The Globalised Village:

Grounded Experience, Media and Response in Eastern

Thailand

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Abstract

Drawing on the fieldwork in a village community in Eastern Thailand, Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked, this thesis explores the complex relationships between processes of globalisation, representations in the mainstream media and activist media; and villagers' responses to change.

The research, summarised here has three interrelated objectives: First, to examine how globalisation and industrialisation are represented in the mainstream and activist media. Second, to investigate the role played by the activist media in promoting counter visions of possible futures. Thirdly, to investigate the practices and ideas that local people have developed to resist or accept globalisation. The research employs a multi-method approach combining ethnographic methods, a questionnaire survey; textual analysis; and focus groups.

The findings point to a complex relationship between mediated representations and visions of modernity. They also demonstrate that villagers' responses are strongly stratified by age, length of residence, and relation to the pivot of the new industrialisation- a major chemical plant and that they remain strongly influenced by the crucial nexus of traditional Thai society, the patron client system. Additionally, content analysis and critical discourse analysis suggest that Thai news television programmes reproduced both the ideology of globalism and the celebration of consumerism. Moreover, the voices of marginalized groups and local people are also absent from the activist media.

Key words: globalisation, industrialisation, activist media, media representations, audience reception, Thailand, globalism and textual analysis.

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List of Abbreviation

BBTV	Bangkok Broadcasting & Television Company Ltd
BEC	World Bangkok Entertainment Co.
CDA	Critical discourse analysis
CODI	Community Organisation Development Institute (Public Organisation), Thailand
DVD	Digital Video disc
EGAT	Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESB	Eastern Seaboard Project, Thailand
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNP	Capita gross national product
IMF	International Monetary Fund
ITV	Independent Television, Thailand
MAI	Multilateral Agreement on Investment
MCOT	Mass Communications Organization of Thailand
MNCs	Multinational corporations
NEDB	National Economic Development Board, Thailand
NGO	Non governmental organization
NIC	Newly industrialized country
OECD	Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
PM	Prime Minister
PRD	Public Relation Department, Thailand
RCDO	Rayong Community Development Organisation
SIF	Thailand Social Investment Fund
TCC	Trans-national capitalist class
TDRI	Thailand Development Research Institute
TITV	Thai Independent Television, Thailand
TNCs	Transnational corporations
TPBS	Thai Public Broadcasting Television Services
TPI	Thai Petrochemical Industry Company

UK	The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
UN	The United Nations
UNCTAD	United Nations Conference on Trade and Development
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	The United nations Children's Fund
U.S.	The United States of America
VCD	Video Compact disc
VHS	Video home system
WTO	The World Trade Organization

Introduction

Background

Thailand's relation to the present wave of globalisation is mediated by two distinctive features of the society:

1) Firstly, in contrast to other nations in South East Asia, Thailand has never been physically colonised by either the major western powers or by Japan. Consequently, western patterns of modernity have a relatively shorter history. Many Thai rural communities, especially in Northern and North East still rely primarily on agriculture for their livelihood and as in the case study village which forms the main focus of this thesis, key dimensions of modernity- industrialisation, urbanisation and consumerism – have arrived only recently, setting in motion a highly compressed process of change.

(2) Secondly, compared to other developing countries, trans-national corporations do not occupy a central or dominant position in the Thai economic arena. Key corporations, including the major mainstream media companies, remain in the hands of a Thai business elite with close links to government and state agencies.

This distinctive combination of features has led some sociologists (see for instance, Nartsupa and Lertvicha, 1995) to argue that Thailand has not yet been so thoroughly or deeply affected by globalisation and capitalist modernity as other Asian societies and that the outcome of globalisation processes is likely to differ from those countries which were colonised by Western imperialism. In contrast, other Thai scholars (Thanapornpan, 1995; and Sriaraya, 1994, 1997, 2001 and 2003) argue that the rapidity of Thailand's modernisation since the first National Economic and Social Development Plan in 1961 has left it more vulnerable to the major forces of western modernity and contemporary globalisation. Pongsapich (2002:101) for example argues that the shift in Thai state ideology from Buddhist principles to capitalist values since 1961 has opened the way for Thai society to be comprehensively transformed into a capitalist society.

Surveying the continuing debate on Thailand's globalisation one conspicuous gap stands out however. Despite the growth of mass communications studies and the expansion of

global communications in recent years, it is difficult to find media research in Thailand that engages with the wider dynamics of globalisation. At the same time, economic and political studies which have examined the activities of trans-national corporations and the impact of neo-liberalism have tended to ignore both the role of the media, and the responses and interpretations of the groups who have been net losers from change. This thesis aim to fill this double gap by developing a multi-disciplinary approach to the relationships between globalisation, media and local people's perspectives, including the responses of marginalized groups.

Before moving on to the basic theoretical framework presented in chapter 1 however, I want to sketch in the basic background to this study and clarify the basic arguments I wish to pursue.

Figure A: Map of Thailand

Source: Modified from

http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=Thailand+map&um=1&ie=UTF-8&split=0&sa=X&oi=geocode_result&resnum=1&ct=title

Ban Neon Putsa Plauk Ked, Rayong: A Case Study of Rapid Change in Eastern Thailand

Following the initial push to industrialisation in the 1980s Thailand experienced rapid growth in the economy, in basic infrastructures and technologies, and in the communication industry. Eastern Thailand, and more particularly the province of Rayong, was selected to be the site of largest industrial complex in the country. As a result, since 1981 Rayong has been transformed from a predominantly agricultural area to a major industrial hub. Land, including the sea shore which has been urbanised to support industrial plant and provide housing for the influx of migrant labour. The launch of the National Economic and Social Development Plan, with encouragement and assistance from powerful countries, particularly the US, not only accelerated and intensified the processes of industrialisation and globalisation in Rayong province, it also created environmental and social problems.

This present research explores the ways this uneven process of change has been represented in mainstream media and perceived and responded to by both activist groups and local residents. It is based on a detailed study of one particular village in Rayong, Ban Neon Putsa Plauk Ked.

The research has three main aims: (1) To examine how the processes and underlying values of globalisation and industrialisation, and the problems they have generated, are represented in the mainstream media consumed most often by the villagers.
(2) To investigate the roles of the activist media in the community and to explore local people's responses to their campaigns.
(3) To investigate the ideas, experiences and practices that underpin patterns of resistance or accommodating to globalisation in the community.

Before 1980, Ban Neon Putsa Plauk Ked, the field work site, was a thriving agricultural community with rich natural resources surrounded by mangrove forest, a community forest, sea, paddy fields and fruit farms. In 1981, a massive petrochemical factory was constructed in the centre of the village setting in motion a swift and far-reaching process of

change. With the acceleration of urbanisation and the arrival of supermarkets, malls and a fully fledged consumer culture in the 1990s, the village's incorporation into global modernity intensified. Positive outcomes such as rising income levels were combined with negative consequences, including loss of natural resources, environmental degradation, social problems and cultural dislocation. As a consequence, the transition produced both winners and losers. This research pays particular attention to ways the grounded experiences and responses to change and to media representations are stratified by three factors; age, length of residence (comparing indigenous people and newcomers to the village), and relative position in the power structure.

A Multi-methods Approach

Addressing the core aims of the research has required a multi-methods approach that integrates both quantitative and qualitative methods, focuses on ethnography and textual analysis, and audience analysis, and situates the case study in the wider context of Thailand's integration into the global market system. The empirical study was undertaken in three stages:

First, ethnography work in the village of Ban Neon Putsa Plauk Ked was carried out using a combination of participant observation, a fieldwork diary, in-depth interviews, image and documents collection, and a questionnaire survey (see Questionnaire in Appendix A). The aims were to explore the villagers' patterns of media consumption, to map villagers' experiences of change, to examine their perceptions and responses, and to explore the cultural resources they drew on.

Second, textual analysis, combining content analysis with critical discourse analysis (CDA), was conducted on a purposive sample of mainstream television news and comment programmes, together with a critical discourse analysis of the activist newsletter distributed to villagers, *Power of Community*.

Third, audience analysis was carried out using focus groups stratified by age, length of residence, and the patterns of media consumption.

During phase 1 of the study, I lived in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked for about eight months. The questionnaire survey, participant observation, in-dept interviews and collecting photos were used to explore patterns of media consumption, attitudes toward globalisation and to investigating the recent history of the village.

The sample size of the survey was 298 people, subdivided into six groups stratified by age and length of residence. Respondents were divided by age into three groups: 15-30 years old, 31-50 years old and over 50 years old, and by length of residence into indigenous residents and newcomers. Purposive quota sampling was employed to produce sub samples of 50 in each of the six groups generated by this sampling frame. This target was achieved for all groups except working age newcomers where the eventual total was 48 (see details in chapter 7).

The survey questionnaire covered four main areas: general data, media reception, alternative media, and globalisation (see Appendix A).

In addition to the general survey sample, in-dept interviews using semi-structured and open ended questions were conducted with ten respondents from key social sectors whose actions had impacted on the community either directly or indirectly. They were: two TPI factory executive (giving interview together), an activist media producer, a fisherman, a house estate owner, a Buddhist monk, two peasants, a former local leader, and a local politician.

The precise questions asked were adapted to the particular roles these key respondents had played but all the interviews covered three main areas:
Perceptions of the problems facing the village: environmental degradation, health, livelihood, loss of natural resources, and teenage behaviour
The impact of industry and globalisation on the community
Strategies developed for managing and responding to these impacts

The results of the questionnaire survey and other ethnographic evidence showed that all six of the main grouping in the village (stratified by age and length of residence) nominated at

least one television news or comment bulletin in the list of the programmes they watched most often. These finding were used to organise the textual analysis.

In Phase two, the textual analysis, 589 news items broadcast on Channels 3 and 7 (the channels nominated as favourites by the villagers) during the first half of the fieldwork period content analysed to map the most frequently presented themes relation to globalisation and the most often quoted sources (see Appendix B-Coding Sheet and Appendix C-Code book).

Critical discourse analysis was then applied to deconstruct the strategies and frames employed in the coverage of four issues related to globalisation which the ethnographic fieldwork had suggested were particularly salient to different groups of villagers. They were the Mae Moh power plant, the water shortage in Rayong, the talent contest in the At Ten variety show, and the scandal surrounding the pregnancy before marriage of the popular celebrity, Kathleeya McIntosh.

Critical Discourse Analysis was also conducted on the activist newsletter to determine how it constructed 'tradition' as a counter to prevailing conceptions of global modernity.

The phase two results revealed the frames and strategies through which the mainstream television news and the activist media represented globalisation. These findings, in combination with the ethnographic evidence on local people's responses to change, were then used to design the audience analysis.

The objective of phase three was to investigate how audiences in the village perceived globalisation, and how they responded to the representations promoted by both the mainstream and activist media. How did they make sense of these accounts and what cultural resources or belief systems underpinned their perceptions?

There were six focus groups designed to map significant variations in grounded experience. The participants were made up of respondents from the general survey sample. The three organising dimensions were: length of residence – contrasting indigenous

residents who had lived in the village prior to the onset of industrialisation, with newcomers who had migrated to the village in search of work in the new industrial plants.

The second dimension is age- young people, adults of working age, and older and retired residents. And the third dimension is the media consumption patterns revealed by the survey, focussing particularly on their degree of contact with alternative media. Both males and females participated in each group with total numbers varying between 4 and 12 (further details of the focus groups and the limitations of using this method in the village context are given in chapters 11 and 12).

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The analysis in Phase three, operated at two levels.

The first level investigated how respondents perceived the impact of 'globalisation' in their daily life. Here the evidence from the focus groups discussions was combined with data from the phase one: questionnaire survey and the ethnographic work.

The second level, focused on the relationship between media representations and audience interpretations and reactions. Here participants were expressly asked to consider the four case study issues analysed in phase two.

It is important to note that this thesis does not argue that the mass media are the only resource which shapes people's perspectives in relation to globalisation or that they impinge directly on people's perceptions. Rather, the aim of the research reported here is to examine to what extent and in what social contexts media representations and people's

perspectives work together or contradict each other and how audiences negotiate or counter prevailing representations.

Table Intro1 provides the main elements of the multi-methods used in this thesis.

Table Intro 1: Main elements of multi-methods

Contents of methods	Chapters	Pages
Selecting the fieldwork site	6	119
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The Core Arguments of The Thesis

Argument 1 Globalisation is an ideological as well as an economic, political and cultural process.

Capitalist modernity, the core institutional ideological constellation of the present wave of globalisation, has penetrated different countries in different ways. In the Americas, its arrival was mediated through formal political independence, while in Africa, the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia, it was embedded through colonial rule. In Thailand in contrast, it was secured through a combination of external threats and selective imports (Therborn, 1995).

These diverse histories and routes into modernity pose problems for the grand theories of globalisation proposed by Giddens (1990), Albrow (1996) and Robertson (1992). Firstly, they alert us to the need to engage with cultural as well as institutional processes. Secondly, they caution against using summative phrases such as Robertson's global consciousness (1992) and Gidden's remark: that 'everyone lives in the single world' (1990), that suggest that the processes involved are homogeneous. In contrast to these easy over generalisations, this thesis argues that accounts of globalisation and its impacts need to take more account of the specificities of historical contexts, local communities and individual experiences.

I argue that globalisation is not only related to political, economic, cultural or environmental aspects. In fact, we should see globalisation as the ideological process which is closely associated with the mass media as Steger (2002) proposes the notion of 'globalism' discourses, and I will articulate in chapters 8, 9 and 10 textual analysis.

Additionally I want to argue that the core institutional processes at the centre of external globalizing forces impact on various groups in different ways depending on their relative position within the core nexus that organises power relations within a particular society. As we shall see in chapters 7, 10 and 12 the specific forms that globalisation has taken in Thailand and the responses to them are the result of processes of selection informed by the society's hierarchy structure and patronage system.

Argument 2 The mainstream media serve to confirm prevailing power relations and to exclude the voices of local people and those marginalised or dispossessed by globalisation.

As noted above, globalisation not only brings about political, economic and cultural changes, it also cultivates particular ideologies. Chapters 8 and 9 focus on television news and explore the presentation of contemporary events and problems sustains the interests and power of privileged groups. At the same time, CDA will be used to examine the presentational strategies employed to reject alternatives ideologies or ignore contested ideas that are not legitimised by elite groups.

The approach used here, to examine how pervasive ideologies are disseminated and embedded in everyday life, is multi dimensional combining historical analysis, ethnography, discourse analysis, and research on the reaction of audience groups with different experiences and different positions within the social system. As Thompson (1990) argues, a satisfactory approach to the question of ideology:

> must examine the ways in which individuals differentially situated in the social order respond to and make sense of particular symbolic forms, and how these symbolic forms, when analysed in relation to the contexts in which they are produced, received and understood, serve (or do not serve) to establish and sustain relations of domination (Thompson, 1990: 91-92).

My research explores how different groups of the villagers make sense and respond to the media text offered by television news and by the activist media. These 'Symbolic forms' might influence some groups but be resisted by others. I shall argue that one of major factors accounting for these differences is the groups' relationship with privileged groups such as the factory owners and officials.

Argument 3 The voices of marginalized groups and local people are also absent from activist media proposing alternatives to the dominant account of globalisation, leaving them doubly excluded.

The voices of grass roots experience and of the disadvantaged have been largely excluded from the literature and debates on change based on grand narratives (modernity, neo-liberalism and globalisation). This is true not only of dominant media but also of major academic accounts. Giddens's influential work on globalisation for example, presents it as the outcome of interaction between four major institutional domains; the world capitalist economy, the nation-state system, the world military order, and the international division of labour (Giddens, 1990). There is no attempt to trace the consequences of these meta - formations for everyday life. 'In contrast, Robertson (1992) proposes a model of 'the global-human condition' or 'the global field' that does include selves or individuals and emphasises 'features of life' or 'comparative interaction of different forms of life'. But this recognition is not followed through with a sustained engagement with the ethnographic evidence. This thesis argues that as well as mapping general dynamics, the study of globalisation must investigate the practical consequences of structural shifts for living conditions at the grass roots.

Turning to the literature on globalisation resistance movements, we tend to take it for granted that these movements articulate the interests of indigenous peoples and those adversely affected by capitalist globalisation. But we need to ask who claims to represent these interests who has a major role in generating the ideologies and fundamental premises of these movements? The available evidence suggests that the discourses of anti globalisation movements discourses are predominantly devised by intellectuals, leading activists, especially in the developed countries, and media activists. One striking example is noted in Curran's work (2003) on the Open Democracy site which reveals that

much of the discourse of the magazine – despite its staff's best efforts – is clearly a dialogue among elites in different countries: among their intellectuals, politicians, administrators, NGO activists, and businesspeople (Curran, 2003: 238).

The participants in this research have been confronted with the negative consequences of globalisation for decades but as we will see, building on the fieldwork data in chapter 10 and chapter 12, many remain unconvinced by the anti globalisation rhetorics and proposals put forward by 'outside' activists operating in the village, seeing them as out-of-touch with local realities. As a consequence, resignation and accommodation are more frequent responses than resistance.

The Structure of The Thesis

The thesis is comprised of five parts:

Part one: 'Globalisation in Action' presents chapter 1 and chapter 2.

Part two: 'Thailand in Transition' presents chapters 3, 4, and 5.

Part three: 'Experiencing and Negotiating Globalisation: Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked' is explored in chapters 6 and chapter 7.

Part four: 'Media Representations' is investigated in chapter 8, 9 and 10.

Part five: 'Interpreting Globalisation: Audiences and Resources' is analysed in chapters 11, 12 and 13.

Chapter 1 discusses theories of global capitalism and the ideology of globalism. Chapter 2 Contesting Globalisation, examines anti-globlaisation movements and the concept of localism as well as clarifies the key terms alternative and activist media.

Placing present developments in the context of Thai history is crucial for considering globalisation and ideology. Chapter 3 outlines the core features of modernisation and globalisation in Thailand by tracing their roots back to 1855. Globalisation is seen as a process of increasing engagement with capitalist modernity produced by the interaction of three main factors: external pressures and forces from powerful countries and world

organisations; the support for globalisation among Thai elites; and of the spread of globalised mass media .

Chapter 4, 'the Remaking of Thai Culture' focuses on the patronage system in Thailand and on Buddhism as core belief systems within Thai society. The development of Thai mainstream media and media representations are also discussed. The cultural consequences of globalisation and the development of mass media are explored together with one of the main counter conceptions, 'community culture', which has had a major influence on social movements in Thailand.

Chapter 5, 'the Transformation of Eastern Thailand' focuses on the contextual changes that have occurred in the region where the fieldwork village is located.

In Part 3 'Experiencing and Negotiating Globalisation: Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked', the focus shifts to the fieldwork case study with Chapter 6 presenting an overview of the history, geography, socio-demographic composition and globalisation of the village.

Chapter 7 'Interpretive Resources and Negotiating: Lived Experience, Social Locations and Grounded Culture', it draws on the fieldwork data to examine how the villagers perceive globalisation and what social practices or collective/individual actions and ideas are employed to promote or resist globalisation. The data shows that different groups construct different meanings of globalisation depending on their position in the patronage system, their age and their length of residence in the village.

The focus then shifts to the textual analysis of mainstream television news in chapter 8. The three most popular television news programmes nominated by villagers are content analysed in order to map which arenas of globalisation were presented, whose voices were given most prominence and which concerning globalisation were presented most frequently.

Drawing on critical discourse analysis (CDA), chapter 9 undertakes a detailed exploration of the coverage of four case study issues related to participants' experiences of

globalisation to establish the strategies and frames employed. The issues chosen were all current during fieldwork period (2005).

In Chapter 10 on activist media representations, the analysis shifts from visual media to print media, focussing on the newsletter: *Power of Community* distributed within the village. CDA is again employed with the analysis concentrating on two dimensions: the text, pictures and composition of the front page; and the editorial page. This chapter also examines the part played by the activist media in the community more generally looking at ideology, production, distribution and funding.

Having looked at how the villagers construct the meanings of 'globalisation' in chapter 7 and how the media represent 'globalisation' in chapters 8, chapter 9 and chapter 10, Chapters 11 and 12 explore how villagers respond to representations of globalisation in both mainstream television news and the activist media. In both cases, the focus group discussions were based on participants watching or reading selected texts.

Chapter 13 'Living with Globalisation: Ideology and Activity', this connects to chapter 11 and 12 by analysing and summarising what the villager's ideas, experiences and practices that underpin patterns of resistance or accommodating to globalisation in the community.

Chapter 14 summarises the findings of the research, reflects on its limitations and suggests directions for future studies.

Part One: Globalisation in Action

Chapter 1

Situating Globalisation: General Processes And Local Impacts

1.1 Globalisation As The Generalisation Of Modernity

1.1.1 From Modernity To Globalisation

According to Hall, Held and McGrew (1992), modernity was developed from the idea of 'the modern' which originated with the discourse of the Enlightenment in Europe in the eighteenth century. Modernity involves 'patterns of change and development', which incorporate

> the nation-states and an international system of states; a dynamic and
> expansionist capitalist economic order based on private property; industrialism;
> the growth of large-scale administrative and bureaucratic systems of social
> organisation and regulation; the dominance of secular, materialist, rationalist
> and individualist cultural values; and the formal separation of the 'private from
> the public' (Hall, Held and McGrew, 1992: 3).

These characteristics originated in Europe and diffused over other regions, including Asia.

For the purposes of the analysis presented here I want to draw on the ideas of three main theorists of globalisation and modernity, Giddens, Albrow and Robertson.

Anthony Giddens (1990) has proposed an influential institutional definition of modernity which identifies it with capitalism, industrialism, military power, and surveillance. He defines industrialism as:

> [the] use of inanimate sources of material power in the production of goods,
> coupled to the central role of machinery in the production process...the notion
> of industrialism applies to high-technology settings...industrialism moreover,
> affects not only the workplace but transportation, communication, and domestic
> life (Giddens, 1990: 56 and 58).

This process has been the primary agent of transformation in the fieldwork village.

Giddens (1990:63) also regards modernity as 'inherently globalising'. For him globalisation is an the extension of modernity's core characteristics across the globe to produce the world capitalist economy; the nation-states system; the world military order and lastly, the international division of labour (industrial development).

In contrast, Martin Albrow (1996) posits an historical break and argues that the modern age has been superseded by 'the Global Age'. He stresses that we need to abandon the grand narrative of modernity to 'gain an appreciation of the epoch shift involved with the advent of the Global Age' (Albrow, 1996:78). He objects to Giddens's account of globalisation as a consequence of modernity, pointing out that:

> Globalisation is not a single overall process of change. It characterises the beginning of the Global Age simply because the weight of reference to globality displaces modernity from prior position in characterizing the configuration, but it has no inherent direction or necessary end-point. In this respect it is unlike modernity (Albrow, 1996:95).

Against Giddens' focus on institutions, Albrow argues that a proper assessment of the globalisation process requires empirical data concerning 'what is happening to the frames of meaning in people's lives' (Albrow, 1996:79). Accordingly, his notion of the 'Global Age' gives prominence to the consequential relationships between historical transformations, new experiences and individual lives. He emphasises the process whereby people are 'made global'.

Giddens's assertion that globalisation is a consequence of modernity is also questioned by Roland Robertson (1992), who argues that globalisation cannot be regarded as a simple consequence of the western project of modernity since the process is increasingly affected by variations in 'civilizational, societal, ethnic, regional, and individual self-consciousness' (Robertson, 1992:27). He proposes a model of globalisation which he calls 'the global field' made up of four interrelated dimensions: 1) national societies; 2) individuals or selves; 3) relationships between national societies or the world system of societies; and 4) humankind (Robertson, 1992:25). Two features of this model are particularly relevant to the argument advanced in this thesis. First, it emphasises the need to examine the

connections between global processes and local, individual lives and conditions. Second, it sees these relations as varying depending on the particular histories and conditions in play in particular locations at particular times.

Robertson (1995) also proposes the idea of glocalisation, in opposition to both the conception of globalisation advanced by Giddens which incorporates it within the grand narrative of 'modernity' (such as Giddens) and the argument that global dynamics always determines local contexts and practices. He sees these macrosociological perspectives, which focus on very large-scale phenomena and abandon microsociological or local issues, as 'very misleading' (Robertson, 1995: 25). Since, in the contemporary world he argues, the interconnectedness of global culture involves 'invention' within many localities or communities or even 'homes', 'glocalisation' is a more appropriate term than globalisation to describe the core dynamic. Because globalisation consistently generates local movements which variously resist, adapt and modify global forces it always produces heterogenization as well as homgenization, process that appear opposed but are in fact 'mutually implicative' (Robertson, 1995: 27).

1.1.2 Disembedding and Deterritorialization

Another key concept concerned with the shifting relationship between cultural globalisation and local conditions is Giddens's notion of *disembedding* which he defines as the 'lifting out of social relations from local contexts of interaction and their restructuring across indefinite spans of time-space' (Giddens, 1990:21). He nominates two main agents of disembedding: symbolic tokens and expert systems. He sees 'money' as the most important symbolic token arguing that it circulates as a measure of value ' *without regard to the specific characteristics of individuals or groups* ' that may handle it at any particular juncture. (Giddens, 1990:22). My ethnographic research in the fieldwork village provided a clear local example of this process in action. As we will see later, the rapid growth of industrialisation, a wage economy and consumerism installed money as a major yardstick of evaluation within the community.

Giddens second major mechanism of disembedding, expert systems, are made up of the bodies of specialised knowledge required to construct and operate complex systems, particularly those, such as power plants or computer networks, based on command of

advanced technologies. Since lay people lack this knowledge they have no choice but to 'trust' that experts will deploy their expertise to improve the overall quality of collective life and minimise potential risks and harm. However, as the field work research on local reactions to the continuing pollution from the factories in the village shows very clearly, trust is a fragile resource which can easily be lost when expert systems are seen to operate in defence of particular interests rather than the common good.

Before leaving the various attempts to specify the relations between cultural globalisation and locality we need to consider John Tomlinson's (1999) influential analysis of deterritorialization which he presents as a complex process that touches almost every facet of mundane lived experience in particular localities. In developing this argument he distinguishes two main dynamics.

The first operates at a national level. Mobilising Billig's notion of 'banal' nationalism as 'the routine reinforcement, through the steady tempo of everyday life, of images which attach the citizen's identity to the nation-state' (Tomlinson, 1999:119) he sees deterrioterialization encroaching on the unconscious of daily life through a myriad of communication forms ranging from 'the routine rhetorical forms of politicians, the news in national daily newspapers, every sections of news from sports, popular culture to weather news' (Tomlinson, 1999). As the analysis of television news presented on Chapters 8 and 9 demonstrates however, projecting the nation as an imagined community is always provisional and often contested. Despite strong continuing state control news coverage reflects the tensions between the two views of Thailand as a nation that have shaped the country's politics in recent years, one centred on the Royal Family and the army and stressing continuity and deference, the other rooted in the new business class and employing a more populist rhetoric.

1.2 Global Capitalism And The Ideology Of Globalism

1.2.1 Global Capitalism

Theorists of Global capitalism follow Giddens in proposing an institutional approach to globalisation but part company with him in nominating capital as the primary agent of transformation. Ross and Trachte's (1990) discussion of global capitalism, for instance,

claims that we are now witnessing 'a new moment in capitalist development' (Ross and Trachte, 1990:4) in which global firms are coming to play a pivotal role in shaping national policies, as well as local economies and local politics.

Ross and Trachte see this process as securing the 'hegemony' of western capital, confirming its dominance as both natural and inevitable. As a consequence, they argue, the workers of Asia, peripheral Europe and Latin America, are 'acutely conscious of the stakes of the game in international trade, but hardly ever conscious of their common fate' (Ross and Trachte, 1990:10). Their fate is determined by 'investment of global firms, credit denial by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and global banks, and economic and political pressures by core states' (Ross and Trachte, 1990:112).

Ross and Trachte argue that while global capitalism decentralises industrialisation from First World countries to Third World countries, it does not necessarily bring wealth and equality to these 'peripheral' localities. Rather, their inhabitants are as likely or more likely to encounter malnutrition, poverty and income inequality. However, Ross and Trachte argue, opposition is diffused by the hegemony of 'the rhetoric of the business climate' which persuades the local working class that they will lose jobs if there is any challenge to capitalist enterprises. This compliance is reproduced at the national level where the hegemony of the discourse of high competition in international trade encourages governments to cut down on social services, relax regulations enforcing occupational health and safety, and offer generous tax relief and incentives to capitalist enterprises in the interests of attracting inward investment (Ross and Trachte, 1990).

McMichael (2004) sees this 'Globalisation Project' as a continuation of the 'Development project' spearheaded by the US in the post war period. This project was organised around institutionally around the Bretton Woods system and the practices of supra-national organisations such as the United Nations (UN), the World Bank, and the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and ideologically around the identification of 'development' with industrialisation, consumption and globality (McMichael, 2004).

