกเข้ารหัสด้วยตัวเลขแทนชื่อของคุณ
รายชื่อรายละเอียดการติดต่อและรหัสที่เกี่ยวข้องจะถูกเก็บไว้อย่างเยือกเย็นจากส่วนที่เหลือของข้อมูลที่รวบรวม

เมื่อเนื้อหาข้อมูลได้รับการถอดความมีเพียงฉันเท่านั้นที่สามารถเข้าถึงสิ่งนี้ได้

สิ่งที่จะ happen กับข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ ในตอนท้ายของ การวิจัย project?
โครงการมีกำหนดจะสิ้นสุด ในเดือนมิถุนายน 2023
ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลทั้งหมดรวมถึงการบันทึกแบบดิจิทัลจะถูกลบเมื่อส่งวิทยานิพนธ์แล้ว

สิทธิของคุณ
ตราบใดที่คุณสามารถระบุตัวตนได้ในข้อมูลที่รวบรวมคุณมีสิทธิ์ที่จะ:

- **เข้าถึงข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่กำลังประมวลผลเกี่ยวกับคุณ**
- **ขอให้ลบข้อมูล**ส่วนบุคคลของคุณ
- **ขอให้แก้ไข/แก้ไขข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่ไม่ถูกต้องเกี่ยวกับคุณ**
- **รับ สำเนาข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ (การเคลื่อนย้ายข้อมูล) และ**
- **ส่งเรื่องร้องเรียนไปยังเจ้าหน้าที่คุ้มครองข้อมูลหรือ**หน่วยงานคุ้มครองข้อมูลของนอร์เวย์เกี่ยวกับการประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ

อะไรทำให้เรามีสิทธิ์ในการประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณ?
เราจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของคุณตามความยินยอมของคุณ

ตาม ข้อตกลงกับ มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน **บริการคุ้มครองข้อมูล ได้ประเมินว่า processing ของข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลใน project นี้เป็นไปตาม กฎหมายคุ้มครองข้อมูล**

ฉันจะหาข้อมูลเพิ่มเติมได้ที่ไหน
หากคุณมีคำถามเกี่ยวกับโครงการหรือต้องการ ใช้สิทธิ์ของคุณโปรดติดต่อ:

- มหาวิทยาลัยออสโลเมโทรโพลิแทน **ผ่าน ผู้เขียนโครงการปริญญาโทนี้ Marisa Elena Olsen (s313488@oslomet.no) ทางโทรศัพท์: +47 99503546 หัวหน้างานที่จะติดต่อคือเบเนดิกต์ วิคตอเรีย ลินด์สดอก (benedik@oslomet.no) ทางโทรศัพท์: +47 98818637**
- **เจ้าหน้าที่คุ้มครองข้อมูล ออสโลเม็ต: อิงกริด จาค็อบเซ่น (ingrid.jacobsen@oslomet.no)**

- **บริการปกป้องข้อมูล OsloMet ทางอีเมล: (**personverntjenester@sikt.no**)**
  หรือทางโทรศัพท์: +47 53 21 15 00

ขอแสดงความนับถือ

นักเรียนหัวหน้างาน

แบบฟอร์มยินยอม

*สามารถให้ความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษร (รวมถึงพันธมิตร*ทางอิเล็กทรอนิกส์*) หรือรับประทาน* ***NB!***
คุณต้องสามารถจัดทำเอกสาร/แสดงให้เห็นว่าคุณได้ให้ข้อมูลและได้รับ ***consent*** *จากผู้เข้าร่วมโครงการ เช่น จากบุคคลที่คุณจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคล (เจ้าของข้อมูล) ตามกฎแล้วเราขอแนะนำข้อมูลที่เป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรและความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษร*

- *สำหรับความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรบน กระดาษ คุณสามารถใช้เทมเพลตนี้ได้*
- *สำหรับความยินยอมเป็นลายลักษณ์อักษรซึ่งรวบรวมทางอิเล็กทรอนิกส์คุณต้องเลือก*
  ขั้นตอนที่จะช่วยให้คุณแสดงให้เห็นว่าคุณได้รับความยินยอมอย่างชัดแจ้ง (อ่านเพิ่มเติมในเว็บไซต์ของเรา)
- *หากบริบทกำหนดว่าคุณควรให้ข้อมูลปากเปล่าและได้รับความยินยอมด้วยวาจา (เช่นเพื่อการวิจัยในวัฒนธรรมปากเปล่าหรือกับผู้ที่ไม่รู้หนังสือ)*
  เราขอแนะนำให้ ***you*** *ทำการบันทึกเสียงของข้อมูลและความยินยอม*