The discourse of development emphasised the significance of economic growth. Capita gross national product (GNP), or the national average of per capita income, or the

commercial output of goods and services within a country, a measure introduced by the UN charter in 1945, became the prime criterion used to calibrate 'a rising standard of living' (McMichael, 2004). However, to be characterised as a 'good society', nations also had to display high levels of mass consumption', a measure promoted by the influential U.S. economic adviser Walt Rostow. Taken together, increased growth and consumption defined what 'development' meant and became accepted as not simply desirable but as necessary. As McMichael argues;

> Perhaps the most compelling aspect of the development project was a powerful perception by planners, governmental elites, and citizens alike that development was destiny (McMichael, 2004: 30).

Both the World Bank and the IMF have played a crucial role in shaping national development agendas. The Electrical Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT) is an example. With the loan provided by the World Bank, EGAT has constructed several dams in Thai rural localities, including areas rich in natural resources and forest land. This in turn has had a huge impact on local agrarian communities, who have been forced to relocate. In addition, when debtor countries were unable to repay their loans, the World Bank and the IMF offered them new loan-rescheduling conditions on the condition that they 'restructured' their economies by opening public sectors to private investors and 'looked outward' rather than inward for their development implementation. McMichael (2004) sees these demands as central to the new 'globalisation project' that employs the globalisation of markets and financial liberalisation to consolidate the global reach and power of the core capitalist economies. He describes the core elements of this globalisation project as follows:

> A (Washington-based) consensus among global managers/policy makers favoring market-based rather than state-managed development strategies;
>
> Centralized management of global market rules by the G-7 states;
>
> Implementation of these rules through multilateral agencies (World Bank, IMF, and WTO);
>
> Concentration of market power in the hands of TNCs and financial power in the hands of TNBs;

> Subjection of all states to economic disciplines (trade, financial, labor), varying by the position in the state system (North/South/East), global currency hierarchy, debt loan, resource endowments, and so forth;
>
> Realisation of global development via new gender, race, and ethnic inequalities;
>
> A countermovement at all levels, from marginalized communities to state managers to factions even within multilateral institutions, contesting and second-guessing unbridled market rule (McMichael, 2004: 199).

For him, this new project is the most powerful ordering force in the contemporary situation because the nation-state role is diminished and controlled by global elites (McMichael, 2004:195).

For Leslie Sklair (2002) however, the relations between local elites and transnational capital are characterised more by collusion than imposition. He sees 'capitalist globalisation' being controlled by an emerging trans-national capitalist class (TCC) made up of four fractions: 1) TNC executives and their local affiliates (corporate fraction); 2) Globalizing state and inter-state bureaucrats and politicians (state fraction); 3) Globalizing professionals (technical fraction); and 4) Merchants and media (consumerist fraction) (Sklair, 2002:99). In his schema these four fractions work together to sustain global capitalism and elite power by eliminating national and local political obstacles and maintaining rising rates of consumption.

Achieving this goal, Sklair argues, involves promoting 'the culture-ideology of consumerism' as the master ideology of change and transformation. This ideology

> thrives by persuading us that the meaning and value of our lives are to be found principally in what we possess, that we can never be totally satisfied with our possessions, and that the goods and services we consume are best provided by the free market (Sklair 2000:6).

As the major arena for the advertising that expresses this ideology in its most concentrated form and for the news and comment that presents the globalisation of capital as inevitable and desirable, the mass media play a key role in this ideological process.

1.2.2 Ideology Of Globalism

In an influential formulation, Steger (2002) maintains that the present drive towards globalisation is underpinned and legitimated by the ideology of globalism, which he identifies as 'the dominant political ideology of our time' (Steger, 2002:6). This ideology he argues, is firmly rooted in neo liberal assumptions and built around five key propositions.

Firstly, Globalisation is identified with 'the liberalization and global integration of markets' (Steger, 2002:47) and its claimed benefits in delivering not only material progress but also enhanced democracy and personal freedom (Steger, 2002:47).

Secondly, globalism asserts that 'globalization is inevitable and irreversible' (Steger, 2002: 54). In this conception, the structural changes produced by the pursuit of globalisation are presented not as the outcome of specific, and contestable, political and corporate decisions, but as 'some sort of natural force, like the weather or gravity' (Steger, 2002:56). As we shall see, this sense that there is no alternative to present policies and that the Thai people 'must adapt to the discipline of the market if [they] are to survive and prosper' (Steger, 2002:56) pervades the mainstream media coverage analysed in this thesis. Interestingly, Steger goes on to argue that the sense of globalisation's irreversibility fosters 'an attitude of political passivity in the face of inevitability' (Steger, 2002:57). Again, as we shall see, despite being highly critical of the motivations of key actors and the consequences of their polices, participants in this study accepted the changes generated by globalisation as a fait accompli and devised a variety of personal strategies for adapting, coping, and taking advantage .

The third claim advanced by globalism is that 'Nobody is in Charge of Globalization' and that change is the outcome of the logics inherent in markets and technologies. Steger contends that this evacuation of agency has the effect of depoliticizing public debate, marginalizing alternatives, and undermining anti-globalisation movements (Steger, 2002: 66). This empty space is then filled by the ideology of consumerism which promotes and glamourises the tangible, and immediate, benefits of change.

This movement from political action to personal consumption is further bolstered by the fourth claim advanced by globalism which is that 'Globalization Benefits Everyone'. This assertion is at the very core of globalism since it offers a convincing answer to the question of whether, on balance, globalisation is a good or a bad phenomenon and that the pains of transition are outweighed by the gains (Steger, 2002: 66). The popular commercial media play a central role in fostering the consumerist ethos that links the benefits of change to personal choice and material betterment. As Steger notes:

> Globalist ideology appears as 'videology' the product of popular culture driven by commercial interests that incessantly instills in its audience the values, needs, and desires required for the expansion of markets (Steger, 2002: 69).

The last claim advanced by globalism is 'that the advance of free markets furthers the spread of democracy' (Steger, 2002: 73). Steger criticizes these assertions, and its best know proponents such Francis Fukuyama (1992) and Thomas Friedman (1999), pointing out that:

> The claim that globalization furthers the spread of democracy in the world is largely based on a narrow, formal-procedural understanding of 'democracy'. Neoliberal economic globalization and the strategic promotion of polyarchic regimes in the Third World are, therefore, two sides of the same ideological coin. They represent the systemic prerequisites for the legitimation of a full-blown world market (Steger, 2002: 75).

The Thai case corresponds closely to this analysis. Just after the fieldwork for this thesis was completed, the elected government was deposed by an army coup, an event that highlighted the key fault line running through the Thai elite, between the old guard comprising the monarchy, aristocracy and the army and the business class. As we shall see, the variations in the news coverage analysed in later chapters are mapped closely on to this divide.

In examining how the ideology of globalism operates in and through the news coverage of relevant issues, we shall follow Steger's advocacy of critical discourse analysis as the most useful methodological approach to the linguistic and ideological practices that achieve the closure of communication around core propositions of globalism (Steger, 2002:14).

1.3 Globalising Media

1.3.1 Who Controls The Media?

The ideological role played by media in the process of capitalist globalisation has attracted increasing interest and debate in recent years with the work Herman and McChesney (1997) commanding particular attention. They see the increasing global reach of the major western transnational media corporations reinforcing 'basic assumptions and modes of thought' supportive of a new liberal vision of social development through four main processes:

> 1) Advertising creates consumption as the primary value which tends to invigorate materialistic values but undermine the spirit of community and sympathetic feelings toward others.

> 2) Displacement of the public sphere with entertainment. To fulfil advertisers' interests and maintain audience ratings to attract higher budgets from advertisers, the mainstream media remove depth, informational and educational programmes such as documentaries and public affair analysis, and increase entertainment, talk shows, game shows, music, and infotainment programmes.

> 3) The globalising commercial media tend to strengthen conservative political forces by advocating neo-liberal economic policies which fulfil advertisers' and TNCs' interests and power, but subvert social democratic alternatives.

> 4) Deterioration of local cultures (Herman and McChesney, 1997:154).

Where other scholars have proposed models of the active audience and argued that media materials are always open to plural responses, including resistance and refusal, Herman and McChesney insist that this 'approach misses the possibility of cumulative effects over time of ideological premises buried in images, lifestyles, and story frames' (Herman and McChesney 1997:195).

As I will argue later, these arguments are not mutually exclusive. The villagers in this study were often critical of the television news reports they watched and drew on their own grounded experiences and maps of the operations of power to support sceptical and counter readings. At the same time, the majority also saw the present trajectory of globalisation that had transformed their living condition in the space of a few years, as inevitable and

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unstoppable. Partly this was a reaction to the failure of the early local protest movements against industrialisation but it was also sustained by the constant reiteration of ideologies of globalism and consumerism in the mainstream media. It was further confirmed by the failure of the activist media operating in the locality to offer an alternative perspective and programme of action that villagers found practicable. Moreover, they saw both the mainstream and the activist media as run by elites speaking on behalf of powerful interest rather than the 'ordinary person' and excluding their voices and views.

1.3.2 Hegemony and Common Sense

One of the aims of this thesis is to 'unpack' news discourses of the mainstream news media in Thailand and the activist media, and to identify the strategies employed to render the present course of capitalist globalisation 'natural' and inevitable. In pursuit of this aim, I have found it helpful to draw on Antonio Gramsci's analysis of the relations between hegemony and 'common sense'.

Gramsci defines common sense as 'the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become 'common' in any given epoch' (Gramsci, 1971:322). Its roots may lie in the grounded understandings expressed in folk wisdom and vernacular sayings but for him, there is a continual pull towards translation, whereby elements are removed from their original and particular origins and mobilised in the service of a more generalised understanding 'closer to the conception of the world of the leading group' (Gramsci, 1971:421). As we shall see, this process was at work in the news coverage and commentary selected for detailed analysis in Chapter 9. In contrast to the largely formal language deployed in Channel 7 (one of the most viewed sources among villagers), Channel 3 (another popular choice) made frequent use of popular expressions and humour. Arguably, this populist strategy had the effect of anchoring the 'normality' of dominant discourse even more securely in the ebb and flow of everyday speech.

Efforts to establish the ideological hegemony of globalism and consumerism have not gone uncontested however. On the contrary, they have been consistently countered by social movement mounting critiques of dominant understandings of globalisation and offering alternative programmes of social development.

Chapter 2

Contesting Globalisation

2.1 Modes of Resistance

2.1.1 Trans-national Anti-globalisation Movements

Much of the commentary on anti-globalisation movements has focused on the trans-national coalition that crystalised around opposition to the Multilateral Agreement on Investment (MAI) devised in 1995 at Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD). The terms of the agreement entered the public domain, via the Internet in 1997, and were widely seen by critics as an attempt 'to do for foreign investment what the WTO was doing for trade, namely to abolish barriers, to establish level playing fields, and to ease the progress of capitalist globalisation' (Sklair, 2002: 287). Opposition to the MAI centered on two main issues. First, that the negotiations to establish it has been undemocratic and dominated by global corporate sectors and western led multilateral agencies. Second, that the agreements arrived at lacked concern for social justice, labour rights, food safety, health and environmental sustainability (Ayres, 2002).

These criticism assumed a dramatic and very visible form when the anti-globalisation movement mobilised to organise protests in Seattle in December 1999 at the WTO summit meeting. Further protests followed at subsequent meetings of key multilateral bodies from 2000 to 2002, including one in Chieng Mai in Thailand.

While several authors have focused on the role of 'trans-national networks' in this movement, the links with national movements have been mentioned by rather fewer scholars. However, as Smith has argued, the Seattle demonstration developed from the local level to trans-national level in protesting trade liberalisation agreements, the World Bank's and IMF policies as well as supporting human rights and the environment (Smith and Johnston, 2002:209). As we will see in Chapter 4 a major national grass roots anti globalisation initiative or movement, The Assembly of the Poor, had emerged in Thailand in 1995. The following year it successfully employed mass non-violent direct action to

pressurise the government into revising its development plans and providing compensation for the negative impacts of infrastructural projects already undertaken. However, with the onset of the economic crisis of 1997, its public support ebbed away and the attention of anti-globalisation activists switched to campaigns based on community and local initiatives. Many of these were informed by Buddhist principles that had deep roots in Thai culture, but they also drew on the international momentum gathering around a philosophy of localism.

2.1.2 Localism

In his argument for the movement, Localization: A Global Manifesto, Colin Hines usefully defines Localism as 'a process which reverses the trend of globalisation by discrimination in favour of the local' (Hines 2000:5). He supports his advocacy of this strategy with two main arguments. Firstly, he points out that the operations of powerful supranational organisations and TNC's are felt most acutely at a local level. The liberalisation of agricultural markets for example, mostly favours the organised lobbies of cash crop exporters and processors and worsens the situation of poor farmers and local producers. As we shall see in the case of our fieldwork village, the decision to earmark the Rayong region as a centre of rapid industrial development decimated the traditional occupations of fishing and farming by eroding the natural resources that sustained these activities. Secondly, Hines argues, decisions taken at a national level are increasingly reactions or accommodations to pressure exerted by transnational agencies. Consequently,

> globalisation is reducing the power of governments to provide what their populations require all over the world. TNCs and international capital have become the de facto, new world government. Their increasing control over the global economy is underpinned by the free trade orthodoxy (Hines, 2000:16).

As a consequence, localization, focusing on practical and achievable solutions to community problems, is increasingly seen the most immediately effective counter to the pursuit of globalism by national governments. As we shall see, this notion was central to the strategy pursued by the activists operating in the fieldwork village. In common with many activists, they assigned a central role to the production of media that would mobilise popular support for their project.

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2.2 Pressing for Change: Alternative Media

2.2.1 Alternative Media: Clarifying Definitions

Non-mainstream media are defined by both their organisation and their content. At an organisational level they are characterised by varying combinations of small scale settings, non-profit activities, democratic-participant communication and acting as mediated channels for communities and the disadvantaged groups such as women, the oppressed, working class people, subculture groups and minorities. In terms of content and presentation, they offer frameworks that oppose or resist dominant ideologies in each society, often drawing in Marxist inspired anti-capitalism rhetorics and/or Gramscian notions of counter-hegemony (Atton, 2002 and Downing 2001).

Research, in particular Downing (2001), Rodriguez (2001), and Couldry and Curran (2003) casts social movements or resistance movements as crucial 'agents' in producing and supporting non-mainstream media. However, there is considerable variation in the terms employed to characterise these initiatives. Rodriquez (see Couldry and Curran, 2003), prefers to use 'citizen media', Downing (2001) uses 'radical media', while other commentators (Atton, 2001, and Couldry and Curran, 2003), simply use 'alternative media'.

For the purposes of the analysis developed in this study, the most useful starting point is the distinction between advocacy and grassroots media proposed by Michael Traber (1985). He defines advocacy media, as media which challenge conventional news values by giving priority to stories of 'alternative social actors' such as, the poor, the oppressed, and the marginalized and which employ 'alternative language' based on 'a combination of the journalist's observation and the people's own speech' (Traber, 1985:3). Grassroots media, on the other hand are defined less by their content and more by their mode of production based on the direct participation of the community. Professionals may help out with technical production but the contents should be produced by the people who are the subjects of the stories presented.

This distinction is crucial to the analysis presented here since, as we will see, although the alternative media distributed to villagers were strong on advocacy, they failed to involve

local people in their production to any real extent. Although, they were produced in small scale settings, were non commercial, challenged mainstream arguments for capitalist modernity and neo-liberalism, and championed local regeneration and the revival of traditional occupations as an alternative route to development, their design and production was dominated by activists. This was the source of their failure to mobilise support. They were widely seen by villagers as another instance of 'outsiders' imposing their own views and excluding them. Consequently, when referring to these initiatives, I will use the term 'activist media'. When discussing the background to the general development of non-mainstream media in Thailand in Chapters 4 and 5 however the more encompassing term 'alternative media' will be employed.

Part Two: Thailand In Transition

Chapter 3

Modernisation And Globalisation In Thailand

'The nation is wealthy; the people are poor'

Thanapornpan (1995:68)

3.1   Thailand In The Modern World System

The modernisation and globalisation processes that have reshaped Thailand have not only produced economic, political, and environmental changes, they have also shifted public culture's centre of gravity from a Buddhist ideology to a capitalist ideology (see Pongsapich, 2002). In this chapter, four eras of globalisation and Thai development will be described:

From the Bowing Treaty to Thai civilisation

The arrival of the US and the World Bank

The fastest economic growth rate in the world

The Thaksin era

3.1.1 From The Bowring Treaty To Thai Civilisation

Siam (the former name for Thailand) was the only country in Asia which avoided colonisation by either Japan or one of the major western powers. However, the Bowring Treaty of 1855 signed between Britain and the Bangkok Administration, giving the British trading rights in Bangkok and limiting import taxes in the interests of 'free trade', had a crucial impact on the country (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000). Unavoidably, Siam was integrated into an unequal international trading partnership. As Walden Bello has noted, the Treaty, 'practically gave Great Britain control over the country's [Siam] foreign trade' (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998:1). Over the next decade, other western states, including the US, France, Denmark, Portugal, the Netherlands and Germany gained similar rights (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000:98). Since then, Siam was ever more securely locked into the world economic system. The resulting pressure from western powers expansion

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had major consequences for the old administrative system (Mulder, 2000; Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

The idea of 'progress' adopted from the west inspired the national elite of the Royal family and aristocracy to attempt to transform Siam into a more modern nation. Partly this was a protective measure to head off more intense international pressure to create a more westernised culture (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005). Fearing that traditional Siamese dress may appear barbarous in the eyes of diplomats and other foreign visitors, King Mongkut, the fourth king of the Chakri dynasty (1851-1868) instructed people to cover their upper bodies when appearing in the law courts. His successor, King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), embarked on a more comprehensive programme of institutional 'modernisation', hiring western advisers, centralising tax revenues, and reforming the administrative system. He also made major interventions in the cultural sphere, introducing modern education, establishing a modern communication network, and assuming control of the Buddhist monkhood institute (Mulder, 2000; Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005). This marked a crucial turning point, moving education from the sacred world of the Buddhist temple to a secular curriculum based in schools.

Connections with the western world were extensive among the elites. King Chulalongkorn travelled extensively in Europe and sent his sons to be educated in the UK. One graduated with a law degree from Oxford University, and subsequently remodelled the judicial system in Siam (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

The wider cultural links between Siam and the west commenced with the publication in 1844, The Bangkok Recorder, the first newspaper of Thailand produced by Dan Beach Bradley, an American missionary, printed in the Thai language but without the participation of local people. The newspaper presented western views on a range of issues, including social justice, citizens' rights and women's rights (Teeravanich, 1983). It failed to gain the support of local elites however and never achieved a wide readership.

Later however, newspapers became a critical tool for ordinary people to appeal for freedom and justice in society. In particular, in the hands of Thienwan, a commoner journalist, who pioneered the idea of the press as an open public sphere rather than a

medium restricted to elites (Teeravanich, 1983). Thienwan, considered by some social scholars as Thailand's first alternative media producer, championed the idea of a new national constitution which would involve people as citizens rather than subjects of a monarch. This idea was revived in the early twentieth-century, when a new generation emerged to challenge the traditional elites identification of 'the nation' with loyalty to the king and redefined it as rooted in universal participation in advancing the well-being of all citizens. (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

Challenges from Western educated commoners and members of the elites mounted and in 1932, the Revolution Group, *Khana Ratsadon*, headed by Pridi Phanomyong, a commoner who had received a law degree from France, forced the seventh King to accept constitutional changes that replaced absolutism with a constitutional monarchy.

Pridi presented an economic plan but he was removed from power by the Mano' government in coalition with the royalist group. His plan was labelled 'communist' (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002) and replaced by a new ideology, 'nationalistic capitalism' (Pongsapich *et al.*, 1993:7).

The modern audio-visual mass communication system first emerged in June 1897 when a group of French film merchandisers advertised in the *The Bangkok Times*, promoting their 'Parisian Cinematograph', offering 'pictures with life movements' (Sukawong, 1983). In 1905, a Japanese businessman established the first cinema theatre in Bangkok, and theatres spread rapidly to other provinces after 1907. The first radio broadcasting station, the Bangkok Radio Station was launched at Phayathai Palace on the Coronation Day of the seventh King, King Prachadhiphok (1910-1925) in 1930. In his coronation speech, the king announced that the 'aims of radio broadcasting are education, trading and entertainment' (Kittiwat, 1983).

The use of broadcasting as a tool for state public relations and social engineering was formalised in 1939 during Marshall Phibun's prime-ministership when he issued seven 'Rathaniyom' or 'cultural mandates'. The mandate on 'progress' required the Thai people to promote the economy, and conform to certain standards of dress, public conduct, and social values. Western cultural practices such as fashion competitions, the wearing of hats,

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using forks and spoons, and kissing one's wife before leaving for work (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005) were strongly recommended. These aims were vigorously pursued through radio, with the aim of addressing foreign criticism of Thailand as uncivilized. Phibun admitted that these innovations had been introduced in response to external political pressure for more rapid modernisation. As he noted;

> Government is forced to reform and reconstruct the various aspects of society, especially its culture, which here signifies growth and beauty, orderliness, progress and uniformity, and the morality of the nation (cited in Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005: 135).

In this early phase of modernisation, then, change was set in motion less by the direct influence of western colonisation and more by the attempts of progressive, western oriented, factions within national elites to stave off outside intervention by remodelling Thai institutions and culture in ways that rendered them more hospitable to the dominant tendencies within the emerging global system. The two most significant cultural apparatuses established in this era were modern education and the major mass media: national newspapers and radio broadcasting both played a crucial role in disseminating the identification of 'progress' with advances in industry, technology and consumption that underpinned western concepts of modernity.

3.1.2 The Arrival Of The US and The World Bank

In their (1993) study, Pongsapich and her team argue that in the post war period 1945-1960, Thailand adopted a definition of 'national development' that identified it strongly with the growth of industry pursued through strategies that encouraged agro-business, import-substitution industries, and export-based industrial development (Pongsapich *et al.*, 1993: 37). These interventions were 'promoted as a national ideology operating side by side with Buddhist ideology', especially after the Sixth Economy and Social Development Plan (Pongsapich *et al.*, 1993:68). Mass media, particularly the emerging medium of television, which was state controlled, played a major role in promoting this equation of development with industrialisation.

The first television station was launched in 1952 by the Thai Television Company with the Government Public Relations Department as the main shareholder, and the remaining shares distributed across other state agencies, including the Army, the Navy, and Air

Force. In addition to instructing people on a cultural mandate, the government mobilised broadcasting as a key weapon against communism, which was seen as the number one enemy (Siriyuwasak, 1983).

It was against the background of the Cold War that US influence over Thai affairs was extended. Control over the country's development was directed by the US and the World Bank in collaboration with the Marshall Sarit regime (1957-1963).

The US had two major strategic stakes in Thailand (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000). Firstly, Thailand was an important military location within Indochina and the US employed it as a military base from which to fight the Vietnam War. Secondly, the US wanted to ensure that Thailand remained a bulwark against communism, which was spreading to countries across Southeast Asia at that time. Kolko (1988) argues, that in addition to military considerations, one significant reason for the arrival of the US in Southeast Asia, especially Thailand, was its desire to control the region's raw materials due to shortages after the War in Korea. As US Assistant Secretary of State, Dean Rusk noted in January 1951, 'Our vital dependence upon Southeast Asia for tin is almost as great as for rubber' (cited in Kolko, 1988:60). As Kolko comments:

> This concern for raw materials was not simply geopolitical, for while it was firm U.S. policy from the inception that they should be available to itself and its allies, it also stipulated that they be developed in accordance with its plans for a world economic structure based on capitalism in general and access for American investors in particular. 'Saving' Asia meant far more than development, security, or stability, much less democracy. U.S. policies in both India and Thailand revealed how it sought to attain this objective. (Kolko, 1988:60).

To achieve its aims the US paid close attention to the internal affairs of Thailand. Between 1951 and 1975, they supported the leaders of the Thai military with a huge aid budget and subsequently pressed them to start programmes of economic development based on support for private capitalism (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000).

Globalisation in Thailand in this period therefore, was primarily the product of the relationship between the Thai state and the US. Globalisation directed the leaders of the

US and Thai armies and in collaboration with Thai elites, particularly the young generations who had graduated in the US and who subsequently became the key middle-level staff of Thailand's National Economic Development Board (NEDB). In 1961, in an effort to accelerate the development of Thai capitalism, the US helped to establish the Budget Bureau, the National Statistical Office, the Board of Investment and, perhaps most importantly, the NEDB, which later became a key institution in directing the Thai economy, its main function being to set economic plans every five years.

American consultants in conjunction with the World Bank played a significant role in writing the first three economic plans, and directing development strategies for the future of Thailand. Phongpaichit and Baker (2000) suggest that the close cooperation between Thai elites and the US marked the beginning of a calamity for Thailand, leading in particular, to natural resources degradation as they said:

> The early economic plans had three aims: intensify exploitation of Thailand's
> natural resources to deliver growth; transfer some of the resulting surplus for
> investment in the urban economy; and facilitate foreign investment to acquire
> technology. US firms were allowed 100 percent ownership, while other foreign
> investors were limited to a minority share (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005:151).

Many development projects included in the plans were under the patronage of the World Bank. Between 1950 and 1975, the Bank gave US$ 440 million to build the infrastructure, transport, highways, irrigation, hydroelectricity and education (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000). As Pongsapich points out, one result of this emphasis was that economic infrastructural development and 'per capita income' became the standard measures of the success of national development initiatives (Pongsapich *et al.*, 1993:8).

Another very significant feature of this era was the increasing collaboration between government functionaries (including politicians and high-ranking military officers) and private investors (Pongsapich *et al.*, 1993:8). The Industrial Promotion Act in 1954 marked a paradigm shift away from a nationalised economy to one in which private investors assumed a dominant role. This movement opened the way for Chinese immigrant families, for example the Lamsam, Sophonphanich, Techapaiboon, and Joeirawanon, who had made their money in agriculture and banking, to powerful groups in the Thai economy (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000).

The head of one of these families, Porn Leopairatana, a rice merchant rapidly extended his business interests by building up good connections with the powerful *Soi Ratchakru* political group and with military officers (Jantaranomi, 1988a). Subsequently, the third generation of the family pioneered the petrochemical industry in Thailand, establishing the TPI plant in Rayong in the Eastern region, the fieldwork area, setting in motion far-reaching changes in the local economy and culture (see chapter 5 and 6).

Between 1947 and 1956, in the Cold War period and under heavy American influence, several Hollywood film trading representatives set up branches in Thailand. Many cinema theatres were also established around the country (Sukawong, 1983). From 1962 onwards television services extended to regional areas and mobilised to support state policy in economic development and cement the relations between money earned through waged labour and personal well being, a link encapsulated in one of Marshall Sarit's most popular slogans, 'Work is money. Money is work. This brings happiness' (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

At the same time, television also acted as conduit for western models of style and consumption. The first colour television station, launched in 1967 by the Bangkok Radio and Television Broadcasting Company, a private business company, broadcast 'The Beauty Contest of Thailand' as its first programme (Panpipat and Thanasathit, 1983). At the same time, advertising on radio proliferated with little effective state control (Siriyuwasak, 1983).

3.1.3 The Fastest Economic Growth Rate in The World

Since the 1980s Thailand has been extensively transformed by globalisation processes and the export-led-growth policy promoted by the World Bank. Between 1979 and 1980, the country borrowed US$ 542 million from the World Bank, and later US$ 325 million, together with US$ 610 million from the IMF (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002). The World Bank granted its loans for structural adjustment on condition that the main economic institutions and policies were reformed and directed to expanding the export industry.

Between 1983 and 1985, when the world economy slumped during the second oil crisis, leading western economists and the World Bank developed a model that saw exports as the

key to economic growth. The Thai government accepted the 'export-led growth' argument. A rising generation of technocrats and economic advisors who had been educated in the US played a crucial role in promoting it. As a consequence, since the 1980s, 'export-led growth' has dominated Thailand's economic policy (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002).

This consensus on the roots of growth, between the World Bank and Thai elites, had a profound impact on Eastern Thailand. To support the export-led-growth strategy, Thailand needed to construct an industrial base. With drafting assistance from the World Bank, the fifth economic and social development plan was launched 'the Industrial Eastern Seaboard Scheme', in Eastern Thailand, aimed at constructing the largest heavy industrial site in the country Thailand, and redeveloping its surroundings to provide support. Under this initiative, Thailand was to be reconstructed as an industrial society and agriculture, the economic, social and cultural backbone of Thailand for hundreds of years, was relegated to a subordinate role (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002).

Since the 1970s, successive Thai governments have neglected the agricultural sector while offering substantial inducements to industry, the financial sector and tourism, offering incentives for the construction of hotels and other tourist facilities. The number of tourists increased from a million a year in the mid 1970s to 2.5 million by the mid 1980s (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000:148) and revenues from tourism increased from 18,000 million baht (approximately US$ 720 million) in 1980 to 32,000 million baht (approximately US$ 1,280 million) in the mid 1990s (ibid). During this period, revenues from tourism were higher than earnings from rice exports and contributed the largest proportion of income for the country.

Table 3.1 Gross Domestic Product and Per Capita GNP of Thailand between the year of 1970 and 2000

Year	Gross domestic product (millions of baht)	Per capita (baht)	Private invesment of GDP (percent)	Public invesment of GDP (percent)
1,970	147,385.	4,052	16.67	7
1,975	303,319	7,220	17.7	5
1,980	662,482	14,065	18.93	9
1,985	1,056,496	20,484	18.46	9
1,990	2,183,545	38,613	34.24	6
1,994	3,630,805	60,612	31.3	9
1,995	4,192,697	69,435	32.04	9
1,996	4,622,832	75,342	30.61	10
1,997	4,740,249	76,184	21.74	12
1,998	4,626,447	72,979	12.73	10
1,999	4,637,079	72,981	11.55	9
2,000	4,916,505	77,551	13.81	8

Source: The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI)

As table 3.1 shows, from 1975 the Thai economy grew dramatically. The rate of real GDP growth rose to 13.3 percent in 1988 (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000) and the World Bank reported that between 1985 and 1995, Thailand's economy was growing at the fastest in the world, an average of 10 percent per annum (Bello, Cunning and Poh, 1998). However, the figures for the overall growth in GDP concealed major differentials between sectors. As Phongpaichit and Baker (2000) point out, during that decade, whereas manufactured exports increased sixfold in six years, trade in agricultural goods grew only slightly and temporarily.

Industrial growth benefited considerably from the influx of foreign investments, most notably from Japan. Prompted by the rise in the value of the Yen in the 1970s many Japanese firms transferred their production bases to other Asian countries and as Sakurai's work shows, Thailand with its combination of low wages, a well-developed infrastructure, openness to foreign investment, free-market attitudes, and long-term political stability, offered a particularly attractive option (Sakurai, 1992 cited in Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000:156).

Economic growth supported a rapid growth in personal consumption. Between 1975 and 1997, the number of shopping malls increased markedly in Bangkok and big cities. They

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later extended outwards to provincial areas and to the hinterland around Bangkok (Subpaithoon, 2002). The new and newly rich middle class, embarked on conspicuous consumption. Thailand became the chief market in the world for the German car maker Mercedes Benz (Bello, Cunningham and Poh,1998). A symbol of a new consumerism was marked by:

> the proliferation of 'fine dining' places where one could spend over a hundred dollars on exquisite continental cuisine and vintage French wine, and the stereotype of Thai travellers being compulsive shoppers who were unfazed by sky-high prices (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998:5-6).

Thailand's increasing involvement in globalisation was further strengthened by the financial liberalisation of the early 1990s under the Anand Panyarachun administration (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998). The eradication of restraint on foreign exchange transactions and tying the baht at a stable rate to the dollar established a key link between the global economy and the Thai economy (Bello, Cunningham and Poh,1998:7)

Rapid economic growth had a substantial impact on the media system. Some daily newspaper businesses merged with the business groups controlling television and radio to form conglomerates. Foreign investment increased. The advertising business became more effective in targeting specific groups, and expanded rapidly, particularly within broadcasting, generating more than three thousands million baht per year (Siriyuwasak, 1983).

New entertainment businesses, such as Grammy and RS emerged, and became powerful players in the cultural industry of Thailand. Celebrity culture expanded, promoted by Thai pop music in western and Japanese styles, television dramas, music video, and product advertising (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005). New communication technologies, particularly video players and computers, became increasingly popular in urban localities while television became the most widespread media in the countryside used by over 90 percent of all households (Siriyuwasak, 1983; Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005). At the same time, the government maintained its over control over television and radio, especially news programmes.

In summary, growth in this era was driven by an ideological vision of 'capitalist modernity' that had been embedded in Thai society since the onset of US influence in 1947. Thailand became ever more securely locked into general processes of globalisation through a combination of industrialisation, and export led growth strategy, and the financial liberalization introduced 1993 which opened the country to foreign investments. These structural shifts were accompanied by new patterns of consumption underpinned by the ideology of consumerism promoted by the rapid expansion of new shopping malls, the promotion of foreign products, and the life styles transmitted through entertainment mass media.

3.1.4 Thaksin Era

In 1997 Thailand was hit by the economic crisis that affected all Asian countries. Many shopping malls failed and the owners tried to sell their business or enter into joint ventures with trans-national corporations (TNCs). As a result, trans-national supermarkets, such as Tesco from the UK and Carrefour from France, bought up Thai shopping malls, and expanded their retail businesses to become the largest supermarket chains in Thailand (Subpaithoon, 2002).

In 2001, Thaksin Shinnawatre, a telecommunication tycoon, won the election with the slogan of his 'Thai Rak Thai' party, 'think new, act new', and an image of novelty, reform, modernism, and globalisation (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002). Thaksin's telecommunication business has close connections with government. Before founding the party, his firm's monopolization of the telecommunication market had been sanctioned by successive governments throughout the 1980s and 1990s. Subsequently, he joined with the Charoen Pokapan conglomerate, a powerful Thai enterprise, which became one of his strongest supporters (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002).

Thaksin locked the Thai people, especially in the countryside, more securely into intensive capitalism with two significant strategies, grass-roots development and outward orientation (Thanapornpan, 1 December 2004). When he took up the prime ministership after the 1997 economic crisis, he launched a 'consumption-led growth' policy to try to re-boost the Thai economy (Thanapornpan, 21 January 2004). This general aim was pursued through a series of grass roots populist measures including the deregulation of credit card use, the

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establishment of village funds (providing 1 million baht for each of Thailand's 70,000 villages), support for local small and medium-sized businesses (SML), and the transformation of the unofficial illegal lottery to an official state lottery. These projects spurred people to spend more effectively, which subsequently resulted in the expansion of consumerism (Thanapornpan, 21 January 2004).

In pursuit of the aim of outward orientation, the Thaksin administration promoted greater trade and investment liberalisation. The amended Telecommunication Enterprise Act (2006) enabled foreign investors to hold up to a 49 percent share in Thai telecommunication enterprises (Athakorn, 2006). Free Trade Agreement (FTA) meetings with powerful countries, including Japan, Australia and the US were held on a number of occasions. This further opening of the country to multinational co-operations (MNCs) without control attracted criticism from commentators who argued that it undermined Thailand's national sovereignty (Athakorn, 2006; and Sriaraya, 1997). As one critic noted:

> MNCs from a small country like Singapore control Thailand's main economic
> sectors. They have invested in the Thai stock market in all business sectors.
> These MNCs control our blood vessels because the Singapore government is the
> key share holder in all MNCs. We should be concerned that Singaporean capital
> is actually a broker of American capital. Therefore, in fact, we are being taken
> over by American (Translated from Thai-Athakorn, 2006).

In short, Thaksin followed the Washington Consensus with its prioritising of liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation (Thanapornpan, 1 December 2004).

The Thaksin's government was also skilful in mobilising the mainstream media. He himself projected an image of innovation and accessibility communicating his government's activities to a countrywide audience through the network of Thailand radio every Saturday (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

The popular campaigns such as the village fund and the SML scheme extended the new consumer culture into the countryside aided by the administration's encouragement for extending the reach of mass media and telecommunication, particularly mobile phones, computers, the Internet, and satellites over all the regions of Thailand. This had a substantial impact on values, especially among the younger generation.

3.2 Community Values and Changes

The impacts of increasing globalisation and following the pattern of western economic development have been unequally distributed. There have been winners but there have also been losers. As Thanapornpan (1995), a Thai economic intellectual has argued, the benefits have been concentrated among a minority of the population with the consequence that 'the nation is wealthy; the people are poor (ประเทศชาติมั่งคั่ง ประชาชนยากจน)' Thanapornpan (1995:68). As Tables 3.2 and 3.3 show, while the percentage of people living in poverty decreased in all regions between 1986 and 2000, table 3.3 shows between 1981 and 2000 the share of total income commanded by the poorest fifth of the population has fallen from 5.41% to 3.88%. Also the share of the top forty percent has increased from 70.22% to 77.52%.

Table 3.2 Poverty Incidence (headcount) of Thailand between 1986 and 2000

year	BMR& Vicinity	Central	North	Northeast	South	Whole Country
	Percentage %					
1986	11.1	31.6	39.4	61.2	40.1	41.7
1988	10.1	28.2	35.6	51.1	36.9	36.2
1990	7.8	24	26.9	47.8	31.6	31.4
1992	3.9	14.1	25.8	43.7	23.5	26.2
1994	1.7	9.6	16.2	32.4	20.5	19
1996	1.2	7	10.7	21.8	13.4	12.7
1998	0.8	7	8.7	22.5	13.6	12.5
1999	2.1	7.3	10.2	28.9	15.7	15.4
2000	1.1	6.3	13.5	30	12.4	15.6

*Central includes the East

Source: The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI)

Table 3.3 Income Share by Quintile Group, Thailand

								(percent)
year	Top Income group	Second Income group	Third Income group	Fourth income group	Lowest income group	Ratio of Top 20 to Lowest 20 income gr	Top 40 Income share	Bottom 60 Income share
1975-6	49.26	20.96	14	9.73	6.05	8.14	70.22	29.78
1981	51.47	20.64	13.38	9.1	5.41	9.51	72.11	27.89
1986	54.84	20.37	12.36	7.89	4.53	12.1	75.22	24.78
1988	54.47	20.57	12.35	8.03	4.57	11.92	75.04	24.96
1990	57	19.46	11.69	7.54	4.31	13.22	76.46	23.54
1992	59.09	18.78	11.08	7.06	3.98	14.85	77.87	22.13
1994	57.23	19.72	11.68	7.33	4.04	14.16	76.95	23.05
1996	56.73	19.93	11.76	7.47	4.12	13.79	76.66	23.34
1998	56.31	19.84	11.93	7.67	4.24	13.27	76.15	23.85
1999	58.21	19.42	11.41	7.13	3.83	15.18	77.63	22.37
2000	57.63	19.89	11.42	7.18	3.88	14.85	77.52	22.48

Source: The Thailand Development Research Institute (TDRI)

The negative impacts of industrialisation and globalisation have been felt particularly acutely in the countryside. Writing from a Buddhist background (as a monk as well as an academic) Prathampidok (2006) argues that Thailand made a mistake in pursuing a western model of modernity and that the core 'Idea of progress' which aims to conquer the nature and exploit natural resources has led to ecological degradation and non-sustainable development (Prathampidok, 2006). His argument is supported by Bello, Cunningham and Poh 's study (1998) which revealed that Thailand has suffered from severe 'deforestation, climate change, air and industrial wastewater pollution, depletion of marine life in coastal waters' (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998:175). The impact of these processes, he argues, amounts to nothing less than a 'Siamese Tragedy' (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998).

Thailand has been transformed from a resource rich country into a resource-poor country within a single generation (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005:215). The Economic and Social Development Plans, influenced by the World Bank and the First World countries, did contain environment management provisions, but their major aim was to exploit natural resources in order to support industry (Dilokvanich, 1995). Consequently, they lacked clear strategies for environmental conservation, or for assistance to local communities to adjust to the new industrial environment, or to manage the environmental impacts arising from to the new heavy industries, such as the production of electronic products, petrochemicals,

pesticides, steel, chemical fertilizers, and ceramics, and the massive amounts of hazardous waste they have generated (Aiumsakulrat, 1994).

Less stringent environmental policies were one of the factors that attracted First World countries to move their industrial bases to Thailand. As a consequence, Thailand has increasingly imported asbestos, a dangerous mineral banned from many countries, from 50,000 tons in 1978 to 128,000 tons in 1992 for use in industrial production (Aiumsakulrat, ibid). Globalisation has also brought polluted and hazardous waste from industrial countries into Thailand, including dumping in poor and rural areas. The explosion of imported chemical hazardous waste in Klong Toey port, a slum residence of Bangkok, in 1991 was a particularly serious incident, causing many deaths injuries, cancer, and other chemical related-illnesses (Aiumsakulrat, ibid; and Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998).

The catastrophe of Thai rural communities became a major concern among intellectuals and activists. There is a widespread consensus among critical commentators that this situation is a consequence of following western development models and submitting to forces of globalisation (see for example Thanapornpan, 1995; Jammarik, 1999; Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998; and Sriaraya, 1994). The shift in focus in the national economic strategy from an agricultural base to an industrial base, is a main factor in driving rural people to migrate to Bangkok and other big cities to find factory jobs leaving many villages populated mainly or solely by children and older people. The introduction of mono-crop agriculture has created huge debts for small peasants as their livelihood has become completely dependent on the world market.

In Thai academic circles, the connections between capitalist modernity and people's attitudes have generated two main approaches. The first maintains that western conceptions of modernity have dominated Thai society because the Thai elites, from King Chulalongkorn (1868-1910), and prime ministers such as Marshall Sarut Thanarut, to technocrats and businessmen, wanted to modernise Thailand or Siam. Consequently, although Thailand has never been officially colonised, the intensification of globalisation , which began in the Marshall Sarut era (1957-1963), actively promoted by the US in its fight against communism, found ready supporters and advocates among Thai elites. The shift in the control and ethos of the education system, from Buddhist to secular elites, is

seen as particularly crucial in disseminating western conceptions of modernity throughout the population (Sivaraksa, 2004).

The second approach, agrees that Thai elites favoured western modernisation, but sees the mass media as the more significant tool for introducing western models of development into Thai society. Eoseewong (2001) argues that the Thai mass media have played a pivotal role in reproducing and disseminating 'the western hegemonic development pattern' in Thailand, by orienting their output around material that supports this ideology and by not offering alternatives to it.

3.3 Conclusion

In this chapter we have seen that since 1855 when the Bowring Treaty was signed, Thailand has been developed under four core conditions: the adoption of western ideas and ideologies among Thai elites; the influence of supra-national organisations, in particular the World Bank and IMF; the formulation of national development strategies relying increasingly on the world market, export, tourism and industry; and use of mass media and communication technologies as a crucial apparatus in disseminating the ideologies.

In the four eras briefly outlined above, we have seen how models of capitalist modernity, and a western formulated ideology of development have been accepted by ruling aristocracies and Thai elites before being embraced by the urban middle classes and eventually reaching into rural areas through the practices of the mass media, to become the dominant ideologies in contemporary Thai society (Pongsapich, 2002; Na Talang, 2001; and Sriaraya, 1994). The next chapter looks in more detail at core elements in this remaking of Thai culture.

Chapter 4

The Remaking of Thai Culture

4.1 Connections and Obligations: The Core Nexus

4.1.1 Patron-client Relations: The Core Nexus and Power

A number of Thai social analysts see patron client relationships as one of the core characteristics of the society (see Rabibhadana 1975; and Thanapornpan, 1995), particularly in Eastern Thailand, where research reveals them to be a distinctive characteristic of the region (see Banpasirichote, 2000; Burt, 2001; and Praditsilpa and Tinbangtoea, 2006).

Patron-client relations reproduce the hierarchical structure of Thai society by emphasising differences in social status and position between a patron who is superior and a client who is inferior (Pongsapich and Kuwinpan, 2000). They are based on unequal possession of three core resources, property, political power and social privileges (Pongsapich and Kuwinpan, 2000). As Akin Rabibhadana , one of the pioneers of work in this area notes, they are in

> a dyadic relationship where the patron is clearly superior to the client, and in
> which instrumental friendship and a striving for access to resources are
> significant qualities (Akin Rabibhadana, 1975:93 cited in Kemp, 1982:147)

This account of recent developments is amplified in various ways by the work of Dilokvanich (1995), Laird (2000), Banpasirichote (2000) and Burt (2001)

Dilokvanich (1995) suggests that before the 1973 political demonstrations, merchants and businessmen were patronised by aristocracies and military groups but that after the political movement in 1973 and 1976, business interests acquired the power to negotiate on their own behalf while aristocracies and military groups retired to the background. As a result, argues Dilokvanich (1995), in order for political groups to retain power it was necessary for them to broker deals between the state and private sectors

John Laird (2000), who worked as a journalist in Thailand during the 1990s, looks more closely at the Thai national political context and stresses the role of money payments arguing that:

> patronage is about building a network of influence. It's about paying money for the opportunity to make more money, for gaining (official) political support, and for protection. In its simplest form, patronage seems harmless: a person of status or wealth helping a less privileged person or group. Sometimes a debt, spoken or unspoken, will be incurred; sometimes not. Thus patronage can be seen to be a natural occurrence among the many possible forms of human relationship. People help each other every day, for friendship's sake, out of benevolence, or in expectation of considerations to be returned in the future (Laird, 2000:242).

In his studies of Eastern Thailand, Banpasirichote (2000) argues that while patron-client relations have acted as an important mechanism for economic growth by acting as a channel for broad economic and business interest exchange, they have presented an obstacle to the development of local democracy. Because they centralise resources and they hinder democratic participation, Banpasirichote's work suggests that the process of opening up the country and pursuing an export-led growth strategy, patron-client relationships played a key role in the Eastern region in building a network to appropriate new planting lands to produce agricultural exporting products. In addition, they acted as important mechanism for negotiating power and interest between local political groups.

Burt's study (2001) which was conducted in the industrial eastern seaboard, and involved TPI's waste management strategies takes the analysis a step further by focussing on 'dark influences', or *Ittiphon*, which he describes as follows:

> Powerful people in Thailand are often described as having 'influence'. Their social status is high enough and they have enough resources at their command to do more or less as they wish without fear of challenge. This has led to a subclass of people who are effectively above the law. Known as *'phu mi itthiphon'* (people with influence), or sometimes *'jao pho'* (godfathers) if they are very powerful, this group includes business interests, politicians, government officials, and senior members of the police and military (Burt, 2001:59).

His study points to three ways in which *Ittiphon* operates in relation to industry in the Eastern seaboard. First, patronage is employed to boost the image of a factory and reduce dissatisfaction with its negative impacts. This includes 'recruiting local people as employees' and 'sponsoring community activities'. He states,

> One of the company's employees is a local community leader, and several local
> subcontractors are engaged by the company. The power to hire and fire staff
> gives the company an additional hold over the community (Burt, 2001:61).

Burt (2001:61) claims that TPI adopted a similar approach. Secondly, *Ittiphon* 'may allow a company to undertake business activities which are on the fringe of the law' Burt (2001:61). Thirdly, when a factory needs to secure the goodwill of local people for a new industrial project, 'The *Phuyaiban* and *Kamnan* are usually given a pay-off, and benefits are provided for the public' (Burt, 2001:62).

Drawing on these arguments in this thesis, the term patron-client relationship refers to the relations of exchange debt between local capitalists, state officers-politicians and the villagers while the term '*Ittiphon*' is applied to secret or illegal-immoral practices.

4.1.2 The Decline of Buddhism

Buddhism is the main religion of more than 90 percent of the Thai population. Buddhism is one of the fundamental founding elements of Thai culture. Chai Podhisita's study (1998) identifies five key components of the Buddhist world view namely, the world of hierarchy, the world of merit (*bun*) and demerit (*bap*), the world of '*bun khun*' or gratitude, the world of the 'cool heart', and the world of individualism. However, these are secondary to the essential principle of Buddhist belief, the concept of '*karma*' which Chai explains as follows;

> This is believed to be achieved by means of accumulated good action or merit.
> The more merit one accumulates, the better future one can expect. The reverse
> is true in the case of demerit. This, then, is the law of karma which states that
> every action (i.e.*karma*) has a consequence which may appear immediately after
> it is performed, or long afterwards, depending on the situation (Podhisita,
> 1998:36).

Buddhism teaches that as humans, we should accumulate '*bun*' or merit to gain good *karma* in future. In pursuit of this goal men are expected to be ordained as Buddhist monks when they are twenty years old and women are expected to make merit by offering food and material support. In rural locales, merit-making has traditionally been one of the central considerations of all families. Thai people invest materials and money in this practice, and expect to obtain benefit or good *karma* in future. Poor peasants tend to be more concerned with obtaining *karma* than the rich (Podhisita, 1998).

At one level, these practices offer a potential basis for accommodation to the changes set in motion by the acceleration of capitalist modernity, but Buddhist philosophy also offers a radical critique of this process and its consequences. This alternative perspective has been powerfully put by an important Thai Buddhism thinker, and monk, Bhikku P.A.Payutto (Prathampidok) who has mounted a trenchant critique of western culture and its core ideologies, focussing particularly on the ideology of progress which he identified with the drive to conquer nature, or the understanding that the prosperity of mankind hinges on the subjugation of nature, and the belief that well-being depends on an abundance of material goods (Payutto, 1993:19-20).

The second value he argues underpins the contemporary consumerism and materialism that has followed in the wake of industrialisation and globalisation (Payutto, 1993) while the first has produced a catastrophe of environmental depletion (Prathampidok, 2006). He sees Thailand repeating the mistakes made by developed countries while failing to prepare people to cope with the conditions created by globalisation.

His radical alternative is based on a programme of education rooted in three core Buddhist principles. First, recognising that humankind is only a small part of nature, and should exercise a duty of care towards other species and the environment. Second, that attitude towards economic behaviour: a human should be based on moderation and differentiate between real and fake values in order to avoid consumerism. And lastly, that science and technology should be employed constructively in ways congruent with the first two principles (Prathampidok, 2006). Under contemporary conditions however, the popular purchase of these ideas has been weakened by two major developments in the organisation of spirituality.

First, Buddhist Temples have seen a marked decline in both visitors and material support from local communities. In response they have moved to attract visitors by producing amulets and giving out lottery numbers, practices that are entirely consistent with capitalist concepts (Eoseewong, 2002).

Second, Buddhism has faced increasing competition from other spiritual practices, particularly spirit mediums who offer consultations on business, health, and private problems and are becoming increasingly popular (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005). Nor is this growth confined solely to rural areas, it is also found in urban centres and among the higher educated, particularly students and government employees, who tend to consult mediums more than less educated people. Komin suggests that this might be a reaction to the frustrations and psychological anxieties generated by the tensions of an accelerating capitalist modernity (Komin, 1998).

Overall then the balance of evidence suggests that Buddhism in Thailand has failed to reconstruct itself in the face of contemporary changes, leaving a cultural gap into which materialism and consumerism can move into without significant opposition (Eoseewong, 2002).

4.2 The Rise of Consumer Culture

4.2.1 The Emergence Of Shopping Complexes and New Attitudes To Consumption

The two decades between 1975 and 1997 saw a steady expansion in the construction of shopping malls and in 1983 a second wave of development began with the opening of new complexes combining retail and entertainment facilities, with shopping arcades, offices, hotels, cinemas, play grounds and fun fairs, restaurants and food halls, housed under one roof. After 1990 new integrated leisure installations spread rapidly to regional areas, including the fieldwork village. Some were joint ventures Thai firms and international co-operations, while others were majority owned by major international retail chains such as Tesco and Carrefour, both of whom took advantage of the 1997 economic crisis to extend their control over the sector.

By 2006, Tesco was operating 200 branches around the country, including the eastern region and Thailand became the company's third largest national market after Korea and the UK (Fletcher, 27 September 2006). There had been local opposition in a number of places and campaigns protesting Tesco's expansion but by the end of the 1990s consumption had become increasingly organised around modern shopping complexes which had established themselves as major spaces for leisure time, for gatherings of teenagers, working age people, and couples on dates. They ate at branches of international fast food chains, Mcdonalds, Pizza Hut, KFC, Starbucks and Japanese restaurants, and window shopped. Urban subcultures: 'from luxury apartments and flashy cars to modern forms of fast food' (Mulder, 2000:12) emerged and encouraged people to aspire to have similar life styles to those they saw being enjoyed in big cities around the world.

This emerging consumer culture was pioneered by the urban middle class, and particularly by the younger generation. In his (1996) study of consumption among middle class 18-25 years old in Bangkok, Teerananon shows how the new consumer system operated as shopping window for the benefits of globalisation with foreign brand named products, especially from the US, the UK, France and Hong Kong, commanding strong support for their image of luxury and up-to-dateness. He also argued that the growing tendency towards conspicuous consumption he noted in his study was fuelled by the increasing media attention assigned to western celebrities and superstars from the worlds of sports and entertainment, a trend he saw as cultural imperialism. The roots of this new 'star culture' can be traced back to the early 1990s, when the music companies, Grammy and RS launched music albums, music video, serial dramas and entertainment products that drew mainly on western and Japanese pop styles. These innovations then provided a template for contemporary style and glamour that came to dominate the national mass media (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005).

In the Thaksin era, after the 1997 economic crisis, innovations in mass media and infrastructure, such as VCD, DVD, mobile phones, motorcycles, televisions and new roads increased both the speed and density of the connections between rural areas and urban centres, incorporating the regions into the new consumer system, while the government's village funding scheme brought modern communication products and new life styles

within the reach of increasing numbers of rural residents. Summing up, Baker and Phongpaichit characterise the cultural shift in the Thaksin era:

> Society became much more complex, especially with the growth of the white-collar middle class, and the ranks of shuttling urban-rural migrants. Local worlds were prised open by roads, buses, motorcycle, televisions, and internet. A new mass society emerged, especially in the reflective panels of national media. Old unitary discourses of race, nation, history, national character, and culture were fragmented by the diversity of reality (Baker and Phongpaichit, 2005:262).

These shifts fuelled a growing anxiety among a number of commentators who saw the traditional anchors of Thai culture being hauled up leaving a moral vacuum. The rise in teenage pregnancies offered a particularly potent focus for these fears of headlong change. In his 1996 study, Teerananon found little evidence of western 'permissiveness' among the young people in his study. Ten years later, a 2006 UNESCO report found that the number of Thai teenagers, 15-18 years old, who were pregnant and had a baby was the highest in Asia, (excluding Muslim countries), and higher than in Europe, Australia and the US (*Online Manager*, 7 February 2007).

These finding were in line with the results of a Chulalongkorn poll three years earlier that had revealed that 76 % of female teenagers had sex before marriage (*Thai Post*, 7 February 2003). A later report (*Matichon*, 25 January 2007) revealed that promiscuity had become a normal part of teenage culture with girls tending to change sexual partners to compete within their peer groups. This behaviour absolutely contradicts the traditional Thai conception of the 'decent' woman and the expectation that women will keep their virginity before marriage. As we shall see later, when we examine differential responses to the news coverage of the pre marital pregnancy of one of Thailand's best know stars, Kathleeya, attitudes on this issue divide strongly along generational lines.

But for many older Thai's, the shift from growing up in the traditional culture of their youth is both stark and shocking and in reaching for explanations many have seen television, foreign comics and films as a key factor in eroding Thai tradition and disseminating new values from the West (*Dailynews*, 10 June 2005 and *Matichon*, 9 February 2007).

4.3   Media Representations and Celebrity Culture

The volume of imported programmes on Thai television increased after 1985 making western images of fashion and desirable life styles more readily available. Teerananon's (1996) study in Bangkok found that Thai teenagers were watching foreign programming and films alongside local productions, and that 80% had a highly positive image of western society and were adopting aspects of western life styles. Broadcasts of international football matches, which had been a feature of Thai television for several decades, have been a major force of westernisation, particularly among young men.

The Thai TV Pool broadcast the final match of World Cup Football in 1970 live. By 1994 Thailand was the only country in the world to broadcast live all 64 matches of the World Cup that year (Kanakasai, 2001). After that, all matches from later World Cups have been relayed live on Thai television together with matches from English leagues. This coverage has helped consolidated the overwhelming popularity of foreign football culture in Thai society.

The popular press has also played a key role by providing information which the audience could use in betting on football games instantly together with details of the private lives of stars players. Television stations were constrained from presenting details that could be used in gambling, but their presentation took full advantage of the liveness of events to package football as entertainment and drama with amusing, violent and exciting characteristics, and to explore the personalities and private lives of celebrity players.

The impact of this coverage is indicated in 2002 in research conducted by the Thailand Marketing Research Society. When Thai youth were asked to name their major role models the results produced the following rankings 1.Thaksin Shinnawatre 2.David Beckham 3. Michael Owen 4. Britney Spears, and 5. mother. This list captures perfectly the nature of the transition in Thai culture and the tensions it has generated. There is patriotism, expressed through admiration for the then Prime Minister and a continuing sense of family obligations, but there is also the strong attraction of western celebrities and their life styles in the persons of the American entertainer, Britney Spears and two star British football players, David Beckham and Michael Owen.

By the 1990s, several researchers indicated that mainstream media exposure of new cultures, not only western styles, but also Japanese, Korean and Taiwan, has influenced Thai youth. Thai teenagers in Bangkok were exposed to television 3-4 times a week. More than half of the samples watched both Thai and international programmes. The foreign films were the most popular programme (Chawengsaksopak, 1998). This study also found that 80 percent of Bangkok teenagers perceived the patterns of western society as affecting their lives at a high level, and adopted these patterns of western life styles in their own life style at a medium level (Chawengsaksopak, 1998).

It would however be over simple to identify the rise of consumer culture solely with westernisation. Japan has also played an important role as an Asian country that has pioneered a consumer culture with Asian characteristics. Contemporary Japanese culture has achieved high visibility in the Thai mainstream media through imported Japanese television dramas, MTV, magazines, and radio programmes. Several radio programmes have Japanese hosts and Thai people translate Japanese songs into Thai. Rakprayoon's (2002) research however, reveals that the starting point for the distribution of Japanese programmes was the close connection between a Thai television executive and a Japanese executive, rather than any demand from audiences or the result of audience research. This fact reminds us of the importance of taking account of the ways political and economic forces shape the range of emphasis of media output and it is to these that we now turn.