หากพ่อแม่/ผู้ปกครองจะให้ความยินยอมในนามของบุตรของตนหรือบุคคลที่ไม่สามารถให้ความยินยอมได้ โปรดจำไว้ว่าต้องรวมชื่อของผู้เข้าร่วมไว้ด้วย

ปรับช่อง ทำเครื่องหมายให้สอดคล้องกับการมีส่วนร่วมในโครงการของคุณ เป็นไปได้ที่จะใช้สัญลักษณ์แสดงหัวข้อย่อยแทนช่องทำเครื่องหมาย
อย่างไรก็ตามหากคุณตั้งใจจะประมวลผลข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลประเภทพิเศษ (ข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลที่ละเอียดอ่อน) และ /
หรือหนึ่งในสี่จุดสุดท้ายในรายการด้านล่างมีผลบังคับใช้กับโครงการของคุณเราขอแนะนำให้คุณใช้ช่องทำเครื่องหมาย
นี่เป็นเพราะข้อกำหนดของความยินยอมอย่างชัดแจ้ง

ฉันได้รับและเข้าใจข้อมูลเกี่ยวกับโครงการ *[แทรกชื่อโครงการ]* และได้รับโอกาสในการถามคำถาม ฉันให้ความยินยอม:

☐ **เพื่อ เข้าร่วม การสัมภาษณ์**

ฉันให้ความยินยอมสำหรับข้อมูลส่วนบุคคลของฉันที่จะประมวลผลจนถึงวันที่สิ้นสุดของโครงการประมาณ *[วันที่แทรก]*

(ลงนามโดยผู้เข้าร่วมวันที่)

Appendix C: Interview Guide for Students and Experts

Interview Guide for Students

Date:
Informant number:

A) Background information and motivations

1. How old are you?
2. What do you study and why?
3. How far have you come in your studies?
4. From where did your interest in politics begin? (Influence from home, from school, from your community…)
5. What does your parents think about your activism? Do they support you? Why/why not?
6. Are you member of any political party or youth association? If yes, what motivates you to engage with this way of participation?

B) Political Participation and Student Activism and po

1. How do you understand the term "activism"?
    - **i.** Do you consider yourself an activist?
    - **ii.** What is your goal with your activism?
2. Have you participated in any student protests? How many?
3. Which strategies have you experienced as most effective in terms of achieving your goal?
4. What has been the government reactions to your activism?
5. By being active in the democracy movement, what has been the consequences for you on a personal level?
6. How has your time in prison affected your activism? Have you become more or less motivated?
7. Do you think that Thai youth are defining a new political generation? How?
    - **i.** Can you identify attitudes and behaviors from this new generation?
8. Do you understand the protests as students main battlefield, or do you think we have moved into a post-protest phase?

C) Democracy and Traditional Hierarchies/Values

1. What does "democracy" mean to you?
2. What are the main factors that affect democratization processes in Thailand?
3. What is your understanding of "Thai-ness" or Thai national identity?
4. Do you think that Thai traditional norms and values (phu yai, dek, wai) is compatible with democratic principles?
    - **i.** In your opinion, what does an ideal or effective form of politics look like?
5. Do you think the new generation is defining a new understanding of "Thai-ness" or Thai national identity?

D) Looking Forward

1. What do you think will be the future of student activism in Thailand?

End. Are there any other points we have missed out that you would like to raise? Do you have any questions?

Interview Guide for Experts

Date:
Informant number:
Comments:

A) Background information

1. Can you tell me a bit about yourself and your professional background?

B) Political Context

1. What do you consider as the major social problems facing Thailand?
2. How would you explain the state of democracy in Thailand?
3. How do you understand the term "Thai-style democracy"?

C) Political Participation and Activism

1. How do you understand the term "political participation"?
2. How do you understand the term "activism"?
3. In what ways do the younger generation of Thai's influence Thai politics?
4. Do you think that Thai youth are defining a new political generation? If yes, how is this new generation different from previous generations? Can you identify attitudes and behaviors from this new generation?