4.4   The Changing Media Landscape

The dominant mass medium in Thailand is television, followed some way behind by radio and newspapers. The 2001 survey by the AcNielson company found that 86 percent of Thai people claimed to watch television while 36 percent listened to radio and 21 percent read newspapers (Tangkijwanit, 2004:4).

Television

Thailand has a growing pay TV sector but its audience base remains relatively small and confined mostly to middle to high income groups in Bangkok and the big cities. For the majority of the population, including the residents of the fieldwork village in this study, viewing is dominated by the six free-to-air channels; channel 3, channel 5, channel 7,

channel 9, channel 11 and ITV. All six are state owned but in the case of the two most viewed channels among the villagers in this study, Channels 7 and 3, day-to-day management has been contacted out. Since 1967 channel 7, which remains formally owned by the army, has been run by the Bangkok Broadcasting & Television Company (BBTV), in which the Ratanarak family hold the main share. Channel 3 (and Channel 9) are owned by the Mass Communications Organization of Thailand (MCOT) a Public Limited Company but while channel 9 is operated by the state, Channel 3 is operated by the *BEC World* company controlled by the Maleenon family, under a concession from MCOT. Channel 11 is owned and run by the Government Public Relations Department. ITV was owned by the Office of the Prime Minister and has granted a concession to the *Shin Corporatios*, a company run by the then Prime Minister, Thaksin Shinnawatre's, family business (Tangkijwanit, 2004).

In 2006, *Shin Corporation* sold a major shareholding to the *Temasek Group* of Singapore. Subsequently, this deal became a turning point of the political chaos in Thailand when people, especially in big cities have protested against Temasek Group. The army finally took charge and removed Thaksin from power, and then transformed ITV to be TITV. TITV was transformed to be Thai Public Broadcasting (TPBS) in January 2008 by the Sorayuth administration under the Coup d'etat.

We explore the ties between these stations and different factions within the Thai political elite in more detail in a later chapter when we discuss the news coverage available to the villagers we studied, but it is evident, even from this bald sketch, that the television system is made up of a complex series of alliances between different state agencies and actors and the national and international capitalist groups. The impact of these connections on the content of news will be explored in detail through the detailed case studies of selected stories presented in Chapter 9.

As we will see, the news on both Channels 7 and 3 is dominated by official sources, the prime minister, ministers, military and high-ranked bureaucrats, and pays little attention to the voices and views of either citizens or civil society groups. However, as we shall also see, Channel 3 has pioneered a more informal and conversational style of presentation which spills over from the news and provides that basis for a current affairs commentary

that gives space to the concerns of ordinary people. There are however well attested limits to acceptable critical commentary. These were forcefully demonstrated when *Mueng Thai Rail Sap Da,* a political and social comment programme on Channel 9, hosted by the newspaper owner Sondhi Limthongkul, was banned after he was deemed to have crossed the line of acceptability in his criticisms of the Thaksin government.

News however makes up only a small part of programming. The rest is dominated by entertainment and it is here that the fact that all the stations (except Channel 11) rely on income from advertising has a major impact. Tangkijwanit (2004) indicates that the pressure to maximise audiences places a premium on popular programming with the result that the schedules are dominated by soap operas, game shows, variety shows, reality shows, music, and foreign series (especially Korean and Taiwanese). His findings demonstrate the success of this strategy with the two stations offering the most entertainment programmes, channels 7 and 3 emerging as the most popular. In 2002, channel 7 had an audience share of 27 percent and channel 3 had 26 percent (Tangkijwanit, 2004).

This strong market position in turn, gave both stations considerable power to determine the advertising rates. Entertainment programmes have the added advantage of avoiding sensitive issues and possible political controversy thereby helping to cement good relationships with the state. This does not mean that entertainment programming does not act as a channel for ideology. On the contrary, as we noted above, it has played a major role in promoting consumerism which by highlighting the advantages of industrialisation and globalisation, in terms material comfort and life style choice, reinforces globalism's core ideological message that the present trajectory of change is both necessary and desirable.

National and Regional Radio

In common with television, the radio system is concentrated in the hands of state enterprises and state agencies with the Thai military owning 524 radio stations throughout the country. The ministry of Defence owns 214 or 41 percent of the total number, followed by the Public Relation Department (PRD) which owns 145 (27.7 percent) and MCOT which controls 62 stations (11.8 percent) (Siriyuwasak, 1999). Also in common with

television, while some stations are managed operationally by state agencies or state enterprises manage others are run by private broadcasters who have been granted concessions. While still subject to state regulations and polices, unlike the stations operated directly by the army, navy or Education Ministry, the arm's length relation to state enjoyed by private operators gives them more flexibility in programming (Tangkijwanit, 2004). This has enabled them to focus on entertainment and music output, and allowed them to build a larger audience base than the state stations.

In the Periphery, in the past, radio programmes were run by the independent broadcasters based in each region. In the early 1990s, with the economic boom in Thailand however, these independent operators were incorporated into the networks of the media conglomerates and regional media capitalists (Tangkijwanit, 2004). Their form and content was assimilated into the national styles originated in Bangkok, the centre for media conglomerates. As Tangkijwanit and Suntharattanakul (2003) have argued, this has reduced the overall diversity of content as the entertainment network companies acquiring stations aim to use them to promote their own cultural products

The National Press

In contrast to the broadcasting sector , the newspaper ownership is entirely in private hands and commentators have consistently argued that this allows more freedom to criticise (see for example McCargo, 2000; and Apapirom, 2002) and more potential to intervene in the Thai political arena (McCargo, 2000). During the protests against the plant TPI in the fieldwork area in 1995 for example, two newspapers, *Matichon and Phujadkarn* gave extensive coverage to both adverse environmental impact and villagers' complaints. But their reports were concentrated in a relatively short period and became relatively infrequent once the protests stopped.

In addition, as with broadcasting, commercialisation is a major factor shaping press strategies and representations. As the Thai scholar Sriaraya has argued, the imperative of audience building pushes coverage towards the tabloid and the sensational.

> Gaining profit does not mean that media produce only valuable messages and benefit the people. Yet this [gaining profit] leads to cultural selling which focuses on sex, amusement, madness, and violence and achieves the

overwhelming amount of selling in current markets (translated from Thai –
Sriaraya, 2003:85).

This tendency is particularly evident in the case of the country's highest circulation daily newspaper, *Thai Rath,* which, as we will see, was the most popular paper among the villagers in this study. They were among the almost one million who read it every day, a figure that increases dramatically on the day the national lottery results are issued. *Thai Rath* conforms closely to the ideal typical model of a tabloid, with a strong emphasis on sensation, celebrity, and entertainment.

Given that *Thai Rath* and the news programmes on Channels 7 and 3 emerged as the central news sources for the participants in this study, it is worth briefly exploring the news culture shaping these production in a little more detail.

4.5   Thai News Culture

The most systematic account of Thai news culture comes from Duncan McCargo (2000), a British academic who conducted original field work research on the Thai press and politics in 1995and 1996. His work highlights three significant features of the Thai news system.

Firstly, political news gathering consistently relies on a small number of key authoritative sources such as government, parliament and the major ministries with the result that government officials, politicians and military officers- have dominated the coverage. Other political groups or organisations are considered either irrelevant or illegitimate as social actors. As McCargo noted after interviewing a *Thai Rath* reporter;

> government officials regarded NGOs and similar groups as trouble-makers who
> derived funds from abroad. In this respect, she and other reporters on the paper
> were broadly in agreement with the opinion of government officials, including
> military and police officers (McCargo, 2000:47).

This view is supported by Nidhi Eoseewong (2001) who also points to the scant attention paid to civil society groups. This reliance on official sources has it roots in the strongly hierarchical structure of traditional Thai society and the respect accorded those with higher status. As McCargo's work shows, this legacy is still active with reporters regularly being

seen by editors, columnists and news sources as 'kids' while the news sources act as '*phu yai*', senior and more powerful people (McCargo, 2000).

The second major point to emerge from McCargo's work is the strong metropolitan bias of reporting. News gathering is centred on Bangkok where both state agencies and the headquarters of major corporations are located. Journalists leave for the provinces for only two reasons: following key sources, such as the prime minister; and gathering stories during a parliamentary election. As a result, coverage of events in the regions is restricted. This situation is compounded by the fact that the provincial journalist who report events and news sources' opinions in their own areas to their media offices in Bangkok are 'stringers' paid by the story not permanent staff. This places them in a difficult position. Their job involves them in a complex web of relations with government officials, community leaders, businesspeople, and influential people (*Choa Por* or a godfathers) in the provincial areas they work in. As McCargo notes:

> In practice, working as a provincial reporter meant dealing on a daily basis with
> 'influential people' – a euphemism for important criminals, many of whom
> were leading businesspeople and politicians (McCargo, 2000:47).

All the local elites know all the stringers. If any provincial reporters put too much effort into an investigative story, they are in danger and 'Every year, a number of provincial reporters were murdered as a result of business or other conflicts' (McCargo 2000:47). On the other hand, if they seem to favour local state agencies and powerful people, they tend to be considered by the head office in Bangkok as inefficient. Attempting to square this circle offers another possible explanation of the relatively short lived nature of the critical coverage of local protests against the TPI plant in Rayong in 1995 and the failure to pursue possible measures to address the problem.

Local suspicions that reporters had been silenced or bought off surfaced several time during my fieldwork in the village. One peasant I interviewed claimed that an ITV reporter was removed from his job after attempting to report on the environmental impact on the village. A former community leader believed that some stringers had received 'special interest' so that they stopped reporting. Similarly, a local non-governmental organisation leader claimed that some reporters had gained 'special money' while others had been sued for considerable amounts of compensation by one of the factories.

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The third aspect of Thai journalism that it is important to note is that there is no established tradition of investigative or analytical reporting. Boonrak Boonyaketmala has argued that Thai reporting remains dominated by an 'oral culture' which focuses on news sources' opinions with little or no analysis or investigation with the result that stories are not developed and seldom propose solutions to the issues raised (see Boonyaketmala, 1994: 321 and 331). McCargo's characterisation of Thai news work as primarily office based quotation gathering rather than going out 'looking for news' (McCargo, 2000) supports this. The reporters' task is to collect quotations from a limited range of sources without analysis or personal interpretation. Comment is separated and restricted to columnists to express (McCargo, 2000).

This relay system is particularly characteristic of foreign news writing which relies almost exclusively on translations from copy produced by foreign news agencies such as AFP and Reuters. The stories are published in the same format as the original piece without additional comment, thereby reproducing the structures of attention devised by western based news organisations.

This relative closure of mainstream Thai news around national elites and transnational agencies assigns a major role to alternative media as potential sources of counter views and perspectives and platforms for the voices of actors excluded from or marginalized by mainstream coverage. Before we review the growth of this sector in Thailand however, we need to briefly sketch in the wider history of the social movements.

4.6 The Rise of Social Movements

Critical intellectuals and activists in Thailand have consistently pointed to the inequalities in wealth between the well-off and the poor, and the destruction of the environment. The perceived collapse of rural society in the face of globalisation and unbalanced development has been a particular concern. As Phongpaichit and Baker argue:

> In the countryside, the survival of the peasantry as a livelihood and a culture
> was threatened by commercialisation, agribusiness exploitation, increased
> government regulation, the penetration of urban culture, the growing tug of out-
> migration, and the diminishing frontier of natural resources (Phongpaichit and
> Baker, 2000:367).

In response to these perceived negative impacts of the dominant model of growth variable coalitions of intellectuals, university students and activists have supported social movements aiming to offer alternative paths to the mainstream paradigm and to assist the disadvantaged. Within this general movement, four social thinkers, Dr Puay Angpakorn, Prawase Wasi, Sulak Sivaraksa and Pra Thampidok (Pra Prayuth Payutto) have played a particularly important role in proposing alternative paradigms.

Dr.Puay Angpakorn, a former Governor of the Bank of Thailand Governor and Chancellor of Thammasat University played a crucial role in founding civil society in Thailand, by establishing the first NGO foundation in 1967 to promote the quality of life of rural people prompted by his concern that the first economic and social plan would create inequality and problems in rural society (Wijakprasert, 2000).

Prawase Wasi, a prominent Thai thinker and university professor has been a key figure in promoting Buddhist concepts and community culture. He has been working with NGOs in the area of primary health care, encouraging the combination between the village-centred view and the reformist Buddhism of Buddhadasa. He sees poverty as the result of the 'oppressive structures' of the state and capitalism and resistance and self-reliance as the solution. He argues that villages should be independent in developing their communities within ethical guidelines by reformist Buddhism, resisting greed driven by capitalism (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000).

Sulak Sivaraksa, a thinker and social critic, has encouraged development based on 'Buddhadasa's principles of restraining greed, sharing resources, relieving suffering, and improving the quality of life through greater self-reliance' (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000: 385). He was one of the social commentators who opposed the 'Americanisation' of Thailand in the late 1960s. His works and books turn a spotlight on the adverse effects of modernisation and consumerism and argue that poorer people caught up in the globalisation process are victims of trans-national corporations as well as government and inter-government agencies (Udomittipong, 2004).

Pra Thampidok, a Buddhist scholar monk champions the concept of sustainable development based on Buddhist principles. He argues that western ideologies, from the

Christian orthodoxy to Marx, rely on the potential of humanity to overcome and control nature and he sees this ideology of exploitation and mastery bringing about a catastrophe for the environment. In response, he advocates a development paradigm focused on working peacefully and harmoniously with nature.

From even this very minimal sketch of a complex intellectual history, Buddhism has played a central role in formulating alternative perspectives. Despite its decline as a force in everyday life noted earlier, it remains a major influence on intellectuals and activists. However, this does not mean that the proposals advanced can command popular support. As we will see, the attempt to revive the mangrove forest in the fieldwork village, initiated by a local Buddhist monk, attracted very little concrete support among local residents, most of whom saw it as futile and irrelevant to the problems they faced. As we will also see, this distance between intellectuals and villagers was reproduced on a larger scale in the attempt by activists from an NGO to develop a community newsletter advocating community self sufficiency.

As Rungsan Thanapornpan (Wongchaisuwan, 2001), a famous Thai economics scholar has argued , proposing a development strategy based in the community is characteristic of Thai grassroots movements and stands in stark contrast to the globalisation strategy advocated by technocrats, the government and the private sector. In his view, these two paradigms are completely different and unlikely to conjoin.

The most significant mass opposition to the dominant development paradigm emerged in 1995 with the formation of 'the Assembly of the Poor' (Missingham, 2003), against a background of manifest economic and cultural crisis .The Assembly opposed the dominant trajectory of globalisation represented by the National Economic and Social Development Plans and the export led-growth strategy and industrialisation. They were particularly critical of the environmental destruction and social dispossession caused by the huge construction projects for new dams and power plants, supported financially in part by the World Bank who had extended loans to the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT.)

The Assembly was made up of a network of the rural villagers, the urban poor, student activists, NGOs activists and organisations struggling with development projects supported by the state and influential organisations such as EGAT. It operated through the seven groups focusing respectively on; forest and land; dams; state development projects; slum communities, work-related and environmental illnesses; alternative agriculture; and small fishermen (Missingham, 2003).

Poor rural villagers, especially from Northeast Thailand joined with poor urban dwellers and gathered to demand that the government address the negative impacts on their livelihoods, ways of life, culture and environment. In 1996, thousands of Assembly members marched hundreds of kilometres from Northeast Thailand to Government House in Bangkok. They demonstrated non-violently, negotiated with the cabinet of Gen Chavalit Yongchaiyuth and senior bureaucrats; and attracted extensive public and mainstream media attention for more than three weeks. At the beginning of 1997, twenty thousand members from every region joined a mass demonstration in Bangkok and at Government House for 99 days. The government acceded to their demands to provide compensation for the impact of the projects, and to revise the development projects. (Baker, 2000; and Missingham, 2003).

Two significant aspects of this movement should be highlighted. First, as commentators (for example, Baker, 2000; Prasartset 1997; and Pintobtang 1998) have pointed out, this movement pioneered direct action as a method of bargaining with state power over the direction of Thai development and local community rights and local knowledge in managing natural resources and participating in decisions (Missingham, 2003; and Baker, 2000).

In 1998, the Assembly participated in the protest against the IMF when the Thai government secured an agreement on loan conditions. Subsequently, the Assembly built the network at local, national and international levels, expanding their campaigns and protests against globalisation and free trade during the 10th United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) in Bangkok in 2000 and the WTO meeting in Chiengmai, Thailand in 2001 (Missingham, 2003). Overall, the Assembly of the Poor was

the first movement within Thai civil society aiming at resisting the industrial-oriented development strategy and globalisation.

The second important aspect, at national level, particularly during the first year of the protest, was the Assembly's ability to gain sympathy from the public, especially the middle classes in Bangkok and the media. But this success was short lived. After the economic crisis in 1997, public sympathy and interest decreased rapidly and the Assembly acquired a negative image (Missingham, 2003). At the beginning of 1998 during the Chuan Leekpai government, the prime minister's secretary labelled the Assembly 'parasites', and the mass media tended to characterise the protestors as 'a mob' making unreasonable demands (Baker, 2000). As we will see in the detailed analysis of news in Chapter 9, this dismissal of popular demands is part of a more general lack of space in the mainstream mass media for the voices of the disadvantaged

The decline of the Assembly of the Poor created a space in which a variety of social movement initiatives, based on different perspectives and programmes, struggled for support.

4.6.1 Three Concepts of Thai NGOs

Kanjana Kaewthep, a Thai media scholar, has usefully identified three main currents within Thai NGOs and social movements: the Buddhist strategy, community culture strategy, and the political economy strategy (see Wongchaisuwan, 2001).

As we noted earlier, the Buddhist strategy is based on the practical application of the core Buddhist precepts of spiritual happiness, love and giving. Preecha Piumpongsan, a Thai economics scholar, identifies four key principles of Buddhist economics that run counter to the core ideology of capitalism. Firstly, helping people is the route to human happiness. Secondly, the goal of business is not the highest profit. Thirdly, moderate consumption without material accumulation will help society and the underprivileged. Lastly, economic and political equality are necessary in society (Wongchaisuwan, 2001; and Buch-Hansen, 2002).

The political economy strategy is based on Marxist theory. It aims to reconstruct political power and production and to have technological development controlled by citizens; to supporting popular demands and labour dissidence; and to promote a socialist economy, a welfare society, equality; and a participatory democracy (Wongchaisuwan, 2001). The movement of 'the Assembly of the poor' might be placed in this category. Many NGOs and activists who work on environmental impact projects and in poor rural areas broadly agree with these aims. They see the present structures of Thai politics and economy as the major cause of contemporary problems for the disadvantaged and accept that it is not possible to help the poor and to solve ecological damage without changing the power structure including the power of the Thai elites (Missingham, 2003). At the same time, most have settled for more forms of intervention based on local community development.

The community culture strategy, though partly inspired by political economy theory, is also strongly influenced by the Buddhist emphasis on human-centred development. It pays particular attention to rural areas and culture and aims to promote local wisdom, traditional local culture, people's participation in developing policy, community rights in managing local natural resources, transforming market-oriented production to self-reliant agriculture or integrated farming, and sustainable development (Wongchaisuwan, 2001). It sees the crisis in the countryside as a result of globalisation but emphasises non-violent intervention and the need for compromise between state, elites and people. From the mid 1980s, NGO movements have been strongly influenced by the 'community strategy'. Indigenous culture, folk wisdom, and traditional technology have become the key concepts in strategies for community development and aim to counteract globalisation and capitalism (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2000).

Additionally, there are many organisations, local, national and international, which share the objective of supporting alternative ways of life, resisting multilateral corporations' power; opposing western cultures; enhancing villages and promoting self-reliant community. For example, 'Focus on the Global South' a collaboration between Thai and international scholars, led by Walden Bello, a prominent Philippines scholar focuses on creating a distinct and cogent link between development at the grassroots and the 'macro' levels (Signs Post to Asia & the Pacific, 1996).

As Gile Angpakorn, a Thai Marxist activist scholar, has pointed out however, the diversity and complexity of strategies and ideologies within Thai civil society has simultaneously produced a fragmented and discontinuous response and reproduced a top-down system of social representation. As he notes:

> people who always speak with mass media are NGO activists, not villagers. This is not different from dictator ways, top-down system (Chiengthong, 2000:52).

4.7   The Emergence of Alternative Media

As our case study confirms, organisations pursuing the community strategy assign a central role to alternative media in promoting their ideas and mobilising popular support. Since this thesis is solely concerned with material produced by Thai social movements, non-mainstream media produced by students, independent individuals and other organisations, such as hand made books, student films, religious cult communication, are not taken into account in this research.

Before the emergence of contemporary Thai civil society in the 1960s, work, in rural communities relied on face-to-face communication and folk media such as *Lumtad* and *Pleng Choi* in the Central and Eastern region, *Nora* in the Southern region , and *Morlum* in the North-eastern region, rather than alternative print or audio visual media, Folk media had a crucial role in educating people and criticising the state and elites. As the study by Phongpaichit and Baker (2003) in the rural North-east demonstrates, '*Morlum*' a Thai folk performance helped to build a local people network and distributed ideas to resist the state in the 1902 rebellion.

During the foundation phase of Thai social movements in the years 1960-1970, media technology was not employed widely for their campaigns and many NGOs continued to rely on personal media (talks) and seminars as communication events. Simple newsletters were produced by some NGOs however, to report on situations around the country (Interview Komsan Hutapaet, 2007). During the decade 1970-1980, media activity expanded. There were at least two alternative magazines, *Social Review* (*Sangkomsart Paritat*) and *Sangkom Pattana*, distributed among NGOs and a small group of intellectuals

(Interview Komsan Hutapaet). Then in 1974 Sulak Sivarak, a social thinker, launched 'Pacharayasara magazine' under the slogan 'link between heart and brain for seeking life and challenge consumerism' (Pacharayasara, 2007). One of the magazine's main aims was to present alternative paths to development which were not controlled by capitalist dynamics. However, distribution of the magazine was not continuous and its readership remained concentrated among small groups of urban students and intellectuals, mainly in Bangkok.

By 1980s, when modern communication technologies were beginning to assume their central role in contemporary Thai culture Komsan Hutapaet established 'The Centre of Media for Development' to help NGOs in producing media, radio programmes, slides, books, newsletters and video cassettes (VHS). The Centre's main aim was to promote alternative and organic agriculture, and local wisdom. Its major sphere of operations was in the Low-northern-central regions and the North-eastern region (Interview Komsan Hutapaet, 2007). During this period, several NGOs launched their own media, but these were still limited to small pamphlets or newsletters, such as, Lae Tai in the Southern region.

The crucial turning point for alternative media in Thailand took place after 1997. The enactment of the new Frequencies Act in 2000 together with the provisions of Thailand 1997's Constitution opened a space for activists and NGOs to participate in the pioneering movement of community radio in Thailand. Article 40 of the 1997 Constitutional states that frequencies for radio and television transmission have to be used for the public interest and that an independent state regulatory agency must be set up to supervise the assignments and licensing of radio frequencies in which education, culture, security and public safety must be considered at national and local levels (Siriyuwasak, 1999).

In response, several organisations, operated by NGOs and academics, emerged to press for the implementation of people rights according to the Constitution and to provide training for local people on how to operate community radio stations (Siristidkul, 2005). They included; the Social Investment Fund (SIF), Community Organizations Development Institute (Public Organization) or CODI, and the Campaign for Popular Media Reform. .

The key principles underpinning the drive for community radio were that the media should serve the public interest and that local communities should be the prime producers disseminating their own local wisdom, local cultural identities and alternative paths. The community radio should be a channel to strengthen local peoples' identity and solidarity and to reflect local problems and needs. The radio operation must be non-commercial media, non-advertising, managed by communities, and broadcast on a small scale locality, not over 15 kilometres (Wirojtrirat, 2001 and Burarak, 2005). After the national campaign, training workshops and seminars on community radio principles and practice took place in the East, Northeast and in Bangkok in 2000 and 2002 (Siriyuvasak, 2002), and hundreds of community radio stations run by NGOs activists and villagers were established between 2002 and 2003 around the country.

Community radio has had pitfalls in its development however. Although the Constitution formally guaranteed people rights to broadcasting frequencies, the relevant laws have not been issued, and the committee charged with allocating radio frequencies has not been set up. As a consequence, some stations were charged with illegal broadcasting. In 2004 a further problem arose when the Public Relations Department announced that all community radio stations had to register and be controlled by the Department and were allowed to derive their income from advertising. This announcement paved the way for the introduction of commercial local radio and resulted in the number of stations rapidly increasing from hundreds to 2,000.

At this stage, both the NGOs and commercial radio broadcasters linked to networks of influential local business people, politicians and mafia, benefited from the ambiguous state policy. This created a confusing situation in which 'genuine community radio' based on non-commercial and participating media principles, operated alongside stations presenting themselves as 'community radio', but which were supported by commercial advertising and other business organisations.

In the midst of this confusion, community radio was labelled by the state as 'illegal, business and political radio'. The delay in implementing the terms of the Constitution and setting up the committee to certify community radio reflects the fact that the army and state

wanted to maintain their majority proportion of radio frequency and the significant financial and political power it bestows (Burarak, 2005).

By the early 2000s however, NGOs and the civil society movements were able to take advantage of the technological advance of the Internet in Thailand. Intellectuals cooperated with NGOs and created an online news agency, PNN News, to distribute stories from local villages and the NGO movement. Subsequently, several NGOs and popular movements established their own websites. However, because of the strongly stratified structure of Internet access, the main beneficiaries of these developments were the urban and middle class in the big cities, not the villagers struggling to live with the adverse impacts of globalisation.

To understand how these impacts have affected lives and livelihoods in the fieldwork area we need now to briefly outline the history of the transformations that have taken place in the Easter region where the case study village is located.

Chapter 5

The Transformation of Eastern Thailand

5.1 Globalisation and Eastern Thailand

Eastern Thailand consists of eight provinces: Chonburi, Chacheogsao, Sra kaew, Chantaburi, Trad, Prachinburi, Nakornnayok, and Rayong where the fieldwork village is located. Before the 1960s, the abundant natural resources including the long coast on the Gulf of Thailand, forests, mangrove forests, and rich soil supported local careers in rice and fruit agriculture and coastal fishing (Banpasirichote, 2000).

The first major change came in the late 1960s, following the export-oriented strategy set out in the third Economic and Social Development plan (which the World Bank had a significant role in drafting). Rice cultivation was replaced by growing cassava and sugar cane for export. There was substantial migration into the region from the northeastern region by incomers attracted by the prospect of bringing new land into cultivation and the new jobs on the export farms. Rayong was one of the provinces that particularly attracted migrants.

The next major change occurred in the early 1980s when the Leophairatana family established Thai Petrochemical Industry (TPI), one of the largest conglomerates of Thailand, in the fieldwork village of Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked, Rayong. This was part of the drive towards industrialisation and urbanisation promoted by the Thai government in the Fourth Development Plan (1976-1980) (Pongsapich et al., 1993:74).

Like several powerful Thai businesses, the Leophairatana family was originally Chinese. They had made their money as rice and agricultural products merchants but the third generation of the family, educated in the US, seeing the potential of the new emphasis on industrialisation moved into the petrochemical industry.

The establishment of TPI also reflected the patron-client relationship of Thai society. The Leophairatana family had long enjoyed a special 'relationship' with military officers and

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'*Soi Ratchakru*', a powerful political group at that time (Jantaranimi, 1988a). Their acquisition of the rights to proceed with the first and second phases of the National Petrochemical Scheme owed much to their good relations with a major political party, *Chart Thai*; and with senior bureaucrats and high-ranking military officers. The major shareholders all were supporters of the Chart Thai party (Jantaranimi, 1988b).

Prachai Leophairatana, the founder of TPI admitted that pressure stemming from globalisation drove him to expand TPI with velocity and intensity (ANON, 2000a). At the beginning of the factory's establishment, TPI had financial assistance from the Bangkok Bank and a German Bank (Jantaranimi, 1988a). In 1996, before the economic crisis, the World Bank offered the TPI enterprise a massive loan of half a billion US dollars (Phongpaichit and Baker, 2002). Prachai claimed that the trade liberalisation expedited by the Anan Panyarachun government at the beginning of 1990s, enabled TPI to compete in the global trade system. As he said:

> All of this [expedition of TPI expansion and a huge loan] have to blame globalisation. In the era of Anan (the prime minister Anand Panyarachun), he pushed liberalisation. He wanted a fast track. So only one way to beat foreign companies was construction of the fully completed factory ... We needed to upgrade ourselves from lightweight to be heavyweight. If we couldn't do it, we would have been hit by them. We rushed to borrow a massive amount of money and increased the capital very much. We asked for a huge loan from international organisations, up to more than 3,000 million US dollars (author's translation- ANON, 2000a).

The original establishment of TPI was a harbinger of larger changes to come, introduced by the Fifth Economic and Social Development Plan (1982-1986) (Dilokvanich, 1995) and more particularly its showpiece initiative, the Eastern Seaboard Project (ESB).

Launched in 1981, the ESB covered three main areas: the Mab Ta Phut district; the Rayong region where the petrochemical complex was located together with soda ash plants, fertilizer plants and a steel complex; and Leam Chaban; Chonburi; and Chacheogsao the centre for medium-sized industries, such as auto parts, computer components and electronic goods. Infrastructures were built to support industries including ports,

telecommunications, roads, power stations and industrial estates (Tang and Muksuwang, 2003; and Anantawong and Sukkhumnerd, no date).

The East was selected as the new centre of industrial development for three main reasons. Firstly, the discovery of gas in The Gulf of Thailand, which is very close to the Eastern region, supported the rapid development of the petrochemical and chemical fertilizer industries. These industries in turn encouraged other industries to move to the region creating new jobs and eventually causing the surrounding lands to be transformed into new urban areas. Secondly, the long coastline was suitable for building industrial ports. Thirdly, there are huge stretches of coastal land for developing into giant industrial areas in the future. Also, it is not so far from Bangkok, the capital (Tang and Muksuwang, 2003; and Anantawong and Sukkhumnerd, no date).

The ESB aimed to transform Thailand into a newly industrialised country (NIC). At the nation-state level, Thai leaders, including academics, politicians, elites, the Army and businessmen welcomed the changes and the prospect of becoming a NIC. Thai elites, technocrats, many academics, and businessmen believed that Thailand would become the fifth tiger economy of Asia after Taiwan, South Korea, Hong Kong and Singapore. In fact, not only has Thailand not fulfilled this aim, but the economic gains have arguably been outweighed by the resulting environmental degradation, social dislocation and growing inequality. Since the 1980s, the rate of environmental impact has increased rapidly; and has offset the economic growth of the region (Banpasirichote, 2000). Land ownership has shifted from local farmers to industry and business prompting both conflicts and massive alterations to the region's culture and patterns of employment.

5.2 The Consequences Of Globalisation In Eastern Thailand

After the ESB was developed, the areas within the development became the most severely air polluted locations in the East (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region et al., 2003). The Mab ta Phut area is the most seriously polluted due to its housing the biggest petrochemical manufacturing complex in the country. Since 1996, communities located close to the Mab ta Phut estate have made complaints repeatedly to the authorities that people have suffered from air pollution and bad smells from factories. Students and

teachers at Mab ta Phut school have become ill with vomiting, dizziness, headaches, allergies, and itchy skin. In 1997 it was found that there were 17 chemical substances in the air, some of which were carcinogenic (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region *et al.*, 2003).

Water in basins and coastal water became polluted with untreated wastewater from factories. In some areas water contaminated with mercury, lead, cadmium and other chemical substances discharged from industrial plants and intensive agriculture is below the standard levels of fitness for consumption. The report on the Environmental Impact of Expansion ports points out that a large amount of mercury and cyanide was discovered in the sea near the Mab Ta Phut industrial estate. High levels of mercury content have also been found in fish in the Gulf of Thailand (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region *et al.*, 2003).

Hazardous waste is another serious problem. The disposal of hazardous waste from industries has been a continuous ecological issue for two decades. In the meantime, the government had no plan to deal with environmental impact. In 1998, a report showed that there were 84,420 tons of hazardous waste a year being disposed of in Chonburi and 264,915 tons a year in Rayong. This figure did not include waste from communities, hospitals and the agricultural sector. Moreover, hazardous waste was being illegally dumped on agricultural lands and remote villages of the East (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region *et al.*, 2003). When Genco, a hazardous waste management company selected the Pluakdang district in Rayong, the site of a hazardous waste landfill installation, residents resisted because the area was a water basin which was used to support their livelihoods. The protest went on for months. Genco finally decided to move the landfill to Mab Ta Phut. During this dispute, a protest leader was killed and the person responsible has yet to be found (Campaign for Alternative Industry Network, no date; and Banpasirichote, 2000).

Although the construction of the first phase of the Mab Ta Phut industry port had not been approved by the Harbour Department, it was still carried out. The environmental impact was much more serious than shown in the Report of Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA). It altered the direction of flow of the sea water and over thirty kilometres of the

shoreline of Thong beach and Sangchan beach were destroyed and some of the houses collapsed. Further houses and police points were damaged. Fishermen had difficulties in catching fish. (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region *et al.*, 2003).

The serious problems of coastal damage and environment degradation resulting from the expansion of factories and the construction of commercial ports have extended more than fifty kilometres, from the seashore of Mab Ta Phut to the TPI factory in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked, the fieldwork area. TPI claimed that it is the most extensive petrochemical complex in South-East Asian (IRPC Public Company Limited, 2008), with 26 factories around the village. According to the Report of People Union for Environment and Developing the East Region *et al.,* (2003), TPI displaced over 1,500 rai (1 rai being equivalent to 6.3 hectares) of seawater to build an industrial port for the petrochemical complex. Local people and fishermen objected to this project. In spite of the EIA Report having not been approved, the port and factories were built without interference from the authorities. This project has degraded the coastal ecology severely. The fishermen were unable to catch fish and bring their own boats into the banks. The coastlines also were badly damaged (People Union for Environment and Developing the East region *et al.*, 2003).

Mangrove forests have also been diminished rapidly after the arrival of industrialisation and export led growth. Mangrove forests were initially destroyed to make way for prawn farms in the coastal provinces of Chonburi, Rayong, Chantaburi and Trat. The rapid growth of prawn farms also destroyed the sea grass forest and coral (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998). Moreover, 'breaking waves' have occurred often due to changes in the direction of flow of sea water. Beautiful beaches of the East part have become black and dirty. Furthermore, it was found that the big fish in eastern sea and the Gulf of Thailand are now inedible as they have become contaminated with very high levels of heavy metal and mercury (Bello, Cunningham and Poh,1998).

The battle for water sources in the region reflects the balance of advantages from globalisation. A Report of People Union for Environment and Developing the East Region *et al.,* (2003) reveals that the East used to have abundant water sources, but at present water supplies are insufficient for everyone. There is only the *Bang Pa Kong* river which is

the main water source, but it is a very short. Through industrialisation, the watershed area of *Bang pa Kong* has been destroyed.

There are 11 water basins which the Eastwater company administers and allocates in the East. The problems are lack of water and contaminated water. Farmers who live around the basins and people along the *Bang Pa Kong* river, which is the watershed area have not gained quality allocated water. All the basins and water resources were built for industry. In addition, water in the *Nong Pla Lai* basin in Rayong was found to be contaminated with a larger amount of heavy metal making it unsafe for human consumption. Moreover, the water rate (cost) is relatively high because the water management is run by only one private company (Eastwater). In this situation, the conflict over water becomes more intense when local people or farmers whose lands were expropriated for water basin construction gain little advantage from the new water basins (Report of People Union for Environment and Developing the East Region *et al.*, 2003).

The arrival of new advanced technology industries was not accompanied by programmes for environmental treatment or protection. Bello's research on the environmental protection measures of Thai industries found that First World investors avoid implementing legally-required measures. As Bello, Cunningham and Poh describe,

> As one foreign expert with a great deal of experience with government environmental monitoring agencies said: 'They're all the same, whether Australian, Japanese, Chinese, American. If they can do it, they would make zero investment in environmental controls. He [one foreign expert] gave the example of a German firm making refrigerators, saying that they used a lower-grade, more environmentally harmful technology than the mother firm used in Europe. 'They can do it in a much better fashion, but they choose not to.' As for Japanese firms, another expert claims by exporting pollution via the export of dirty industry... Textile factories which discharge harmful acetate dyes have been moved to Thailand (Bello, Cunningham and Poh, 1998:126).

The health impacts are now more serious. Bello's study points out that

> Deaths due to malignant neoplasm rose from 9.06 per 100,000 people in 1961 to 40.96 in 1991. Also, the average incidence of malignant neoplasm and the rate of perinatal morbidity and mortality were significantly higher in the three heavily industrialized provinces in the Eastern Seaboard than the average for the

remaining 24 provinces. (Han Ten Brummelhuis cited in Bello, Cunningham and Poh,1998:124).

5.2.1 Economic and Cultural Changes

Saisuksawad's research (1994) on 'the Impact of Eastern Seaboard Project on Villagers' Lives' based on a close study of Mabchalood in Rayong highlights the cultural changes that have followed in the wake of the ESB.

Since ESB was launched, land expropriation has been carried out in the area of Laem Chabang, Chonburi and around the Mab Ta Phut without any participation or public hearing for local people, leading to new gigantic industrial estates emerging in the two areas. This has led to the transformation of traditional life and culture in many villages. Mabchalood, a village near the Mab Ta Phut estate, was transformed to be a new municipality to support the industrial estate. After local people sold their own land, they became wage labourers in factories, and traditional agricultural practices and the culture they supported declined rapidly. Some of the lands which were not expropriated were sold very rapidly due to a drastic increase in price. However, not everyone can be a worker in a factory and Saisuksawad's study (1994) points out that industrialisation opens doors primarily for educated people, leaving poorer residents with agricultural and fishing resources severely depleted and damaged.

With the demise of the high degree of self-sufficiency characteristic of traditional agricultural system, the egalitarian social ethic and tradition of mutual assistance has also disappeared. All of the sixteen participants interviewed in the Saisuksawad's study (1994), reported that they were unable to seek help from neighbours as they did in the past. They saw levels of distrust rising and relationships becoming more firmly incorporated into the cash nexus with people tending to measure the success of others by looking at how many luxurious things they can afford. The development of a consumer economy has transformed farmers from producers into consumers. A new kind of power has emerged: it was the power of money that people counted as first priority. Although, industry creates more jobs and income, at the same time, living expenses are much higher as well. The villagers have to buy things, for instance food and medicines, while in the past all food and some herb medicines were available from their own lands.

However, the fieldwork data collected for Saisuksawad's study (1994) shows that there are winners as well as losers from this process and that one of the primary fault lines is generational. Young people do not wish to continue working on the land and see factory work and the wages it brings as a gateway to a life style more attuned to the images of style and modernity that surround them. Adults too may be net beneficiaries from change. If they own land, they can sell it and get money to invest in small businesses; for instance, house renting or grocery shops.

People in the Eastern region have had some experiences of collaborating to negotiate with factories when the impact of industry affected them directly, but there are very few civil organisations or non- governmental organisations operating in this region. In many protests, leaders or other people have been killed or injured (Banpasirichote, 2000). In the meantime, the government pressed on with plans for the second phase of the ESB implemented between 1997 and 2006. This industrial project covers 11 provinces: Chonburi, Rayong, Chachoengsao, Chantaburi, Trad, Prachinburi, Sra Kaew, Nakornnayok, Ayuttaya, Singburi and Lopburi. The aim is to open up the inner parts of the East and link the Eastern coastal regions to the North-Eastern and Indochina countries. As a result, many areas which were left untouched by ESB1 have now been integrated into ESB2 (Report of People Union for Environment and Developing the East Region *et al.*, 2003).

The impact and changes to the environment, the economy and culture have therefore now extended over the whole of the Eastern region. According to all the sources discussed above, the development plans have benefited political leaders, businessmen and trans-national corporations while causing adversity to many local people. In response, social movements operating in Eastern Thailand have attempted to negotiate with the state and maintain community rights.

5.3   Social Movements and Alternative Media In Eastern Thailand

Civil society movements are relatively underdeveloped in Eastern Thailand compared to other regions. One of the main reasons is that the number of 'development-oriented people organisations' in the region is not sufficient to create a self-conscious role for community organisations (Banpasirichote, 2000).

However, socio-economic factors should be taken into account as well. As noted above, the eastern region has been subject to capitalist dynamics for longer than other regions with the result, as we will see from the fieldwork findings, residents have had time to accommodate to change. They may not accept it but they see no viable alternative and dismiss community development strategies as unrealistic. Added to which, the transformation of many villages into semi-urban and urban communities is unattractive to those NGOs and social movements which tend to work in poor rural localities (Banpasirichote, 2000).

Another relevant factor is the important roles in political and economic sectors in the eastern region played by *choapor* or the local mafia (Praditsilp and Tinbangtoea, 2006). Research indicates that some people's movement participants in this region have been threatened with their lives and that leaders have been killed without anyone being arrested (Banpasirichote, 2000; and Praditsilp and Tinbangtoea, 2006). As a consequence, establishing permanent social movement organisations is more than usually difficult.

As Banpasirichote's study (2000) points out, the protests organised by villagers responding to the adverse consequences of globalisation tended not to be led by permanent organisations. Rather they emerged around single issues such as the protest against the building the reservoir at Chonburi in 1974, in which the leader of the protest was shot dead (Banpasirichote 2000:473); the protest against the building a commercial harbour in 1988 at Laem Chabang, Chonburi; and the protest against the GENCO hazardous wastes landfill in Rayong in 1995 where once again, a protest leader was killed. The gunman was arrested by the police, but subsequently released as the case was rejected by the court (Praditsilp and Tinbangtoea, 2006). Between 1970 and 2000, thirteen big major protests against ecological degradation were reported in the media (Banpasirichote, 2000; and Praditsilp and Tinbangtoea, 2006) and this number excludes local small scales protests; the protests

were ignored by the national media; including the protests against the TPI in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked in the mid of 1900s.

The sporadic nature of protest movements also inhibited the development of widespread and permanent alternative media but by the end of the 1990s, three organisations working in the region were actively using media to promote their development strategies.

The first organisation, made up of group of democratic-oriented NGOs and academics supported by 'the Thailand Social Investment Fund' (SIF) focussed on promoting community radio. Several Eastern activists launched their own stations for example: Bangsrakao in Chantaburi province; Ban Kingampur Kohchan in Chonburi province; Ban Tung Kwai Kin in Rayong province; and the community radio of Rayong Community Development Organisation, FM 106, which broadcast over a wide area including Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked in Rayong. When the SIF, funding ended, each community attempted to raise their own funds from donations or subsidised their operations out of their own community saving funds.

However, according to the participant observation work conducted for this study, community radio stations without secure subsidy found themselves in a constant predicament financially. As non commercial media operated by unpaid volunteers, obtaining money from advertising or from business corporations, is considered to be against the principles of community radio, which emphasises the participation of small communities without intervention from commercial sources. As a result, the lack of regular and sufficient income presented a critical difficulty in managing the stations. Unpaid volunteers however, agreed to work temporarily as they were in a desperate situation regarding their livelihood.

Politically, they also had to cope with the unclear state policy towards local radio and the attempts to exert control by media corporations. The Eastern Thailand has a long history of domination by local mafia and intense capitalism. As a consequence, powerful business people launched advertising supported local stations under the banner of 'community radio' which took advantage of the unclear state policy. Transmission from these stations covered over 15 kilometres, a larger area than NGOs stations could manage. Faced with

these impediments, some 'genuine' community radio stations have closed and some are struggling to broadcast with difficulties.

The second organisation, 'the Thai Health Promotion Foundation' (ThaiHealth) was launched in 2001 with an annual revenue of about $35 million coming directly from 2 percent of tobacco and alcohol taxes. It is a state agency but not a government agency or a state enterprise. In 2004, the 'Happy Communities Project', one of many projects initiated by this organisation, was launched in villages across the whole country. It emphasised 'integrating existing development activities in the community and moving towards learning and well-being through supporting community' (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2004b). An important expected outcome of the project was that the well-being of the community would be improved physically, mentally, socially and spiritually in the long run by developing environmental, economic, social and cultural resources (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2004b).

In the East, ThaiHealth joined the Eastern Development Union Club and eight provincial networks to launch a sub-project titled 'Happy Communities in the East for Physical, Mental and Spiritual Health Development'. The project covers eight provinces with 100 villages as targeted communities (Thai Health Promotion Foundation, 2004a). In 2003, with funding from ThaiHealth, the Eastern Development Union Club produced a newsletter, *Friends of the East* to promote their alternative paradigm of development. The newsletter emphasises happiness in the community, organic and integrated farming, Buddhist principles, the adverse effects of capitalism, the impact of chemical and toxic substances, environmental conservation and youth activities.

There are however problems with *Friends of the East*. First, although in principle, ThaiHealth claims that the targeted communities should be one hundred villages in eight provinces in practice, according to ethnographic findings, there are only eight communities of eight provinces operating the project. *Friends of the East* has therefore been distributed directly only to these eight communities. The rest of the copies have been delivered to other organisations, both NGOs and government sectors. Moreover, the audience in the eight communities has been limited to community leaders, members of the project and

NGOs activists. Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak ked, the fieldwork site, was not one of targeted villages. Therefore, residents have never received the newsletter.

Another problem is that the producers of the newsletter, who are activists and residents in Eastern villages, have faced repeated difficulties in media production such as the use of computers in artwork design and gathering stories. This causes delays and the irregular circulation of the newsletter. Added to which, completely depending on funding from ThaiHealth led to irregular distribution of the copies when the funding ended each year. As we shall see, these same problems of irregular production and limited circulation were also characteristic of the newsletter selected for detailed analysis in this study.

The third organisation, the Community Organizations Development Institute (Public Organization) or CODI has had a major role in supporting and training NGOs activists and community organisations throughout the country. CODI was a public organisation under the supervision of Ministry of Finance initially. It is currently under the Ministry of Social Development and Human Security. The major aim of CODI is to strengthen the society at the grassroots level by empowering community organisations and civil society (Community Organizations Development Institute, 2006).

One of the key concepts underpinning CODI's activities is the 'revival of local community ways of life' which, according to Thongdeelert (2004), it views as a counterbalance against the forces of globalisation. It sees the clash between local wisdom and globalisation having three possible outcomes: conflict, exchange or adjustment.

CODI 's strategy has four main dimensions:

> First, reviving life capital, social capital and local wisdom to create sustainable development (building alternatives and solutions);

> Second, holistic and integrated development (linking between forest, soil, water resource, alternative agriculture, alternative medical, alternative education, welfare fund, local arts and cultures, and so on);

> Third, developing local knowledge to raise local consciousness and ideologies in the midst of globalisation;

Lastly, creating and developing alternative ways of life and communities (understand our roots, being aware of globalisation) (translated-Thongdeelert, 2004:53).

However, one of the main principles of the CODI project is sensitivity to the particular context of each community. As a result, there is no carbon-copied formula in working with provincial communities. Consequently, NGOs and activists need to adjust their plans and practices to effectively respond to the specific problems presented by varying types of community; rural, semi-urban or urban. To accomplish this a study of four crucial aspects, local belief system or religions, natural resource bases, production bases, and the structure of community relationships, is essential in the initial stage. CODI believes that if each initiative establishes appropriate operations, villagers will be able to direct their own development (Thongdeelert, 2004).

In 2005 and 2006, several eastern NGOs, activists and community organisations were supported under 'the Revival of Local Ways of Life Project'. According to participant observation findings of this research, at the meeting of all Eastern member organisations in 2005 at Rayong, it was agreed to set the agenda of 'alternative media' as a core strategy. Partial funding from CODI was allocated to launch an experimental community Internet project in Srakwae province.

The arrival of CODI in the East region was a major factor in the launch of the newsletter *'Power of Community'* and the activist VCD in Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked, the fieldwork area, in 2005 both of which were run by the Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO), a non-governmental organisation in Rayong. We will examine the operations of the newsletter and the organisation of the representations it made available to villagers in more detail in Chapter 10, but as additional context we first need to explore the village's general experience of the transformations set in motion by industrialisation and globalisation in more detail.

Part 3 Experiencing and Negotiating Globalisation: *Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked*

Chapter 6
The Eye of the Storm: Industrialisation and Transformation

6.1 Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked

The fieldwork study for this thesis was carried out at Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked, a village in Amphur Mung (town district), Tumbon (sub-district) Cheong Noen, Rayong province, Eastern Thailand. During the fieldwork period in 2005, the population of the village was approximately 4,600. Most of them are Buddhists. According to the village head, there were no more than 1,000 indigenous descendents of families who had lived in the village since its foundation, the rest were newcomers who had migrated there, attracted by the prospect of work in the numerous factories. Some of the remaining indigenous residents also worked in factories or pursued small businesses such as groceries. Others continued with the traditional occupations of fishing and growing crops and fruit, especially *Putsa* (a kind of Thai fruit), for which the village was famous, a reputation the villagers attributed to the soil composition and climate.

Geographically, the village is located in the middle of two major motorways, the Sukhumvit and By-pass No.3, splitting the area into three main zones: the Wat Noen putsa; the town house estate; which include indigenous groups and newcomers; the Pluak ked, which includes its adjacent City town house estate and the Arun Ruem area (see the map in the next page). Two Buddhist temples, Wat Noen Putsa and Wat Pluak Ked, are located in the areas of Noen putsa and Pluak Ked groups. The main factory, TPI, spreads over all three main areas. Some parts of the main petrochemical site and the harbour are in the area of Wat Noen Putsa, near the long seashore and mangrove forest which were significant
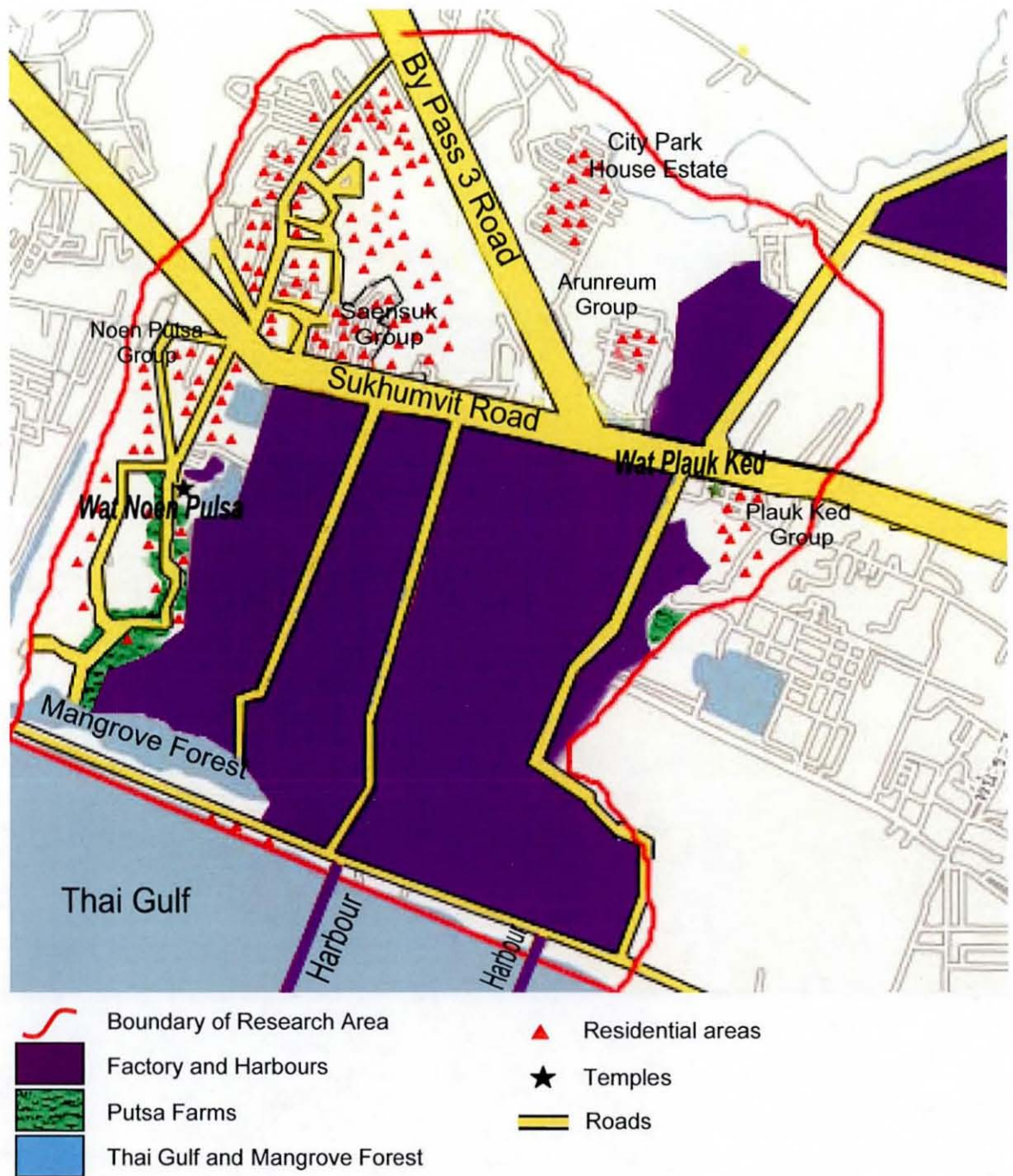
Figure 6.1 Map of the case study area (Ban Noen Putsa Plauk Ked), Rayong, Thailand

Source: modified from

http://maps.google.com/maps?hl=en&q=Thailand+map&um=1&ie=UTF-8&split=0&sa=X&oi=geocode_result&resnum=1&ct=title

resources in the past. One of the army bases was constructed on the other side of the seashore near the community forest and the factory. The village is approximately 2 kilometres away from Rayong town centre where several spacious shopping malls and supermarkets such as Laemthong, Macro, Big C and Tesco-Lotus.

There is a local election every four years to vote for two representatives to run the Tumbon Choeng Noen Administrative Office which is responsible for developing the environment, culture, education, and a range of other tasks, including collecting business taxes. The villagers can also vote to select a village head, who is the official leader of the community. Members of the national parliament are selected every four years.

6.2 Globalisation in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked

Although respondents stressed that Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked had had ties and relationships with other communities since the beginning of its establishment around one hundred years ago (the interviews of Ballang Chaipinit and Udom Sakulchuea, 2005) the recent era of industrialisation and globalisation marks a step change in the extent and density of the village's connections to the wider national and global arenas. We can usefully divide this recent history into three main phases.

Before 1980, the pre industrial era

From 1981 to 1997, industrialisation, urbanisation and the development of the TPI factory

From 1997 to 2005, The impact of economic crisis and its aftermath, the consolidation of consumerism.

Figure 6.2 The oldest house of Ban Noen Putsa Ked

Figure 6.3 Fishing is a traditional career in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked

Photographs by the author

Figure 6.4 Traditional culture and Thai New year (Song Kran) in a Thai temple in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked.

Photographs by the author

Figure 6.5 A farmer is selecting '*putsa*' to sell in the market.

Figure 6.6 Mat Weaving in the village

Photographs by the author

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6.2.1 Before 1980:The Pre Industrial Era

Originally the villagers' livelihoods were based on agriculture, fishing and natural resource utilisation. According to the survey I conducted in 2005, 83.7% of the adult and older indigenous residents who recalled the pre industrial era claimed to have fished while 76.5% said they were engaged in agriculture. 86.7% of this group stated that their families were self sufficient and that it was not necessary to purchase food, and 91.8% claimed that an ethos of mutual assistance and cooperative values governed collective life. The ethnographic findings confirmed that mutual assistance was one of the core values which the villagers saw underpinning the general well being of the community. Connection with other communities was primarily based on personal contact. As Udom Sakulchua, an indigenous man in his sixties, recalled; 'in the past, there was a dirt road, not the concrete road like this. We use a cart for transportation'.

One of the stories which many old people recounted when they were asked to talk about the history of the village, was supernatural power of 'Chao Por Pluak Ked'. (Chao Por is the title given to a holy male spirit, and Pluak means termites). In rural Thai society, people respect a termite sanctuary, believing that it houses a holy spirit. The story the villagers told was of a man who rode a cart pulled by two buffaloes. While he was passing the area of the holy Pluak Ked, he said he would offer food and liquor. However, he did not do as he promised and on arriving home, one of his buffalo's neck was broken and it died immediately. In this era, the villagers stressed that they respected Chao Por Pluak Ked and asked for his supporting power especially when they were travelling and trading. Indeed, the village was named after this Pluak Ked and the holy area associated with him employed in religious and traditional events, for example Thai New Year and the rice offering ritual.

It was this intricate network of beliefs and customs and the self sufficient rural local economy they supported that was to be so comprehensively transformed by the arrival of industrialisation.

Figure 6.7 Chao Por Pluak Ked, the respected holy spirit of Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked.

Figure 6.8 Modern house estate in the village after the arrival of the factory. Noone here knows *Chao Por Pluak Ked* in the picture above.

Photographs by the author

6.2.2 From 1981 to 1997: Industrialisation, Urbanisation and The Arrival of The TPI Factory

The arrival of the giant Thai Petrochemical Industry company (TPI) in 1978 marked a decisive turning point in the village's history ushering in a new era marked by rapid industrialisation, the substantial expansion of infrastructure, and mass inward migration, forces which combined to dramatically alter both the villagers' established ways of life and the local environment.

As noted earlier, TPI pioneered the development of the petrochemical industry in Thailand generating a variety of products including refined petrol, plastics, electric devices, vehicle spare parts and furniture, all of which were produced and distributed domestically and internationally. The arrival of heavy industry in the area required extensive infrastructural development including harbours and new industrial centres, projects that were opened to both domestic and international investors. In a corporate promotional pamphlet, TPI describes its assets as follows;

> The TPI industrial centre is one of the biggest industrial centres in Thailand. It covers the lands more than 4,000 rai [one rai equals to 0.16 hectare]. The company offers modern infrastructures such as roads, pipe transportation, harbours, a power plant. The outstanding character of the centre is located adjacent to the sea. The harbours are constructed on safe and well-protected location, near the ship routes, which connect to Europe, Singapore, South East Asia, South Asia and China. Factories in the centre are able to contact directly the Asian market through the TPI harbour. The company would like to invite investors to invest in Thailand by establishing a factory in the centre, which we provide the full scheme of superb services, location and infrastructure (translated- Thai Petrochemical Industry Public Company Limited, no date).