D) Protest Movements

1. Do you think that the youth-based protest movements have succeeded in influencing the national political debate? If yes, in what ways?
2. What do you see as the protester's main tactics and strategies in influencing Thai politics?
3. What do you see as the short-term impact and the long-term impact of the protests?
4. To what degree has the students succeeded in mobilizing support for their activism?

E) Government and Public Response

1. How has the government responded to the movement? What do you think of the way that the government has responded to the protest movement?
2. How has the general public responded to the protest movement?

F) Looking Forward

1. Do you think their demands will be met? How do you think the country will move forward?
2. What do you think the role of students will be in the coming years in the process of shaping Thailand's political culture?
3. What would it take for this to develop from a youth movement to a popular-people's movement?

G) Discussing Politics

1. If you think about the general Thai population, is it common to be politically interested and share ideas about politics?
2. How do you understand the climate of discussing politics in Thailand?

3. Do you think that the youth-led movement has influenced the conversation about politics in Thailand?

End. Are there any other points we have missed out that you would like to raise? Do you have any questions?

คู่มือการสัมภาษณ์สำหรับนักเรียน

วันที่:

หมายเลขผู้ให้ข้อมูล:

ความ คิด เห็น:

A) ข้อมูลความเป็นมา

1. คุณอายุเท่าไร
2. คุณเรียนอะไรและทำไม?
3. คุณมาไกลแค่ไหนในการศึกษาของคุณ?

B) การมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมือง และการเคลื่อนไหว

1. คุณเข้าใจคำว่า "การมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมือง" อย่างไร?
2. คุณเข้าใจคำว่า "การเคลื่อนไหว" ได้อย่างไร?
3. คุณคิดว่าตัวเองเป็นนักกิจกรรมหรือไม่? ทำไม / ทำไมไม่?
4. คุณเป็นสมาชิกของพรรคการเมืองหรือสมาคมเยาวชนหรือไม่?
   ถ้าใช่อะไรที่กระตุ้นให้คุณมีส่วนร่วมกับวิธีการมีส่วนร่วมนี้?
5. คุณคิดว่าเยาวชนไทยกำลังกำหนดคนรุ่นใหม่ทางการเมืองหรือไม่?
   ถ้าใช่คนรุ่นใหม่นี้แตกต่างจากคนรุ่นก่อนอย่างไร?
   คุณสามารถระบุทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมจากคนรุ่นใหม่นี้ได้หรือไม่?
6. คุณคิดว่าคุณทำอะไรสิทธิมนุษยชนทำงาน? ในทางใด?

C) การประท้วงของนักเรียน

1. คุณเคยเข้าร่วมการประท้วงของนักเรียนที่จัดขึ้นในปีที่ผ่านมาหรือไม่?
2. ทำไมคุณถึงเข้าร่วมหรือทำไมไม่?
3. รัฐบาลตอบสนองต่อการประท้วงเหล่านี้อย่างไร?
4. คุณมีความคิดเห็นอย่างไรต่อวิธีที่พวกเขาตอบสนอง?

D) แรงจูงใจ

1. ความสนใจของคุณในการเมืองเริ่มต้นจากไหน? (อิทธิพลจากที่บ้านจากโรงเรียนจากชุมชนของคุณ...)
2. มีประเด็นทางการเมืองหรือปัญหาสังคมที่คุณหลงใหลมากขึ้นหรือไม่?
   ท่านคิดว่าเหตุใดปัญหาเหล่านี้จึงสำคัญ

E) อภิปรายเรื่องการเมือง

1. คุณมักจะพูดคุยเรื่องการเมืองกับครอบครัวและเพื่อนๆ หรือไม่? ทำไม / ทำไมไม่?
2. ถ้าคุณพูดคุยเรื่องการเมืองกับครอบครัวและเพื่อนฝูง คุณจะคุยกันเรื่องอะไร?

3. คุณเคยประสบกับผลกระทบเชิงบวกหรือเชิงลบจากการแบ่งปันความคิดและแนวคิดของคุณเกี่ยวกับการเมืองไทยหรือไม่?
4. มีอะไรที่คุณต้องการแตกต่างเมื่อพูดถึงเรื่องการเมืองหรือไม่?

F) อุปสรรค

1. คุณประสบปัญหาใด ๆ ในการทำงานของคุณในฐานะนักกิจกรรมหรือไม่?

ปลาย มีจุดอื่น ๆ ที่เราพลาดไปที่คุณต้องการเพิ่มหรือไม่? คุณมีคำถามใด ๆ หรือไม่?