The company has close ties to a range of Thai elites. Originally founded by two Thai tycoon families: 'Leophairatana' and 'Taepaisitpong', its shareholders include the 'Sophonpanich' controllers of the Bangkok Bank, elite families such as 'Hongladarom, Aksaranukraw, Aiemsakulrat', senior military officers (General Sueb Aksaranukraw) and senior civil servants (for example, Sippanon Ketthat-former minister and Kaewkwan

Watcharothai-the Secretary-General of the Royal Household). Foreign creditor banks including the Export-Import Bank of the United States, Standard Charter Bank, and Deutsche Bank of Germany are also share holders. In 1978, when the company was first registered, it commanded capital of 300 million Thai baht or approximately 4.28 million pounds. In 2006, its assets were valued at 130,000 million Thai baht or approximately 1,857 million pounds (interview with Nopphol Narkyoth, a TPI staff in September 2006).

TPI became a public company in 1994. In 2006, it employed approximately 7,000 staff working 24-hours a day in rotation. Most of them lived in the community. However, indigenous villagers employed by the factory constituted less than 20 percent of the total (interview with Nopphol Narkyoth, a TPI staff in September 2006).

The development of TPI was accompanied by the construction of the Mab ta Phut industrial estate as part of the Eastern Seaboard Project, only 20 kilometres away from the fieldwork area. To support to rapid industrialisation of the Rayong region, modern infrastructure was installed, including concrete highways and roads, electric power and telecommunication system. The Sukhumvit road that ran from Bangkok into the east of Thailand, was expanded to a four lane highway in 1995. The national highway route No.36 Pattaya-Rayong was also expanded in 2002. Additionally, the national highway route no.3, which connects No.36, was upgraded to be an asphalt concrete road in 1983 and widened to four lanes in 2001. This road connects route no.36 to tumbon Choeng Noen and the TPI area.

According to the survey conducted for this research, although the great majority of the adult and older indigenous respondents (85.7%) had a generally positive attitude to the extension of Sukhumwit road and route No.3, 70% of the older group and 47.9% of the working age indigenous group agreed that the number of accidents had risen dramatically. Moreover, as mentioned earlier, the extension of this infrastructure had separated the community to five small areas (see the map of the case study area).

The growth of industry and infrastructure development motivated a large number of people from both the capital city and the North Eastern of Thailand to migrate to Rayong and Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked. In the meantime, indigenous villagers whose livelihood relied on

agriculture and natural resources moved out to seek other fertile lands. By 2005, as noted earlier, this had produced a highly unbalanced population structure in which the newcomers outnumbered indigenous residents 3 to 1. The newcomers were by no means a homogeneous group however. On the contrary, their economic and status differences were reflected in strong residential segregation. The poorer newcomers who had migrated from the North Eastern Thailand and other provinces to work as labourers in factories occupied houses simply built in highly density locations whereas migrants from Bangkok and other areas, who held middle-range to top positions in the industry, lived in newly built modern housing estates with costly western architecture styles.

According to the ethnographic findings, the raid of industrialisation during this second era of development had major impacts not only on the traditional livelihoods and lifestyles of the indigenous community but also on the environment. At the beginning of the decade in 1980, before the TPI was constructed, a large amount of land was sold to prepare for the plant's construction. Small fishermen were asked to move out from the lands along the *Ta Ton Tan* beach, a key natural resource for the community. The factory was then established on lands that had played a central role in the community economy while an industrial harbour was constructed on the *Ta Ton Tan* beach. As a consequence control over natural resource utilisation passed from the indigenous people to industrial interests. Rice farms and *putsa* fields were transformed into industrial areas and housing estates. Nevertheless, there were still six peasant families who struggled to plant *putsa* despite the environmental challenges (interviews Boontham Srisura and Thanom Kaewkao, 2005).

In 1995 and 1996, several national newspapers, including *Matichon* and *Phujadkarn*, reported the protests of villagers objecting to the environmental impact resulting from the development of TPI. The villagers complained to the factory, the provincial officials and the press that they had been exposed to pollution and poisonous water for a considerable time but that nothing had been done. They pointed to students at Pluak Ked school and the Polytechnic school who had suffered vomiting, dizziness, skin disease and in some cases, unconsciousness (*Matichon* 3,5,7,9,11 June 1995).

The environmental impacts reported in the press included air pollution, wastewater in the mangrove forest and the sea, hazardous waste on cattle fields, acidic rain, contaminated

ground water and the invasion of natural resources such as sand, beaches and the mangrove forest (*Matichon* 3-15 June 1995, and 27 June 1995). According to an interview with a protest leader, Narong Preedarat printed in *Matichon* (6 June 1995), the mangrove forest behind the factory, which was an important natural resource to the community had become contaminated by the toxic substance. Somnuk Nongpailom, a fisherman in the community, was quoted as saying;

> I do not understand how the factory could be located in the centre of community. The villagers are in difficulty and had complained to the province. However, the province does not pay attention to the complaints. Moreover, at the seashore behind the factory, a massive amount of sand has been moved. The factory also releases wastewater into the sea. This caused many sea animals dying almost everyday. I have to move out to catch seafood in other areas (*Matichon*, 3 June 1995).

Figure 6.9 TPI factory and the harbour

Photographs by the author

Figure 6.10 The area of the factory is adjacent to water resource and Noen Putsa temple.

Photographs by the author

The villagers had questioned the central authority as well as the local state organisations regarding the close proximity of the industry to the town centre, pointing out that the distance was only 2.5 kilometres. Questions were also raised about the alteration of the area's status from a yellow zone (for habitants) to a purple zone (for industry) after the arrival of the plant. These questions pointed to a close connection between bureaucratic officials and the elites of Thai society. In response, TPI argued that there were no sick children or villagers due to toxic emission (*Matichon*, 8 June 2005) and a company executive, Prachai Leophairatana claimed that the protest was being stirred up by residents who wanted to increase the prices of their own lands which they hoped eventually to sell to TPI. In his view, all the complaints were prompted by interest groups who desired to extort money from the company (*Phujadkarn*, 11 May 1995).

While there were many press reports in 1995 and 1996 related to illnesses among the villagers, only one case was confirmed by the doctor who advised a female patient, who had chemical substances in her blood, to move out from the accommodation (*Phujadkan*, 9 and 12 September 1996). In response, TPI claimed that they provided health examination services to the locals regularly and that, no one was sick due to the toxic atmosphere (*Matichon*, 8 June 1995).

This dispute between the company and the community was part of a longer running arguments over environmental impacts that began before 1995, when the factory had expanded and established the power plant. Once the seashore was replaced by the huge harbour, the number of sea animals was drastically reduced and the fishermen were denied access the seashore (interviews with Pitsamai Sanohlum and Rin Sanohlum, 2005). Approximately 300-400 fishermen who had depended on the sea for their livelihood could no longer support themselves and had to find other jobs (*Matichon*, 9 June 1995). The fertile lands used for planting *putsa* were transformed to accommodate the factory plant and housing estates. Two farmers whom I interviewed during the ethnographic work claimed that although a few peasants insisted on carrying on their own traditional occupation, they desperately struggled to cultivate fruitful crops due to salty ground water caused by the removal of sand from the beaches for use in industrial processes.

Once they could no longer depend on the sea, the lands, the forest and clean rain water, their daily consumption needs became indirectly controlled by markets outside the community. Without the natural resources providing rice, food and herbal medicine, obtaining money to purchase basic goods became the most important factor in securing the villagers' livelihoods (interviews of Niran Promchan and Ratree Bupakosum, 2005). Even the rain and ground water that had been available for use in daily life had been contaminated by chemical substances (interviews Sawong Saenroj and Ratchanok Sakulchue, 2005) forcing villagers to purchase water, along with food, medicine and many other things, which they had never had to pay for before.

Taken together, these shifts in the basis of everyday life have introduced a new organisation of daily activities. For workers in the factories, work from nine to five. Many people also work at night and weekends to earn more cash. The villagers who have shifted to small business such as food shops and groceries, have had to adjust to working at the same time as the workers in the factory. This relatively inflexible time schedule left less time for other activities.

Responding to my 2005 questionnaire survey, 32.6% of indigenous residents claimed that they did not go to the temples as regularly as in the past because after the arrival of the factory they needed to earn and did not have time for religious activities. For some villagers this disengagement from religious practice was reinforced by their conflict with the Pluak Ked temple when a religious leader allowed the factory to construct huge pipes beneath the temple lands. Some of the villagers were concerned with the danger posed by the construction and its implications. The resulting dispute undermined the relationship between the temple and the locals with the result that the religious leader can no longer retain either their faith in him or his role in the community centre. In contrast, the relationship between the industry and the temple became more interdependent from this era onwards.

Other traditional social gatherings and festivals have also suffered a decline. In the pre industrial era, one of the most important festivals in Thai society, Thai New Year (Song Kran), was celebrated at *Ta Ton Tan* beach. However, these celebrations ended when the beach was converted to an industrial harbour. At the same time other formerly public

spaces were now utilised and held by the private sector (Niran Promchan, interviewed 2005).

TPI also made a major incursion into the local education system, founding a vocational school in the community with the aim of producing human resources to support the factory.

6.2.3 From 1997 To 2005: The impact of Economic Crisis and Its Aftermath

In 1997, the Asian economic crisis dramatically affected all sectors of the Thai economy including TPI. Although, the company is predominantly owned by Thais, it borrowed heavily from foreign banks. Due to the huge amount of debt incurred, it was forced to enter the "Participating Scheme Creditors' Resolution" initiated by the government Ministry of Finance and foreign creditors.

At a political level though, the company had learned from its earlier confrontations with local people, and after 1996 it pursued a vigorous strategy of incorporation. One key plank in this strategy was to put community leaders on the payroll as company staff. This resulted in one of the two local administration representatives working for TPI in their public relations department alongside a local district representative from a political party. In an interview, a TPI executive revealed that this strategy had succeeded in its major aim of improving relationships between the factory and the community (Pannipa Laosiripoj, interviewed 2005).

This goal was given a further boost by shifts in the local political system. In the local elections for administrative office, the former local representatives who had protested against TPI in 1995 lost their seats and were replaced by a resident working for the company and a local businessman.

The company also pursued its strategy of incorporation within the community supporting traditional activities and donating money for charity and to the temples during religious events. In addition, it established closer relations with the Neon Putsa temple by providing a clean water supply to the temple to replace the salty water caused by the arrival of the factory.

Although protests against the factory had ended, environmental degradation persisted and there were no solutions or answers from any state agencies to the problems. Research by Rayong Provincial Health Office in 2000-2001 (Rayong Provincial Health Office, 2000-2001) and Premsantia's report in 2002 (Premsantia, 2002) revealed that residents who live close the TPI complex were still complaining about air pollution and foul smells. The research between 2003 to 2005 in Choengnoen sub-district (Nong Jok Healthcare Unit, 2005) also showed that the people were most often sick with respiratory problems such as coughing and sore throats with skin diseases and rashes ranked second, followed by constant headaches.

The residents' complaints related to land holding, sand suction, the change from habitation zone to industry zone, the location of the factory, illness due to pollution, waste water in the mangrove forest, air pollution, toxic lands, and contaminated ground water, which were reported in the press, were never answered or resolved by either relevant state agencies or the government.

In this era, two powerful new agents of globalisation penetrated the community. In 1997, the first modern shopping complex, Laemthong, opened in Rayong town centre offering western brand name products, such as Benetton, Levi's, and Espris; and branches of western fast food chains such as Macdonalds, KFC, Pizza Hut, Burger King, together with Japanese restaurants. The complex also housed cinemas, karaoke hubs and staged weekly contests events such as the Miss Motor Show Contest, dance contests and fashion show contests, which provided an attractive stage for teenagers to show off their talent in modern and western styles. Its popularity with young people was confirmed by my 2005 survey where it emerged as the favoured place to 'hang out'.

After the launch of Laemthong, other large retail chains, namely, Macro, Big C and Tesco-Lotus established branches in town centre during the period of 1998-2000. Big C and Macro are owned by Thai Tycoons while Tesco-Lotus is a joint venture between the UK and Thailand conglomerates, a fact that its rivals seized on to label it 'foreign' and alien to Thai society. During the fieldwork period these stores were attracting large numbers of people from the community and the areas around Rayong to come and shop. Eating out in

the modern food outlets and spending time window shopping was also one of the popular family activities during Bank holidays.

At the same time, the traditional local markets which opened one or two days a week continued to play a significant role selling food and consumer goods. Although they were operated by local vendors they also acted as a conduit for globalisation making modern western cultural goods, such as cheap CDs of foreign films and music and fashion clothes, easily available. They also introduced Christmas and Valentine's days products into what was still a predominantly Buddhist community.

Alongside the emergence of modern shopping complexes, this period in the village's development also saw a rapid growth in new media, particularly VCD (including CD), DVD players and computers. The findings of my survey in 2005 showed that the VCD player was most popular among teenagers with 94% of indigenous locals and 86% of newcomer using one. Usage was lower among working age residents but still high with 76% of newcomers and 58.3% of indigenous residents using one.

Figure 6.11 Traffic is jammed in front of Tesco-Lotus, one of the most popular shopping malls in Rayong.

Figure 6.12 Every night, local people go out to shop in night markets which provide fashionable clothes and all consumer goods they are seeing in the media.

Photographs by the author

This rapid penetration was largely due to the low costs. A VCD player could be purchased for approximately 1,000 Thai baht or 14 pounds and cheap non-copyright VCD discs and DVD films, music, karaoke were readily available in local markets and stores in town. Demand was further boosted by shopping complexes' offers of payments in installments for electrical goods.

Poorer families' access to modern household electrical appliances, a mobile phone, a motorcycle or other goods was also helped by the availability of other sources of cheap loans. The introduction of the Village Fund Project by the Thai Rak Thai government in 2004 and 2005 allowed villagers to obtain a cash loan from the fund of approximately 10,000 Thai baht or 140 pounds at low interest. Although the stated purpose of the loan project was to support poor households, many used part of the payment either to pay off high interest debts from private creditors or to purchase consumer goods (Niran Promchan and Sukit Chinniyompanich, interviewed 2005).

The popularity of the new media and the department stores cannot be taken as a simple index of improved living standards for all groups however. Although in answer to my questionnaire, 50% of the adult and older indigenous groups claimed that their income was higher than in the past 90.8% said that their expenditure was also higher and 33.7% had debts. A case from my ethnographic fieldwork provides a stark illustration of the precariousness of many poorer families' finances. When I first visited the Puek's family, they had an impressive CD-radio-stereo system, a television and a VCD player. During my last visit before leaving the village, all the equipment had been taken away by the creditor because the bread-winner in the family, who worked as a bus driver, could not afford to pay the installments.

Two other communications technologies also expanded during this era. Carrying a mobile phone became commonplace but computer usage remained largely restricted to middle class newcomers who used PCs both at work and in their daily life at home. Very few indigenous residents owned a desktop machine or came into contact with one at work but children and teenagers often went to the shops to assess the latest computer games. Despite these innovations however, as we shall see, television remained the most popular and widely used medium in the community.

Taken together, television, foreign films watched on CD, and the displays in the shopping malls combined to generate a self-reinforcing system. Western ways of life, displayed by the media, were reinforced and presented in accessible forms in malls. Fashions appearing on television and in foreign films were always available in local retail outlets. This rapid growth of consumer culture has not led to enhanced personal or social well-being however. On the contrary, there is evidence that the cultural dislocation it has generated is producing negative social effects in a context where the social fabric and structure of expectations is being rapidly transformed.

While people's income in Rayong has increased rapidly, and consumerism has become embedded in this province, Areerak's research (2001) showed that Rayong had the highest suicide rate in the country. A report from Rayong Provincial Health Office (2005) revealed that Cheongnoen sub-district, especially Moo 5 (the fieldwork area) had the highest number of attempted suicide cases in 2002, 2003 and 2004. This situation has led to the creating of a course being introduced by local healthcare units in 2004 training villagers to reduce stress and avoid committing suicide (Wattana Booranrat, interviewed 2005).

It was against this background of rapid transformation and dislocation that a group of social activists launched their initiative in the community. In 2004, the Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO), a local non-governmental organisation, introduced 'the Revival of Ways of Life of Cheong Noen Project' to seven villages in Cheong Noen sub-district. The fundamental strategy was to restore personal and social well-being by reviving natural resources and traditional cultures (Thongdeelert, 2004). Using media to publicise their ideas was central to their operations. Community radio and VCD were produced and distributed in the fieldwork area from the end of 2004 and a newsletter, *Power of Community*, was launched in 2005. At the beginning of the project, a traditional activity, mat weaving, was selected to spearhead the push to revive traditional cultures of the village. We return to this intervention and its reception by local people in more detail in Chapters 10 and 12.

6.3 Selecting the Fieldwork Site

The village of Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked, was selected as the fieldwork site for this study for three main reasons.

(1) Mapping Transition

Firstly, the history of the village offers a particularly dramatic instance of a transition that has been experienced across Thailand and other low income countries where communities that previously relied on agriculture and natural resources to sustain a mainly self-sufficient, sea and mangrove forest have been faced with the full force of industrialization. In addition, the impact of government polices oriented to securing an advantageous niche in the new global economic system. Moreover, the village illustrates the tensions that these shifts have provoked at both the level of popular experience and the level of elite power. These tensions are embedded in the geography of the village where the TPI plant, a bastion of the business elite, stands on one side of the village and an army base, representing the established military and aristocratic elite stands on the other. The general trajectory of change in Thailand has been largely the result of the bargains struck between these two major elite sectors, but these accommodations are always subject to revision.

The fieldwork was conducted when Thaksin was still the prime minister. Soon after I left the village, he was removed from office by a military coup. One constant factor however is the relative exclusion of ordinary people's views and voices from the debates that shape crucial decisions. As we have seen, after a brief upsurge of popular pressure around 'the Assembly of the Poor', concerted opposition to the direction of change faded, a pattern repeated in the village with the collapse of the initial protests against the TPI plant and the company's successful attempts to incorporate potential dissidence. Natural resources have been transformed to benefit business interests while the community forest, a major resource for the villagers' livelihood in previous days, no longer belongs to the village. The villagers are allowed to access it but only under the control of the army base (interview Gai and Yai under assumed names, 2005).

(2) Filling Gaps

Although the village has been dramatically affected by the advent of industry for more than thirty years the mass media, social movements and most researchers have tended to focus their attention on Mab ta Phut, the largest industrial estate of Thailand located 20 kilometres away from Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked. In his recent book, 'Language and Globalization' (2006) for example, Norman Fairclough also selects Mab ta Phut as a case study.

It is not completely true to say that Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked has been ignored by researchers. According to the ethnographic findings, researchers arrive in the community every year, mostly to conduct surveys on health and environmental impact. However, the villagers assume that most work for industry or state agencies, and have no intention of learning from their experiences or trying to solve the 'real problems' the villagers face , but aim to use research to legitimize the industry or state practices or gain promotion. Penchom Sae Tang, the head of Campaign for Alternative Industry Network (CAIN) of Thailand, added two other reasons why it was difficult to carry out research in this community noting firstly that the community is riven by conflicts of interests and secondly that data collection is often impeded by powerful groups, dark influences or *Itthiphon*. As a result, comparatively few pieces of critical academic research have been conducted on this community. This present study aims to fill this gap.

In Pongsapich *et al.,'s* (1993) study, which touches on a number of themes dealt with in this research, they offer a useful analysis of patron-client relationships and attitudes on 'development' ideology, but they do not examine how the role of media representations is shaping popular understandings. Addressing this absence is a major focus of the present work. Additionally, their research only covered a wide area of the Central region, and did not focus on the contemporary transformations experienced in locations like Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked.

(3) Analysing Alternatives

As we noted above, in 2005, the RCDO launched a series of community media initiatives in the village with the intention of mobilizing popular support for a project designed to revive community activity and traditional ways of life. This intervention represented the options for change from a perspective that ran counter to the official ideology of globalism. The assumption in much of the literature on alternative media is that these outlets offer an arena and platform for the views and experiences of ordinary people that are routinely excluded form or marginalized by mainstream media, particularly news coverage and comment with its tendency towards closure around elite sources. Examining how far this ambition was fulfilled in the village initiative and the reasons why it failed is another important goal of the present study.

6.4   Conclusion

Looking at the fieldwork site as it was when I first arrived, we see a space characterised by multiple contrasts and tensions produced by rapid social and cultural transformation and its uneven effects. We see that a heavy industrial plant was built directly adjacent to fruit farms and temples. We see a community that is better off in money terms and has gained a modern infrastructure, but is also confronted by higher rates of illness, stress, accidents and environmental degradation. We find a community where a local millionaire lives only 30 metres away from a poor family, whose children do not have enough food to eat daily. We see some villagers, especially from the older generation, still going to the temples and making offerings as Buddhists but we also see many more willing to spend money and time in the shopping malls.

In the chapters that follow we will look in detail at how these transformations and tensions are experienced and understood by different groups of villagers, at how the media, both mainstream and alternative, represent the situation facing them and the options open to them, and how these representations are responded to.

Chapter 7

Interpretive Resources and Negotiating: Lived Experience, Social Locations and Grounded Culture

7.1 Ethnography

As Brewer has noted, commenting on Friedman's work, ethnographic methods are particularly well suited to studying the 'relationship between local structure of desire and identity and the broader global economic and political context' (Brewer, 2000:180) because they allow the researcher to:

> Chart the experience of people in a local setting to demonstrate how global processes are mediated by local factors;
>
> Address the persistence of tradition;
>
> Describe how traditional identities interface with globally structured ones (Brewer, 2000:176).

The field work for the present study was undertaken in 2005. I stayed in the village of Ban Neon Putsa-Pluak Ked for eight months, basing myself in the office of the team producing activist media which was about two kilometres from the centre of the village.

My research employed a multi-method approach using five basic data gathering techniques :

(1) An initial questionnaire survey of selected villagers media consumption habits and attitudes towards change.

(2) Participant observation

(3) In-depth interviews

(4) The collection of personal documents and photographs.

(5) Focus groups

Before presenting the results of these inquiries it is necessary to describe each exercise in more detail and to outline the difficulties I encountered in utilizing them.

7.1.1 The Questionnaire Survey

In the first phase of the research, a questionnaire survey method was employed to gather basic information on villagers' media consumption and attitudes towards globalisation. There were three main objectives:

To map villagers' consumption of mainstream and activist media.

To explore differences in attitudes towards globalisation and traditional ways of life among indigenous residents and newcomers .

To collect accounts of the perceived history of the village and the problems it faced.

Population and Sampling

As described in chapter 6, since 1981 when the TPI factory was built, the village has experienced far-reaching political, economic and cultural changes which have intensified in the past ten years. This study is based on the working hypothesis that these changes will be differently perceived and responded to depending on people's social location.

I want to argue that the central axis of difference is that separating the indigenous residents who lived in the village before 1981 and those who migrated there after 1981 to take advantage of the job opportunities opened up by the new factory. In assessing and evaluating change indigenous residents can call on memories of 'how things used to be' and employ 'before and after' frameworks of interpretation in which nostalgia and regret for a vanishing way of life may play a role. In contrast, the newcomers, who have only ever known the village as an industrialising zone, are more likely to respond to change in terms of incremental shifts, both positive and negative.

This basic division is however cross-cut by another major stratifying dimension- age. In this study I divide the age range into three main groups:

those aged 15-30 who are either still in full time education or are in the process of building careers and independent families.

those aged 30-50 who form the core of the working population.

those aged over 50 who are either retired or coming to the end of their working lives.

Those in the first group are more likely than their parents to have had formal education, at least to high school level and have more opportunities to widen their experience, by for

example going to work in major cities. They have also been born into or mostly grown up in a rapidly modernising environment marked by consumerism and the development of new communications and media technologies such as mobile phones and the Internet. Consequently, their relation to tradition is likely to be attenuated.

Those 31-50 years old have grown up during the transition from a cultural landscape organised around traditional Thai forms and one organised around modern industrialised life styles. Some have only primary school education but others have gone to university. Work and family building take up the lion's share of their time and they have less opportunity to learn new things.

Those over 50 years old are more likely to hold conservative viewpoints. Some of them have no formal education. The indigenous residents who have lived in the village for more than 40 years, and have no experience of migration, are particularly likely to adhere to traditional ways of life and to perceive the community as 'home'.

Combining these two stratifying dimensions generates six groups which can be employed as a basis for exploring differential reactions and responses. They are:

Group young indigenous villagers (YI),15-30 years old

Group young newcomers (YN), 15-30 years old

Group working age indigenous villagers (WI), 31-50 years old

Group working age newcomers (WN), 31-50 years old

Group older indigenous villagers (OI), over 50 years old

Group older newcomers (ON), over 50 years old

During the fieldwork period, the total population of the village was approximately 4,600. Using this six fold classification of residents a sample of 298 was constructed by purposive quota sampling, with the aim of including 50 in each group.

Although the statistical majority of residents in the village were newcomers and their families who had arrived after the process of industrialisation was underway with the

building of the factory, I opted to sample an equal number of indigenous residents. This was a strategic choice informed by two analytical considerations.

Firstly, since the thesis is primarily concerned with the ways change is understood and negotiated the experiences of residents who had grown up in the village before industrialisation and had lived through the thirty years of transformation that this process had set in motion were central to mapping the full range of experiences and responses. Sampling in proportion to the group's presence in the village at the time of the fieldwork would have very considerably reduced the potential range of experiences that could be included in the analysis.

Secondly, one of the central themes addressed in this work is the relative decline of collective and political responses to the negative impacts of change, following the initial protests against the factory, and their replacement by individual strategies for coping and accommodating. Since the costs of change have fallen disproportionately on indigenous residents, provoking a widespread sense of loss, an adequate exploration of the dynamics of regret and quiescence required a sample of indigenous residents large enough to illuminate the possible range of responses.

The questionnaire was designed to cover four areas:

Basic socio-economic data on income, gender, careers, and age.

Details on patterns of mainstream media consumption, detailing the television, radio, magazines and newspapers respondents consume.

Information on activist media consumption, recording their contact with the radio, VCDs and newsletters which activists circulated in the community.

Lastly, the questions on perceptions of the history of the village and attitudes towards globalisation (See Questionnaire in Appendix A).

Data Collection

The questionnaire was administered using face-to-face interviews rather than self-completion or telephone contact. There were four main reasons for this. First, some respondents had only minimal education and would have found reading the schedule and writing answers difficult. In addition, many older people had eye-sight problems. Second,

although the questionnaire had been modified several times to simplify the expression some of the terms employed, such as 'globalisation' and 'environment', needed to be clarified or explained in person before respondents could give considered answers. To facilitate this 'globalisation' (*Lokapiwat-* in Thai language) was linked to concrete objects, experiences and impacts in four areas: industrialisation, media, shopping malls, and infrastructure such as electricity and concrete roads. Third, it was not possible to use the telephone or the Internet as neither technology was widespread in the village. Lastly, face to face interviews provided an opportunity to build relationships with the villagers and secure their willingness to participate in the next step of the research, the focus groups.

7.1.2 Participant Observation

In the Thai context, where relations are strongly embedded in networks of power and influence, selecting a place to stay carries strong connotations. Electing to stay with the village head for example would position the researcher within that faction and in opposition to other power groups in the village. To avoid being caught up in these conflicts, as mentioned above, during my field work I stayed in the Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO), a non governmental organisation producing the activist media. The fact that the office was two kilometres from the village centre coupled with the organisation's 'outsider' status allowed me to distance myself from the power struggles within the community. It also allowed me to observe at first hand how the activist media were produced and the thinking behind them.

During the fieldwork period I visited the village every day and participated in all the events that played an important role in their culture. These included:

Economic and Secular Social Events

The meetings of the village fund which provided loans to poor villagers, and oversaw the distribution of monies.

The meetings of the SML fund, a government fund operated by Thai Rak Thai (the party of the prime minister, Thaksin Shinnawatre) which aimed to support activities and small scale business in the community. In the meeting, the villagers discussed their problems, made decisions on how to make use of the fund, and elected the fund committee.

The Health Service Community volunteers visit to the TPI factory (which provided free health check and barber services to the villagers).

Festivals

The festivities surrounding Song Kran (Thai New Year) and Kao Pan Sa (the Buddhist Lent day).

The worship of Chao Por Pluak Ked (a spirit respected by some indigenous people)

Thed Mahachad or the Grand Buddhist Sermon Festival

Everyday religious practices

The practices surrounding Kon song choa (a spirit medium).

Local people's wedding receptions and Funerals

In addition, I visited households, had meals and participated in daily activities for example, watching news and dramas with them. At the same time, I also conducted media ethnography of activist media production and dissemination.

7.1.3 In-depth Interviews

A number of both informal interviews and in-depth semi-structured interviews were carried out. This session provides details of in-depth interviews. As for the list of informal interviewees during participant observation, please see Blibiography-Primary sources.

The interviewees for in-depth interview included:

1) Add, a fisherman.

2) Nop (assumed name), a peasant.

3) Pannina Laosiripot and Prayote Pindech, TPI executive.

4) Phayong, Head of Cheong Noen Administration Office.

5) Prajeen, (assumed name), a peasant.

6) Prakunchao (assumed name), a monk.

7) Pramuk (assumed name), a former leader.

8) Sia Cut, a house estate owner.

9) Suparat Kwanmung, an activist media producer.

Some of these interviewees did not consent to reveal their names, but agreed to provide information and documents. In what follows these respondents will be given assumed names or referred to solely by occupation.

7.1.4 Collecting Personal Documents and Photographs.

This technique was particularly useful in tracing the history of the community and the early opposition to industrialisation. Some villagers provided valuable photographic evidence of ecological degradation and adverse health impacts during 1995-1996. An activist from outside the village provided news clips, documents, exhibitions and photos taken when he and his colleagues joined the protest against TPI. This data helped in understanding how the villagers constructed their sense of their world and their identities, and how they negotiated with privileged groups.

7.1.5 Interview and Integrated Data Analysing

The analysis of the in-depth interviews began with re-reading the nine transcripts (two TPI executive were interviewed at the same time) several times to fully itemise the themes and issues being raised and to understand the perspectives being employed. The results of this initial close reading were systematised in a file that listed the themes raised, the interpretative schemas employed, and links related theories.

The analysis presented in this chapter however, not only draws on the interview data, but also on findings from the survey together with the results of the ethnographic work: participant observation, photo collection and the focus group exercise. This multi-method approach, although enormously productive than relying on any single method in providing a more comprehensive account, does pose problems of how to integrate the range of research materials.

Drawing on the advice offered in Mason's (1994)'s article, on *Linking qualitative and quantitative data*, I arranged all relevant data form the survey and field notes into three files based on the key questions posed by the main objectives of the thesis: how do the villagers make sense of and respond to the processes of globalisation and industrialisation as they impact on their everyday lives?; how do they use media materials in constructing accounts and explanations?; and what other sources do they draw on? The intention was not to force material into these categories but rather to use them as a point of departure for re-reading and interpreting data in search of a more complete analytical framework, since Okely notes:

> Both during the fieldwork and after, themes gradually emerge. Patterns and priorities impose themselves upon the ethnographer. Voices and ideas are neither muffled nor dismissed (Okely, 1994:20).

This process of integrating sets of data involved four significant elements: searching for patterns, identifying contradiction; testing categories; and monitoring the big picture (Richards, 2005:109). I also applied Mason's strategies for linking different sources of data: by following up similar themes in the different data sets and using a range of different data sets to address a particular topic from a variety of angles (Mason, 1994: 105-106). For example, the survey findings supported the results of the participant observation in highlighting the importance of particular themes such as the of decline of tradition, the failure of collectivism and the rise of individualism, but the ethnographic data pointed to contradictions in the general views articulated in the survey responses while the in-depth interviews offered different angles on the core themes.

This process of comparing and integrating various data sets generated three master analytical frames: the domination of capitalist modernity and modernisation, the centrality of individual rather than collective practices in negotiating the local impacts of globalisation, and the importance of the core nexus of power relations and the patron-client relationship in shaping responses.

7.2 Understanding Globalisation, Responding to Change

Drawing on these various sources of information, I want now to explore villagers' perceptions of the changes brought by globalisation and the social practices, both personal and collective, that these understandings support.

7.2.1 The Domination of Modernity and Modernisation

My research confirmed the centrality of conceptions of 'modernity' and 'progress' among all the groups of villagers. They associated these developments with four main characteristics (1) the decline of tradition and the emergence of materialism; (2) the dominance of secularisation; (3) industrialism; and (4) the failure of collectivism and the rise of individualism.

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1 The Decline of Tradition and The Emergence of Materialism

As the survey findings in table 7.1 show, the great majority of both the indigenous working age group (81.3%) the indigenous older people (84%) agreed that the villagers had become more materialistic after industrialisation and urbanisation.

Table 7.1 Attitude towards materialism

Attitude	Agree %		Undecided %		Disagree (%)	
	WI	OI	WI	OI	WI	OI
Villagers have been more materialistic	81.3	84	8.3	12	10.4	4

N=98

In addition, when asked to compare life before and after the arrival of industry, as shown in table 7.2, mutual assistance, one of the central traditional values was seen to have declined sharply from 91.8% to 49% while expenditure on daily life had dramatically increased from 9.2% to 90.8%. Having a more modern life also rose, from 11.2% to 51%.

Table 7.2 Compared life and attitudes between before and after factory arrived

Indigenous working age and older groups (WI and OI)		
Daily life and attitudes	Before factory arrived (before 1981) (%)	After factory arrived (after 1981) (%)
Mutual assistance in the community	91.8	49
Having a lot expenditure in daily life	9.2	90.8
Having a modern life	11.2	51

N=98

This survey data is consistent with the evidence gathered through ethnographic work and focus groups. 'Money' and 'self-interest' emerged as key words that were often mentioned by participants in these groups when talking about social values.

The focus groups revealed a strong link between materialism and 'the idea of progress'. The villagers largely accepted the ideology of globalism, that there was no option but to move forward, and that there could be no return to past ways of life. They identified 'growth' (*kwarm Jaroen* and *kwarm toebto-* in Thai language) with advance in infrastructure and with the chance to earn money and purchase capability. In this respect,

the idea of progress or 'growth' in the villagers' words seems to be embedded in all. There were however two exceptions to this broad based consensus, a group of peasants and some former leaders. As we will see in the next section, both negotiated with globalisation more than other groups did.

The pragmatic acceptance of change as a fait accompli among indigenous residents is a response to real changes in their life conditions. When their lives shifted from a material base in natural resources and a cultural base in traditional cultures and became totally reliant on waged labour controlled by local capitalists, money emerged as the key resource for survival. This shift was accompanied and reinforced by the decline in a variety of traditions rooted in mutual assistance that were seen not to boost economic growth. These included, giving, attending traditional festivals, *putsa* planting and coastal fishing. Their demise is closely linked to the second element, the dominance of secularisation.

2. The Dominance of Secularisation

The decline of the power of the sacred world within the community had two main dimensions: the weakening relationship between the villagers and the temples, and the ascendency of new attitudes and attenuation of Buddhist perspectives or principles.

When asked in the survey both the indigenous and newcomer groups admitted to declining levels of religious observance. As table 7.3 shows, the highest number in both the working age groups,(44% and -45.8%) claim that they read or listen to principles of religion less now than in the past because they do not have time. Underlying this answer is ordering of the value attached to time spent on various activities.

The shift in the organisation of production from dependence on natural resources and daily and seasonal rhythms to becoming a labour commodity working in an industrial setting ruled by clock time, has transformed the villagers' sense of time. In this changed context, the 'time' spent on religious activities is doubly devalued. It returns no material or tangible benefits, and it is taken out of the 'free' time set aside for leisure after work and is therefore in competition with a whole series of alternative ways of relaxing, including those organised around the newly arrived media of television and video cassettes (VHS) .

They went to temple, the time there was not able to return back any material benefit, including money.

Nor was age, and retirement, necessarily a guarantee of religious observance with 40% of older newcomers claiming that they practice only once in a while or never. The only group who claim high levels of observance are indigenous older respondents, with 54%, saying that they pay attention to religion regularly and continuously.

Table 7.3 Religious activities and attitudes : working age and older groups

How often do you read or listen to your principles of your religions and go to temples	Percent (%)			
	WI	WN	OI	ON
Do regularly and continuously	27.1	10	54	8
Used to do but less nowadays (don't have time)	45.8	44	16	22
Used to do but less nowadays (have less faith)	8.3	2	6	0
Once in a while or never	12.5	20	8	40
Used to do but less (I am not indigenous)	N/A	10	N/A	6

N=198

When probing further it was found that indigenous youth and working age groups were more likely (34% and 45.8%) to agree that 'religions or temples have changed for the worse' while older people, 44% were likely to disagree .

The ethnographic work confirmed that the power of the Buddhist temples had become weaker and that they no longer enjoyed such a close relationship with the villagers as they once had. The villagers' perception that 'religions or temples have changed for the worse' seemed to focus on individual monks, whom some respondents claimed, 'are materialistic, are not religious, do not study Buddhism, and are involved in illegal and immoral issues, such as drug addiction'. These suspicions were confirmed for many villagers when the temple was accused of having a secret agreement with the factory allowing it to use the temple's land for setting fuel pipes. At the same time most respondents continued to separate the institutions of religion from the beliefs, maintaining that Buddhism as a cultural system, remained holy and virtuous .

The growing ascendancy of secular perspectives over Buddhist beliefs appeared in attitudes towards consumerism and industrialism. Consumerism has been boosted by both the emergence of modern shopping malls, and the spread of mass media and new

technologies of communication and will be investigated in detail in the section of the patron-client system of the young groups. For the moment though, we need to examine the third characteristic of modernity appearing in the community, industrialism.

3. Industrialism

As the questionnaire results reported in Table 7.4 show, opinions around the impact of the new factories were sharply divided. This is not surprising since the arrival of the industrial plant was both the most visible signal of change and the main catalyst for many of the other changes villagers had experienced. The findings support our hypothesis that length of residence will be a major factor in organising attitudes. Whereas 44% of newcomers of working age agreed that the factory had brought positive consequences with only 4% disagreeing, among working indigenous residents positive endorsements dropped to 22.9% while negative perceptions rose to 25%. Working newcomers (40%) were also over twice as likely as working indigenous residents (18.8%) to disagree that factories and supermarkets were not necessary. The high proportion of respondents among working newcomers of those who were undecided on this question (46%) and on the positive and negative consequences of industrialisation (52% and 54%), points to a high degree of ambivalence in popular attitudes, even among those who are most receptive to change.

Table 7.4 The villagers' attitudes towards industrialism

Attitudes towards globalisation	Agree (%)				On both side (%)				Disagree (%)			
	Group WI	Group OI	Group WN	Group ON	Group WI	Group OI	Group WN	Group ON	Group WI	Group OI	Group WN	Group ON
The factories bring positive consequences to the community.	22.9	30	44	40	52.1	52	52	46	25	18	4	14
The factories bring negative consequences to the community.	52.1	60	36	48	45.8	40	54	38	2.1	0	10	14
You do not see necessity of globalisation such as factories, huge supermarkets or shopping malls.	35.4	40	12	44	43.8	36	46	30	18.8	16	40	24

N=198

As predicted, age was also an important variable affecting attitudes towards globalisation and industry with 60% of older indigenous residents agreeing that the factory had had negative impacts as against only 30% acknowledging positive consequences. Added to this, 40% of this group refused to accept that the changes brought about by globalisation

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were necessary with only 16% endorsing the changes. At the same time in Table 7.5, 21.2 % of this group endorsed members of their family working for the factory as against only 11.8% who wanted them to work in agriculture (see Table 7.5). This suggests that although they saw the impact of the factory as largely negative, they accepted industrialisation pragmatically as the new material basis of everyday life.

Table 7.5 What do the villagers want to do in future?

Groups	YI (%)	YN (%)	WI (%)	WN (%)	OI (%)	ON (%)
Want to study further and work for factory	27.5	23.1	6.0	4.4	1.2	1.3
Want my children to work for factory	n	n	20.2	14.4	21.2	20.0
Want to study further and work for the government	8.8	17.6	n	n	n	n
Want to go to Bangkok	1.3	3.3	0	1.1	0	0
Want to do business	31.3	28.6	20.0	25.6	11.8	22.5
Want to do agriculture	11.3	5.5	14.3	10.0	11.8	10.0
Want to work for the community: Cultural and environmental preservation	12.5	13.2	19.0	29.7	20.0	12.5

N=298

4. The Failure of Collectivism and The Rise of Individualism

The findings reported in Table 7.5 also shed light on the shift from collectivism to individualism. Among young people born into both indigenous and newcomer families, the most popular ambition is to go into business (nominated by 31.3% and 28.6% of respondents respectively). This is closely followed by further study to prepare for a non routine job in the factory (endorsed respectively by 27.5% and 23.1% of respondents). Significantly, only 12.5% and 13.2% of young respondents want to work for the community in cultural or environmental preservation. Taken together, this pattern of choices strongly supports the argument that a shift in the organisation of ambition is underway, from traditional occupations and community oriented jobs and towards individual mobility and career making in the new business economy.

As we noted earlier, collectivism based on religious traditions is in decline within the village but participant observation and other ethnographic data indicate that there were also very few other occasions when villagers gathered together for shared activities. There are two reasons for this attenuation of public life. Firstly, many of the public spaces formerly used for community gatherings have been built on or converted into harbours. Secondly, leisure time and entertainment has increasingly become centred around private domestic space and on modern media especially TV, VCD. When people do go out, it is more likely to be to visit new sites of entertainment such as shopping malls and karaoke .

Participant observation confirms that even when there were official meetings of the village, only 20-30 people turned up to express opinions or listen to the village head. Only two events attracted significant numbers of people during the fieldwork period and, significantly, both had a strong material base and involved the distribution of money or benefits in kind. The first was the meeting to allocate money from the village fund, which the former government of Thaksin Shinnawatre had set up to bolster his party's popularity. This attracted 50-60 people, mostly indigenous residents. The other was the distribution of free primary health care and hair cuts organised by factories. As one villagers commented 'in our village it is hard to gather to do collective activities and hard to rule, except when the issue is related to money'.

This is a significant shift. My interviews with older residents, together with the survey, and the observation findings on history of the village confirm that collective activities were a major dimension of village life in previous eras. Villagers regularly gathered to help each other in agricultural work and to take part in the associated cultural performances such as the rice paddle folk song (*Pleng Keaw Kao*). Some older people could still remember and sing a part of this song when asked. *Pleng Choi*, a local fun folk song, also was popular in traditional festivals. Talking of earlier times the value which respondents mentioned most often was 'mutual assistance', one of the crucial collective traditions both of Thai society and the village.

In the 1990s, when the globalisation process began to embed itself in the village, the residents gathered to take part in collective protests against the factory organised collaboratively by groups of villagers, the local media and national media, and NGOs and

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student activists from outside the community. This battle ended with negative consequences for the community and conflict between contending groups within the village. After that, collective political action declined sharply. Some welfare groups, such as those organised by housewives and by older people emerged periodically but their lack of political power meant that they were unable to sustain themselves over a long period. The only long-running collective activity was organised by the Local Health Office, under the direction of the Ministry of Public Health, and involved Groups of Health Aware Volunteers (*Aor Sor Mor*) who watched out for health problems in each community. This group supported a range of collective actions, from meetings with volunteers, free training on health care, and free medical services to group leisure activities, such as free travel to tourist attractions.

Overall however, my research indicated that collective pressure had been largely replaced by the individual, material, strategy of attempting to buy influence. Indigenous residents repeatedly claimed that 'buying people' now filled the space left empty by the failure of collective action. The term refers to the practice of providing jobs, money or 'secret presents' or supporting materials to anyone who seems to be charge of the provincial management, or who tends to be against the industry, for example local journalists, politicians, the community leaders and civil servants.

There was however one form of mutual assistance that was still in evidence during the fieldwork period., '*Tid Rang and Chai Rang*', which operated in relation to auspicious events such as wedding ceremonies, funerals and a young man's entry into the Buddhist priesthood. '*Tid Rang*' means that other people help you, by for example working to prepare a wedding ceremony, and you are indebted to them but have not yet had the chance to help them in return. '*Chai Rang*' means that your help is reciprocating help that has already been given to you. However, the ethnographic findings suggest that this form of mutual assistance is very much a residual practice. It was only found occasionally, primarily among working age and older indigenous residents, and enjoyed much less support among newcomers. (see also the figures for support for mutual assistance in table 7.2).

As the ethnographic findings confirm contemporary collective action in the community was either industrially sponsored or the result of corporatist partnerships between government and business. The state run Local Health Office for example, cooperated with industrial firms to organise free activities to attract locals to participate. Under this scheme, the volunteers (*Aor Sor Mor*) in the Groups of Health Aware Volunteers were brought into a factory (under the programme for 'factory visiting'), and given gifts and a free lunch in a five star hotel. Industrial firms also played a crucial role in cultural religious arenas, providing support and donating money and materials on the Buddhist Lent day (*Kao Pan Sa*).

The demise of the traditional reciprocities of '*Tid rang-chai rang*', and the industrial cooption of remaining forms of collective action underline both the key role that industrialisation has played in transforming traditional ways of life and the increasing domination of capitalist interests and logics in everyday life.

It is too early to conclude that these forces have successfully annexed villagers' beliefs and practices, but the materials generated by my field work and by the focus groups strongly suggest that the modes of negotiating the fall out from globalisation practised in the village tend to be individual, rather than collective.

7.2.2 Negotiating Globalisation: Individual Practices

1. Bhuddism and Alternative Practice: The Mangrove Reforestation

Despite loosing purchase within the community, Buddhism continued to underwrite individual responses. One Buddhist monk I interviewed in Wat Noen Putsa, argued strongly that industry should not have been established near the community as people were adversely affected by pollution. In line with the Buddhist emphasis on maintaining harmony and balance between the natural and human worlds, he believed that;

> If the rich nature is still intact, everything, human being and all environment
> will be in balance and good conditions as well (Prokunchao, interviewd 2005).

At the same time, his intervention was also strongly informed by a desire to help the villagers economically.

When construction work on the factory first started he was asked by the factory owner to move the temple to a new location, which the factory would buy. He rejected the offer arguing;

> I don't want to move to somewhere else. If I move, no one will keep resisting the industry. I resist it in terms of principles. I'm interested a lot in the nature because if the nature and environment is good, everything will be fine (Prakunchao, interviewd 2005).

After 2005, he started to restore the mangrove forest, adjacent to the temple and the factory, which had been badly damaged by the industrial processes employed by the factory. The main purpose of this reforestation project was to create jobs and income for the villagers. He planned to ask the Administration Office to build a bridge between the seashore and the mangrove forest in the expectation that the temple and the mangrove forest would become a tourist attraction for the village while allowing the temple to benefit from visitors' offerings.

The restoration of the mangrove forest started after the monk had consulted the researcher and a former leader of the community who dealt with the Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO) and who then asked the head of RCDO to help find free mangrove seedlings which the NGO managed to obtain from a Royal Mangrove Forest Project. However, the practice was not operated collectively. The monk did not ask for collaboration when he planted and only a few people knew about the reforestation. He was however sometimes joined by junior monks and factory workers who stayed near the temple. The monk explained why he did not request collaboration saying that,

> Nature cannot wait. If we do not make it today, it will be too late. I have been waiting for a long time and nobody is determined to proceed with this plan (Prakunchao, interviewed 2005).

There was also a more pragmatic reason for his decision to go ahead largely on his own. As the findings reported above suggest, since fewer people were interested in going to the temple, seeking financial support from laymen posed difficulties. At the same time, the project was underwritten indirectly by the very forces it sought to counter. Although the monk tended to oppose industry, the temple was patronised by the factory, receiving a free supply of water regularly and financial support for religious events. This contradictory

state of affairs points to the wider paradoxes set in motion by globalisation and the varying responses it evoked.

2. Popular Buddhist Principles and the Power of Superstition

Although, as we noted earlier, the influence of Buddhist institutions has weakened among the villagers in recent years, Buddhist beliefs, which have been embedded in the Thai society for hundreds of years, continue to play a role in organising villagers' perspectives. At first sight, one would assume that the enduring relevance of Buddhist philosophy lies with the alternative it offers to the ideologies of modernity, especially industrialism and consumerism, through its emphasis on moderation in living and balance between man and nature. The Buddhist world view sees both the depletion of natural resources and excessive consumption as forces of devastation for both humans and all living things.

The ethnographic findings however suggest that these principles seem not to have much influence on villagers' attitudes. Rather it was the belief in 'karma', the cycle of action and its consequence, that continued to be active in everyday thinking. According to this system if one performs good 'karma', good consequences will follow, such as a better life and happiness. In contrast, practising 'bad karma' or 'sin' will make one's life difficult and miserable. This principle was frequently evoked when indigenous residents 'gossiped' about the factory. As one indigenous working age woman put it;

> Now, karma returns to the factory. It (the factory) did so much bad karma. It
> took advantage of the villagers, took natural resources, which are owned by the
> public (the community), and it has appropriated nature privately. It (the factory)
> is selfish (Kai, interviewed 2005).

She saw a strong link between the rule of karma and the financial and management problems at the factory that had followed in the wake of the 1997 economic crisis and, like a number of other locals, she believed that the factory deserved this 'bad karma'. This belief did not lead to any practical action within the community but it did provide a framework for understanding the 'suffering' experienced by the factory.

The case of an indigenous woman in her forties who has been ill with a blood disease for a long time provides another instance of the persistence of Buddhist beliefs. She believed strongly that her illness was caused by poisonous air and pollution from industry, a belief

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supported by the widely held knowledge that the highest incidents of sickness in Rayong province were clustered around diseases of the respiratory system and the skin. The search for a cure had already cost her a million Thai baht but her symptoms had got worse, and she had on one occasion lapsed into a coma. Faced with her continuing suffering she turned to practise Buddhist meditation believing that going to the temple and meditating was the only way to help her to survive the adverse effects of globalisation.

At the same time, her interest in spiritual practices was heterodox and drew on popular sources other than Buddhism. She developed a passion for fortune telling using cards and became a fortune teller in her free time, and many villagers visited her and asked her for spiritual advice and predictions of their future life. This gave her a new identity and new status.

Members of two peasant families who also suffered from serious illness adopted a similar solution becoming 'spirit mediums' or *Kon Song Chao*, who mediated between the human and spirit worlds. They believed that the only way for them to survive their illness was to use their body as a 'medium' through which spirits (known as *chao por* or *chao mae*) could help other people who were suffering from illness, private affairs, business and work failure. Even rich and privileged people: state bureaucrats, factory staff and business owners, came and asked for their help.

Whereas supernatural forces have been part of villagers' belief systems for a long time, the spiritual practices I observed all involved reinventing identity and power. Although the peasant mediums, never claimed directly that the negative consequences of industrialisation has caused their illness, becoming a spirit medium offered them a way of negotiating with globalisation, particularly its economic and cultural aspects, that conferred social status.

The argument that the rise of mediumship was a response to the intensification of globalisation is supported by the timing. Although the spirit medium cult has existed in Thai society for a long time, there was no evidence that it was active in the village before the 1990s. Many villagers confirmed that while they might believe in some superstitions,

mediumship, especially in the families concerned where there was no previous history of the practice, emerged in the community only after the 1990s.

As the ethnographic and focus group findings suggest, within the village, consumer products and money have come to be valued as essential resources for demonstrating superiority and gaining social acceptance. In this altered landscape peasants have lost out twice over. They have surrendered their command over physical space as agricultural lands and natural resources have been bought up and depleted by industrialisation, and they have lost the 'socio cultural space' provided by traditional beliefs.

Becoming a spirit medium addressed both these losses. It delivered economic benefits from the income provided by visiting clients and it conferred respect by reinventing their identity and relationships within the community. They were no longer 'poor and powerless peasants', but 'forceful holy spirit mediums'.

3. Participation With The NGO, Activist Media and Localism.

The RCDO, the major NGO operating in Rayong was the main secular source of an alternative ideology to globalisation and its effects. This took the form of an emphasis on localism.

This ideology of localism entered the village through two main channels. Firstly, a community leader was sought to work with the RCDO in the Renewing Community Ways of Life Project, supported by Community Organizations Development (CODI) under the Ministry of Human Security. Secondly, the concept and the activities it generated were reported and disseminated through activist media; a radio station, a specially produced VCD, and the newsletter, *Power of Community.*

The community leader, chosen to work with the RCDO was Niran, a female bus driver in her fifties. She was a member of a group of former community leaders who had opposed the factory in the 1990s. She floated the idea of mat weaving as a way to revive traditions and localism. Her knowledge of weaving had been passed on to her by older people in the village when she was young. In 2005, she tried to persuade people to join the project but

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only a few people, mostly her neighbours and relatives, were interested.

According to the survey, the great majority of villagers paid lip service to the importance of tradition and localism with 79-88% in the indigenous groups and 74-94% in the newcomer groups agreeing that 'traditional cultures, religions and local identity of our community are necessary to you and your community'. However, when it came to concrete practice most of this support evaporated.

4. Gossip

Gossip was a widespread practice, especially among the group of former community leaders who had opposed the factory and the peasants who considered themselves powerless. Recounting symptomatic incidents, telling stories, and rehearsing grievances served to cement group solidarity and confirm their sense of the unbridgeable division between 'us' and 'them'. They saw the 'others' as the factory owners and those with privilege and all those they saw as having collaborated or colluded with them - former and current community leaders, a monk, local government officials, bureaucrats and intellectuals. As a stranger, but one who did not fall into any of these categories, I became an honorary member of the gossip networks and gained some of my most useful insights into the villagers' world views from listening to the flow of spontaneous talk.

The 'others' featured in gossip included the factory owners and managers, the locally privileged elite, and those locals who were believed to have 'sold out' to the new power brokers. Gossip revolved around three main topics. First, how environmental impacts and industrial hazards had destroyed traditional community and peasant livelihoods. Second, the collusions between the factory and those community members who had received favours and 'interest' in return for their cooperation. Lastly, the strategies employed by the factories in buying off and getting rid of people who opposed them. As these topics suggest, talk was centered on the new power nexus and the ways it worked to promote business interests, silence opposition and marginalize villagers' wishes. Noticeably, there was very little talk about the wider processes of globalisation such as the emergence of urbanisation, shopping malls and the mass media.

General views and complaints were continually anchored in concrete instances. These included:

The story of the fire at a factory ten years ago that killed some staff and the factory's attempt to conceal this news. As a result, nobody knew how many people had died and the villagers were very worried about future incidences.

The case of a former leader who received a very substantial commission for acting as an agent in deals to sell villagers' lands to the factory and told the villagers only that the factory would bring prosperity and jobs to the community.

Denied access to public channels of critique, through political representation and mainstream media, the continual recycling of grievances through gossip served as a way to sustain a sense of injustice and negotiate the impact of globalisation.

5. Nostalgia For Community Tradition

While modernity and modernisation dominated the material textures of people's everyday life, change had not always effectively replaced traditional sources of the 'self-esteem' and well being. As a consequence, while villagers recognised the tangible benefits of modernisation many saw a spiritual vacuum opening up. Money bought comfort but not necessarily happiness. When asked in the survey 79-88% of indigenous villagers agreed that 'traditional cultures, religions and local identity are necessary to you and your community'.

This sense of a village culture rapidly receding into the past fuelled a widespread sense of nostalgia among indigenous villagers. This took two forms. In general, older people, some of whose their family's members worked for the industry, tended to be nostalgic but accepted modernisation as they believed 'we are not able to return to the past'. However, those closely associated with NGO's localism, anti-globalisation concepts and the reforestation practice of the monk in Wat Noen Putsa were not only strongly nostalgic for the past but wished to reinstate traditional ways of life. As we shall see in Chapter 12 the villagers' pragmatic acceptance of change led them to be highly critical of activist media advocating a return the past. The search for meaning and community in an idealised memory of the past centered around three main themes.

Firstly, the central role of mutual assistance and helping each other was emphasised and contrasted with the present domination of individualism and of money and possessions as the measure of worth and well being.

Second, emphasis was placed on the abundance and beauty of the village's natural resources: before the arrival of industry. As Niran, an older indigenous woman remembered;

> It was happy time really. The mangrove forest was so beautiful. It was full of birds and variety of animals. We really enjoyed fishing. It was amusing to see people from other communities coming and joining us at night. We lighted the lamp for fishing. It was really beautiful. I wanted to be back in that time. The mangrove forest was actually the important food resource of ours, and it was important for our cultures as well (Niran Promchan, Interviewed 2005).

Thirdly, older villagers recalled the importance of rice planting, the folk cultures and traditional performances it supported and the system of 'mutual assistance' (*Shai Rang*) it involved. As we shall see in Chapter 10, reviving this practice was one of the key planks in the renewal programme.

7.3   Stratified Reactions: Opportunity, Resignation, and Critique

Having looked at the resources available to individual villagers in interpreting and responding to the process of change, I want now to outline the ways that differential experiences of transformation, and the unequal distribution of gains and losses, inform the reactions of the main social groups in the village.

Although this study focuses on the role of age and length of residence as key principles organising both experience and response a fuller account of differential reactions to change also needs to take account of participants' relative position within the local power structure.

7.3.1 Power Relations and The Patron-Client Relationship: The Core Nexus

As noted in chapter 4, commentators on Thailand have laid particular emphasis on the central and continuing role of patron-client relations in organising the operation of power arguing that these connections of favours and obligations constitute the core-nexus of the social order. My own research confirmed the importance of the patron-client system shown in Figure 7.1 in understanding villagers' responses.

local capitalists/businessmen

community leaders   the villagers   local politicians/state officials
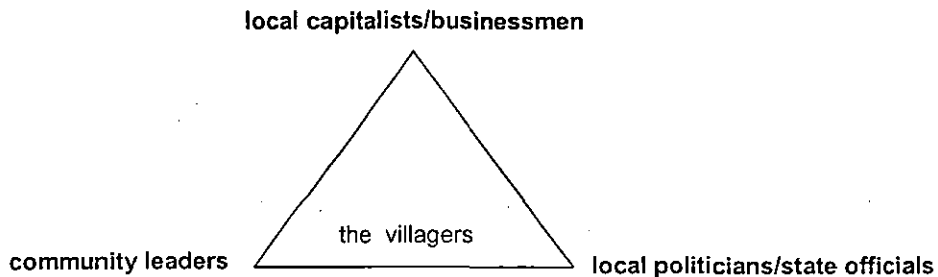
Figure 7.1 The triangle of patron-client relationship

Figure 7.1, depicts a power structure organised around the relations between three major groups of patrons: local capitalists/businessmen, community leaders and local politicians/ state officials; with the villagers as clients of all three. These relations are organised hierarchically with local capitalists/businessmen at the apex of the local power structure exerting pressure on both community leaders and local politicians / state officials and villagers caught in the cross-fire between them as they negotiate with each other and jockey for position.