คู่มือการสัมภาษณ์สำหรับผู้เชี่ยวชาญ

วันที่:

หมายเลขผู้ให้ข้อมูล:

ความ คิด เห็น:

A) ข้อมูลความเป็นมา

1. คุณช่วยบอกฉันหน่อยได้ไหมเกี่ยวกับตัวคุณและภูมิหลังทางอาชีพของคุณ?

B) บริบททางการเมือง

1. ท่านมองว่าอะไรเป็นปัญหาสังคมสำคัญที่ประเทศไทยกำลังเผชิญอยู่
2. คุณจะอธิบายสภาวะประชาธิปไตยในประเทศไทยได้อย่างไร?
3. คุณเข้าใจคำว่า "ประชาธิปไตยแบบไทย" ได้อย่างไร?

C) การมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมือง และการเคลื่อนไหว

1. คุณเข้าใจคำว่า "การมีส่วนร่วมทางการเมือง" อย่างไร?
2. คุณเข้าใจคำว่า "การเคลื่อนไหว" ได้อย่างไร?
3. คนรุ่นใหม่ของไทยมีอิทธิพลต่อการเมืองไทยอย่างไร?
4. คุณคิดว่าเยาวชนไทยกำลังกำหนดคนรุ่นใหม่ทางการเมืองหรือไม่? ถ้า
   ใช่คนรุ่นใหม่นี้แตกต่างจากคนรุ่นก่อนอย่างไร?
   คุณสามารถระบุทัศนคติและพฤติกรรมจากคนรุ่นใหม่นี้ได้หรือไม่?
5. คุณคิดว่าการเคลื่อนไหวที่นำโดยนักเรียนทำงานด้านสิทธิมนุษยชนหรือไม่? ในทางใด?

D) ขบวนการประท้วง

1. คุณคิดว่าขบวนการประท้วงตามเยาวชนประสบความสำเร็จในการมีอิทธิพลต่อการอภิปรายทางการเมืองระดับชาติหรือไม่? ถ้าใช่ในสิ่งที่วิธี?
2. ท่านมองว่าอะไรคือยุทธวิธีและกลยุทธ์หลักของผู้ประท้วงที่มีอิทธิพลต่อการเมืองไทย
3. คุณมองว่าอะไรเป็นผลกระทบระยะสั้นและผลกระทบระยะยาวของการประท้วง?
4. นักเรียนประสบความสำเร็จในการระดมการสนับสนุนการเคลื่อนไหวของพวกเขาในระดับใด?

E) การตอบสนองของรัฐบาลและประชาชน

1. รัฐบาลตอบสนองต่อการเคลื่อนไหวอย่างไร?
   คุณคิดอย่างไรกับวิธีที่รัฐบาลตอบสนองต่อขบวนการประท้วง?
2. คุณมองว่าอะไรเป็นเครื่องมือของรัฐบาลในการลดมาตรการ?
3. ประชาชนทั่วไปมีปฏิกิริยาอย่างไรต่อขบวนการประท้วง

F) รอ คอย

1. คุณคิดว่าความต้องการของพวกเขาจะตอบสนองได้หรือไม่?
   คุณคิดว่าประเทศจะก้าวไปข้างหน้าอย่างไร?
2. ท่านคิดว่าบทบาทของนักเรียนจะเป็นอย่างไรในอีกไม่กี่ปีข้างหน้าในกระบวนการกำหนดวัฒนธรรมทางการเมืองของประเทศไทย
3. สิ่งนี้จะต้องพัฒนาอะไรจากขบวนการเยาวชนไปสู่การเคลื่อนไหวของผู้คนที่เป็นที่นิยม?

G) อภิปรายเรื่องการเมือง

1. ถ้าคิดถึงคนไทยทั่วไปเป็นเรื่องปกติที่จะสนใจทางการเมืองและแชร์แนวคิดเกี่ยวกับการเมืองหรือไม่?
2. คุณเข้าใจบรรยากาศของการพูดคุยเรื่องการเมืองในประเทศไทยอย่างไร?
3. คุณคิดว่าขบวนการที่นำโดยเยาวชนมีอิทธิพลต่อการสนทนาเกี่ยวกับการเมืองในประเทศไทยหรือไม่?

ปลาย มีจุดอื่น ๆ ที่เราพลาดไปที่คุณต้องการเพิ่มหรือไม่? คุณมีคำถามใด ๆ หรือไม่?