Employing this model, in combination with age and length of residence, the next section sketches out the stratified response to globalisation and industrialisation characteristic of the main groups within the village.

1. Opportunity: Globalisation and Modernisation as Engines Of 'Growth'.

Privileged groups who were part of the patronage system, local business men and factory managers, state officials and bureaucrats, and local leaders, tended to see both globalisation and industrialisation as delivering increased benefits and opportunities. They were joined by client groups of factory workers, both newcomers and long-standing residents, who felt that change had enhanced their incomes and material conditions and life chances, bringing improvements to the local infrastructure, greater comfort and

convenience in daily living, and the opportunity to become small businessmen on their own account.

This support for the ideology of globalism was embedded particularly strongly among newcomers who had migrated to the village in search of higher income and improved opportunities. They saw industrialisation as the only viable engine of 'growth' or *Kwarm Jaroen*, capable of delivering a better life.

As Mukda, a working age newcomer argued in a focus group session;

> We can't compete with other countries if we return to localism like agriculture. Moreover, if Rayong stops operating industry, it will affect other sectors like agriculture and local people as well. If the industry dies, the locals will die (Mukda, Mainstream media users-Group WN and ON).

It is not surprising that factory workers who depended entirely on the new industrial system for their livelihoods welcome change as a source of opportunity.

Nor is it surprising to find wholehearted endorsement among local elite figures who had taken full advantage of the opportunities opened up by the arrival of the factory. The local landowner who had built a new housing estate to meet the demand for accommodation from families migrating to the village to work and had become a millionaire, was prototypical. He identified strongly with the new landscape that he had helped to build. As he proudly stated in an interview:

> I'm the first person who brought electric power and built roads in the village when the first housing estate project emerged (Sia Cut, interviewed 2005).

His wealth also allowed him to insulate himself from the negative effects of the factory. As he noted,

> I don't see any impact from the factory. I never get any smell or pollution because I'm in the air-conditioning room all the time (Sia Cut, interviewed 2005).

His positive endorsement of change was shared by a long standing resident and former leader or Phuyai Ban who had sold land to the factories and joined the ranks of the new rich.

After the local protests against the factory ended in 1995, the management set out to keep local elites 'onside' by offering them employment. Two sub-district representatives of the village for example, worked in the public relations department. This strategy of co-option altered the power relations within the core nexus, weakening local representatives' ability to voice villagers' discontents and enlisting them as cheerleaders for a business driven model of globalisation and change.

This vision, articulated by the management of the main factory, TPI, rested on four main arguments. First, developing the petrochemical industry was essential to Thailand's ability to compete effectively in the new global economy, and that because the company was owned by the Thai Liewpairatana family and not a trans-national corporation, it was advancing the national interest. Second, TPI invested more in environmental protection than any other factory in Thailand did, and any remaining environmental impacts were minor. Third, this led them to characterise complaints from the villagers concerning noxious smells or dust or health problems or other incidents of environmental degradation as prompted by politicians wanting to promote themselves at election times, rather than genuine expressions of popular anxiety. As Pannina Laosiripot and Prayote Pindech, two TPI managers said in an interview,

> There is a main conflict in political change seasons. Whatever elections, Local
> Administrative Office Representatives or sub-district head (Kamnun) or village
> head (Phuyai ban), the campaign for attracting votes from the villagers is...they
> raise some problems. Whatever problems they might be sorted out or haven't
> sorted, the candidates raise the problems and call us to go out to confront the
> villagers. It was power exercise. They called the villagers and said they would
> let TPI management clear up. This happens often. It's like using us for their
> voting, and to show that 'I'm more capable than the former leader... Look! I
> can bring TPI management here... I'm worried only one thing. When the
> election season arrives, they get me every time for their voting campaigns.
> That's it (Pannina Laosiripot and Prayote Pindech, interviewed 2005).

In response, the fourth arguments, the company employs several strategies to head off conflicts with the community. As Pannipa and Prayote stressed several times projecting 'sincerity, participation and proximity' are key principles for them. As Pannipa explained:

We have a lot staff in Community Relations work to go down to the village and talk to the villagers. In the past, we had a former district officer deputy [*Palad Amphur*] who was a head of this Department. This is a strategy of TPI. We had a former district officer deputy, teachers and former community leaders. They worked in Community Relations jobs. We have tried to convince the mass who are not too biased...Another strategy, we select 'local young people' to work with us because if we can do this, we will also convince their families, their relatives. One sub-district has ten thousands people. If we get one person, we will get lots of people because they will extend (their understanding about the factory). I think this is our technique. In Community Relations, we use local people (Pannina Laosiripot and Prayote Pindech, interviewed 2005).

Community relations also take more tangible forms. The factory gives financial support to collective activities such as sports, education, festivals and religious events, and provide free primary health checks, free hair cuts and occasionally free dental treatment, together with free water for the community and the temple. As Pannipa revealed: 'each year, we spend 20-30 millions Thai Baht contributing to society'.

The factory also puts considerable effort into securing the goodwill and support of community leaders. The visits to the factory by *Aor Sor Mor*, the Group of Health Aware Volunteers, are typical of these initiatives. One trip, observed during the fieldwork, began by bringing *Aor Sor Mor* members into the auditorium and showing a film produced by the factory celebrating its technological advances in production and environmental protection, and its contribution to the nation and society. It ended with a free lunch in a luxurious hotel in town but excluded any visits to actual industrial sites. This instance, which also involved community leaders and local dignities, confirms the shifting relations within the core nexus with state officials, who organised the *Aor Sor Mor* group, co-operating with local capitalists to co-opt local volunteers and community leaders who could then serve as channels for positive publicity for the factory. The comment made by Phayong, the head of sub-district Administration Office, catches perfectly the recognition of a fait accompli:

At the beginning, the industry caused serious problems and we had violent protests. We have had lots of material growth, but less giving and mutual assistance. Nobody cares for each other as many newcomers came to our community. But now the problems are lessening and the factories have tried to sort out the unpleasant smell. They also give jobs to the locals. Now, the factory

is completely established, we can't get rid of it. We should find the proper way to live together (Phayong, interviewed 2005).

2. Resignation: 'No money, No power'.

In contrast to those peasants who had sold land to the factory, for fisherman, indigenous residents had little or no land to sell and for the poorest villagers, the arrival of the factory had been a catastrophe. The increase in the salinity of the ground water had destroyed the traditional livelihood of those peasants who relied on planting *putsa*, the well-known fruit in this village, while the deterioration of the mangrove forest and sea shore had ruined the resources that fishermen and the poor depended on. Consequently, in focus group, interviews and ethnographic work with these groups, the conversation always returned to the issue of negative environmental impacts and the exploitation of natural resources.

Respondents in this group did not deny that modernisation had brought material growth and improvements to the local infrastructure. Nevertheless, they experienced industrialisation as a source of great loss and pain and argued that the major winners from change had consistently used the power of money and patronage to silence those who opposed the factory. They saw this process of 'cooling out' working in three main ways. First, hiring former opponents of the factory as workers. Second, using 'influence and connections' to get reporters or district officers who intended to establish the facts about pollution and protect the village from negative consequences removed from the locality. As one peasant recounted,

> Ten years ago, ITV staff member came here and gathered information about salty water and other environmental impact. Then the next day, he was removed from his job. A district officer deputy also was sacked. He loved the villagers so much and tried to help us (Prajeen, interviewed 2005).

Third, they complained that state and local government officials had been silenced by favours and privileges conferred by businessmen and now ignored all complaints and information from ordinary people on the grounds that the evidence the villagers offered was non-professional and non- scientific (Nop, interviewed 2005).

Some long standing residents were so exhausted by their struggle against the factory and their deteriorating conditions of life that they simply wanted to leave. As a male peasant in his fifties confessed;

> Peasant's life is so suffering and miserable. I am so tired. I've fought with a
> factory for a long time and did everything. I will wait for my grandson to grow
> up. Then my wife and I will leave (Nop, interviewed 2005).

Others however were determined to stay and took a fierce pride in the identity they derived from their connection to the land and their traditional occupations. As one woman from a fishing family put it:

> Why do we have to leave our own land? This is our land. We have been living
> here since we were born. If we move to new land, how can our parents manage
> their lives? It's very difficult (Suriyaporn Sawangrung, interviewed 2005).

Another fisherman recounted how he had gone to work in the factory but had resigned and returned to fishing which gave him a sense of autonomy and dignity:

> I don't like to work in factory. It's not independent. They always treat you as a
> routine worker. Being a fisherman is poor and sometimes gets less money but I
> prefer to catch fish (Add, interviewed 2005).

Another female fisherman shared this sense of independence saying that while it was very difficult to catch seafood after the factory had arrived 'we have more difficulties and gain less income but just do as we can do'.

Others however were simply resigned to staying since they saw no alternative:

> I cannot move to anywhere. I do not have enough money to buy new land. I
> don't have anywhere to go (Prajeen, interviewed 2005).

Overall it was clear from the fieldwork that the history of the battle with the factory had convinced the members of this group that they did not have power to negotiate with the new capitalists and that complaining to local officials was likely to be ineffective. For them the new centrality of money as a resource had changed everything, weakening the culture of mutual assistance and creating a social order where 'if you do not have money, you do not have relatives (and friends) and acceptance from people'.

3. Accepting Globalisation but Opposing Industry.

Not all indigenous residents had resigned themselves to the status quo however. Some continued to be highly critical both of the way industrialisation had been introduced and of its adverse consequences. These critical voices were drawn mostly from the ranks of the local intelligentsia, many of whom were highly educated with university degrees (some in engineering) or had at least completed college. They preferred not to work for factories in the village and tended to be employed by firms located outside. Some had played a significant role in opposing the factory in the 1990s. Others came from long-standing venerable families in the community, some of whose relatives had become sick, a situation they blamed on pollution from the factories. Members of this group did not deny the benefits of globalisation in terms of material growth and improved convenience and communications, but they had strong objections to local industrialisation. As several participants put it in focus groups: 'I accept globalisation, but I don't accept factory'. They had two main criticisms.

First, they argued that the selection of land for industrial construction had been decided in secret between high state officials and factory owners creating a lottery for the villagers in which some had enjoyed huge wins. They felt the process had been conducted behind closed doors with no consultation and no attention to issues of equity. As an older woman recounted;

> Suddenly they (brokers who sought lands for industry-author) approached and
> told us that it was good to sell it now. But they didn't tell us what they wanted
> to construct in this village. Everyone wanted to sell lands. So our village
> changed a lot in a short period. Some poor families turned to be millionaires in
> one night (Busara Sinaromyen, interviewed 2005).

Second, they objected to the fact that industrialisation had been sold by promoting the 'dream' of 'progress' and material betterment while remaining silent about the possible negative impacts on the environment and on health. The villagers were never told that pollution would occur. As an older indigenous woman said,

> At the beginning of the emergence of a factory, we were optimistic because we
> had expected that the village would reach 'growth'. The villagers would gain
> more income and their family members would have a good job. We never knew
> about impact of factories and all dangerous chemical substances there. Nobody

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tells us. Everyone said it was good and '*charoen*' (growth). But now many people were sick with diseases of respiratory system (Busara Sinaromyen, interviewed 2005).

Not all members of this group spoke with one voice however. Some sought a solution to adverse environment impacts by moving or planning to move and work outside the village. This strategy was met with cynicism by the members who claimed that these would-be migrants' opposition to the factory was informed by self-interest rather than by concern with community since under present conditions they could not get a satisfactory price for their land.

4. Contesting Privilege, Recovering Tradition.

Another dissenting current within the village centred on a critique of the new power nexus and a desire to preserve traditional ways of life and natural resources in the community. Environmental impact, loss of identity and traditional ways of life, and the cooption of local leaders by the new capitalists, were critical issues for this group.

Its membership centred on a group who had played a leading role in opposing the factory in 1990s. Some were university educated and had been local representatives for the Cheong noen Administration. They saw themselves as activists rather than victims. Some collaborated with NGO's on the Revival of Tradtional Ways of Life Project or were engaged in producing activist media. They were supported by the monk mentioned earlier and by some long standing residents. In their view, industrialisation's destruction of natural resources also destroyed community identities and traditional ways of life. They saw '*putsa* planting' as the activity that gave the village its distinctive character. They were proud of the mangrove forest as both a rich food resource and an area of outstanding natural beauty and they pointed to the sea shore, *Ta Ton Tan*, as not only an essential source of food and support for fishing but the primary location for the cultural customs associated with the Thai New Year's festival. For them the depletion of the sea and the mangrove forest had undermined traditional identities as well as traditional occupations and ways of life.

While they subscribed to the general values of progress and economic growth they were highly critical of the way some former community leaders had cooperated with capitalists

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and bureaucrats in driving through changes that had undermined the ethos of mutuality and installed money as the primary measure of worth. They saw the cultural bonds that had previously bound the community together fractured by new hierarchical relations between classes and between rich and poor. In informal interviews and focus group discussions, they recounted how this shift had unfolded in three main stages, each accompanied by a new phase in the development of the emerging core nexus.

As we noted earlier, when villagers were first approached to sell their land they were assured that industry would bring jobs and increased income. They were not told what kind of factory was to be built and what environmental damage it might cause. Nor were they told about possible pollution and health risks. Members of the group were strongly critical of those former leaders, who instead of representing the general interests of the village, had accepted commissions and other 'interests' from business owners in return for encouraging those that could, to sell up. They saw this process as driving a wedge into the community, but turning those with land to sell into millionaires overnight and ushering in a money oriented society that undermined the values of mutual assistance and communality. As one long standing resident in his forties noted, 'the richer you are, the more respect and socialisation you gain' (Pramuk, interviewed 2005).

When the factory building was underway and protests against it were gathering momentum they identified another betrayal, as the major opposition leader together with sympathetic journalists and bureaucrats were 'bought out', and given money in return for giving up their defence of community interests. They argued that nowadays, although people's co-operation was still bought, local politicians, community leaders and health volunteers were paid off in kind through the various free benefits the factory sponsored.

As members of the group pointed out, while it was rare to see these people at other community events they invariably turned up for the factory sponsored free health and dental services, the free hair cuts, and the monthly free lunch. These regular hand-outs were supplemented by the factory's support for a wide range of special events, including the traditional New Year's festival (*Songkran*) and a range of religious events. In addition the factories financially supported the *Tumbon* (sub-district) Cultural Centre, and funded schools and sports activities. Even the current local representatives were employed as

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factory staff in the Public Relations Department. As Prayoth Pindech, TPI Director proudly pointed out,

> We participate in many activities. For example sports, religious events, traditional festivals, funerals. We also bring the factory management with us. We organised local sports. All groups in the villages, we join them (Prayoth Pindech, interviewed 2005).

As a result of this comprehensive co-option of activities ranging from economy, politics, culture, religions, sports, education to media, the village has come to resemble a classic company town.

The pervasiveness of buying cooperation and co-opting ostensibly 'independent' activities has also led this group to be highly sceptical of researchers, and inclined to see anyone arriving to collect information in the village as a 'tool' of powerful vested interests. As one indigenous man in his forties said,

> I and the villagers have so much experience about the outsiders. They came here like you and claimed that they wanted to do research. Some lecturers claimed they wanted to help the villagers. All are high educated. But finally, what's up? They all are gone with our information. The outsiders include civil servants and bad journalists. They sell our information to a factory and never help us (Pramuk, interviewed 2005).

This group had two major objections to the activities of researchers and academics. First, they believed that researchers always collect data from the villagers to sell it to the industrialists. Second, this group believed that researchers collect data solely for their own interests or future prospects. For example, students want to get a degree and bureaucratic researchers want to get promoted. Neither offered 'concrete plans' or real actions to help the villagers. They saw researchers and intellectuals, as part of a new core nexus, benefiting from its patronage, and through their work providing legitimacy to the privileged.

5. Working in Industry, Embracing Consumerism: The New World of Young People

As noted earlier, young people defined here as those aged 15-30, constitute a special group. The new landscape of modernity and consumerism is the only one they have known and they are not yet firmly enmeshed in the new core-nexus. Their ties to modernity are

therefore secured firstly through their preference for working in industry rather than agriculture and secondly by the new opportunities for leisure, pleasure, and consumption presented by the emerging urban environment and the rapid development of communications media.

As the figures in Table 7.5 show, when asked what they wanted to do in the future both young people from both indigenous and newcomer families nominated going into business as their first choice (31.3% and 28.6%) closely followed by studying and going to work in a factory (27.5% and 23.1%). In marked contrast, only 11.3% and 5.5% wanted to work in agriculture. Conversations revealed that they saw industry as offering not only a higher income but also more respect and more opportunities to meet new people. As Tu, an early working age newcomer said,

> When I worked in the factory, I felt more enjoyable. I had friends there and I
> feel it is 'cool' to work in a big company (Tu, interviewed 2005).

This orientation to a modernised future is reinforced by their immersion in a new landscape of leisure and consumption.

According to the survey, young people had three main priorities when thinking about how to spend their moneys, fashionable clothes, mobile phones, and going to the cinema or buying a film VCD. The activities these choices supported were not entirely separate however, but increasingly integrated. 'Going to the cinema' for example was not just about seeing a film. The young people I spoke to overwhelmingly favoured the cinemas attached to the Laemthong mall, the most modern shopping complex in Rayong. A trip to the cinema was therefore also an opportunity to wander and window shop -in a retail environment that contained international fast food outlets from McDonalds, KFC, Pizza Hut, Starbuck to a Japanese restaurant; shops selling world brand name clothes and mobile phones, and a proliferating range of entertainment options from karaoke to pop concerts, and singing/dancing/beauty contests.

The clothes favoured for these activities were mostly copied from celebrity fashions on television which found their way into the markets and superstores as soon as they were shown in the mass media. Although the fashions were mostly derived from Thai produced

drama series or soap operas, they tended to follow western styles and were widely seen as provocative by older people.

The evidence I collected supports the argument that access to this more commercialised and cosmopolitan arena of action has detached young people from traditional cultural activities. When answering the questionnaire only 8% of the indigenous group and 6% of newcomers said that they attended temple regularly as against 54% and 50% who said they did so only rarely or not at all. Similarly, only 6% of the indigenous group and 2% of newcomers said they joined public or community activities. This was confirmed by participant observation, when on religious days and national holidays, it was normal to see a huge numbers of teenagers mingling with peer groups at shopping malls, rather than going to temples or attending traditional events. While the majority of young people (60%) paid lip service to the need to preserve tradition in the village, when asked what they meant the majority had no idea which traditions were central to the community.

These findings seem to confirm the salience of Giddens's notion of disembedding (Giddens, 1990) and Tomlinson's idea of deterritorialisation (Tomlinson, 1999) suggesting that their encounters with westernised modernity, both in the workplace and in their preferred leisure environments, have fostered a world view that is detaching them from the traditions of the community and the identities they support. This is however over simple since my fieldwork also suggests that the influx of newcomers has strengthened local identity among indigenous youth and reinforced a sense of belonging to a distinctive, historically rooted community.

Some indigenous young people referred to the newcomers as 'provincial people' or 'new people' (*Kon Tang Jung Wad* or *Kon Mai*) and called themselves 'the fifth villagers' descendants' or 'the locals' (*Luk Lan Kon Moo Ha* or *Kon Punt Tee*). They asserted that newcomers had brought a range of troubles to the village such as drug addition, crime, disorder and adverse environmental impacts, which had not been there before. Conversely, although many indigenous youth were themselves involved in street gangs and drugs the term 'the fifth villagers' descendants' or 'the locals' carried strong connotations of harmony and care about the community. When asked, in the questionnaire survey, whether

the arrival of the factories had had many negative impacts on the local environment for example, 82% of indigenous youth said 'yes' as against 58% of newcomers.

My ethnographic work confirms that among some indigenous young people having 'others' in the community has created a legacy of resentment that can spill over into violence. During the fieldwork period, there were several quarrels and battles between indigenous and newcomer groups. On one occasion, a newcomer boasted that he was superior to the locals and was able to attract any girl he wanted since as a factory worker he had more money than them. This calculated insult to the indigenous sense of worth ended with him being shot by a local young man.

Most older residents however, saw young people as a single group, and frequently complained about the increased social problems that the new environment of fashion clothes, mobile phones, motorcycles and shopping malls had brought. As one indigenous woman in her sixties, who was particularly concerned about teenage pregnancies, lamented;

> Motorcycles and mobile phones are 'the driving forces' which makes teenagers
> have partners too early. They always talk on the phone. Then they drive to see
> each other. In our days, we never had a chance to see a guy if parents didn't
> allow, but this youth can do it easily. So...now many girls are pregnant in their
> young age (Sawong Sangroj, interviewed 2005).

7.4 Conclusion

As we have seen, the multi-method approach adopted in the fieldwork has revealed a complex set of reactions both to the industrialisation of the village and the wider context of globalisation in which this process was embedded. I have argued that these variable reactions are not simply a matter of individual differences but are systematically patterned by the intersection of three dimension of group experience; age and stage of life, length of residence in the village, and relative position within the new core nexus that organises local power relations.

Some groups within the community, including local leaders who has been co-opted by the new companies, villagers with land to sell, and newcomers who had moved to the village

in search of higher incomes and improved living standards, have been net winners from change. For others, particularly landless peasants and the poorest villagers, change has been a catastrophe, eroding their former means of livelihood and undermining the traditional culture and practices of communality and mutuality that agriculture and fishing had supported. These groups tended to perceive themselves as powerless and saw no chance of influencing or effectively negotiating with the new authority structure. The result was a pragmatic resignation. On the other hand, as we have also seen, other groups who have been net losers from change, particularly those who played a leading role in the original opposition to the factory or who were involved with projects for reviving traditional ways of life, have adopted a more critical stance. As we also noted, they tend to be more highly educated than most villagers and hence more able to formulate an intellectual critique of change. At the same time, their relative detachment from the poorer villagers (some of who are sceptical of both their ideas and their motives) has meant that resistance tends to express itself through individual dissent or small group initiatives rather than mass collective action. Consequently, it poses no real challenge to the new power structure.

We also saw the complexity concealed within the seemingly homogeneous category of 'age'. By and large, young people welcomed the chance to work for companies or go into business on their own account and saw the new leisure spaces of the shopping mall and the new media of VCR's and cell phones as their preferred spheres of action in their 'free' time. At the same time, the appearance of a single 'youth culture' concealed strong divisions between 'locals' and 'newcomers' that were mapped onto differential senses of worth and opportunity.

As we shall see, these various stratified differences in orientations to globalisation and industrialism help to illuminate the differences in villagers' responses to the public discourses and representations of globalisation carried by both the mainstream and activist media, and it is to these that we now turn.

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Part Four Media Representations

Chapter 8

Picturing Change: The Television Representations

8.1 Mass Media Consumption: The Centrality of Television

As we noted in the last chapter, industrialisation and the spread of modern media have had a major impact on village communication patterns. Traditional media associated with agriculture work and rhythms have declined in importance. The rituals and webs of local knowledge centred on religious institutions and the management of communication between the sacred and secular world have increasingly lost their purchase on popular allegiance and belief. Industrial labour has redrawn the time-line between work and leisure. With the exception of young people, modern media have increasingly concentrated recreation in the home and as Table 8.1 shows, this has installed television as both the central focus of leisure and the major source of the interpretive framework that situates village experience within wider debates on the processes, contexts and consequences of change.

Table 8.1 Mainstream media consumption

Groups / Media	TV (%)	Radio (%)	Newspapers (%)	VCD (%)	Cinema (%)
Group YI	100	68	88	94	85.7
Group YN	92	70	88	86	76
Group WI	97.9	50	77.1	58.3	25
Group WN	98	66	86	76	40
Group OI	88	20	50	22	6
Group ON	94	32	46	20	4

N= 298

As table 8.1 demonstrates, television is the only medium that has uniformly high rates of usage across all social groups with most villagers watching every day. Newspapers enjoyed high rates of use among young and working age groups, but were much less used by older groups. In addition, relatively high rates of exposure to newspapers did not mean

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that people bought their own copies or that they read everyday. Most read only once or twice a week. Ethnographic observation confirmed that villagers were much more likely to scan the front page at local food shops, or snatch a brief look at school or in the work place. Radio was also most popular with young people, with usage falling sharply as we move up the age scale.

VCDs were also popular with all except the older groups, with respondents watching films or music two or three times a week. Singing karaoke and watching VCD films were popular activities during holidays and at weekends. Young people were particularly heavy users with interviews confirming that many tended to use VCD more than television, selecting their favourite music or films, often from Hollywood, China, Taiwan, and Korea from the rental shop or purchasing non-copy right discs from local markets. Young people were also the most avid cinema goers, favouring, as we noted in the last chapter, screens in the new shopping malls. In contrast, almost no older people went to the cinema. Radio was also most popular with young people, with usage falling sharply as we move up the age scale.

Table 8.2 The most popular media selections of each group

Groups	Television	Newspapaers	magazines	radio
YI	1) Soap operas 2) News (evening news, channel 3)	Thai Rath (front page)	TV Pool (entertainment magazine)	FM102 pop music
YN	1) News (evening news, channel 3) 2) Soap operas	Thai Rath (entertainment page)	TV Pool	FM102 pop music
WI	1) News (evening news, channel 7) 2) Soap operas	Thai Rath (Front page)	TV Pool	FM102 pop music
WN	1) News (Morning news talk by Sorayuth) 2) Documentary	Thai Rath (front page and political news page)	Kaihuarao (comic)	FM102.75
OI	1) News (evening news, channel 7) 2) Soap operas	Thai Rath (front page)	Kaihuarao and Koosang Koosom (real life stories and a couple life guidance)	*FM94.25
ON	1) News (Morning news talk by Sorayuth) 2) Soap operas	Thai Rath (front page)	TV Pool and Koosang Koosom*	*102.75 and do not remember which channel

* The number of the audience is lower than 10 percent in the group

Looking at table 8.2, which lists the most popular programmes or publications nominated by respondents, we see that radio is used primarily as a source of pop music. The most popular magazines are *TV pool*, and entertainment magazine, and among working and older groups, *kaihuarao*, a comic, and *Koosang Koosom*, which features real life stories and advice on everyday personal problems. The most popular newspaper among all groups is *Thai Rath*, Thailand's best selling title, famous for its sensationalist reporting and crime stories. At first sight, the nomination of soap operas as a favourite television genre by all except the working age newcomer group, seems to confirm that the villagers' overall media profile is predominantly entertainment led except that all the groups also nominate at least one television news programme.

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Television then, emerges from the survey findings as both the most widely used medium across all groups and their primary source of news. Consequently, if we want to explore the possible roles the media might play in shaping villagers' responses to change we need to look carefully at how the television news programmes nominated by respondents shown in Table 8.3 represent issues around globalisation and modernity.

Table 8.3 The most popular news programme nominated by each group

Groups	The most popular media of the group
1. Young indigenous (YI) 2. Young newcomers (YN)	Evening TV news channel 3
3. Working age indigenous (WI) 4. Older indigenous (OI)	Evening TV news channel 7
5. Working age newcomers (WN) 6. Older newcomers (ON)	Sorayuth Morning news talks channel 3

8.2 News and Power

As we noted our discussion of media ownership in Chapter 4, Thai television is dominated by companies controlled by major business dynasties. Globalisation and marketisation have created opportunities for them to further consolidate and extend their interests. They have been major beneficiaries of change. They are also often closely allied to or involved with major political factions that have been promoting general policies rooted in an ideology of 'globalism'. The channels respondents nominated are no exception.

Channel 7, is operated by the Bangkok Broadcasting and Television Company Ltd (BBTV), the holding company for the media interests of the Ratanarak family. The company founder, Chun Ratanarak, was already a successful industrialist and financier, with a sizeable fortune derived from his interests in Siam City Cement and the Bank of Ayudahya, when he used his connections to obtain the operating licence for Channel 7 from the Royal Thai Army. The channel was the first in Thailand to employ satellite links to obtain national coverage. It remains a family owned company and is now headed by Chun's widow Sasithorn. She and her immediate family are currently ranked the 5th richest in Thailand by Forbes magazine (Forbes.com 2008).

Channel 3 is operated by the Bangkok Entertainment Co (BEC), a subsidiary of the BEC World Group, established in 1995 to manage the diverse media interests of the Maleenon

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family, ranked by Forbes as the 7th wealthiest in Thailand. Although the channel is managed and run on a day-to-day basis by BEC, it remains under the formal ownership of the Mass Communications Organization of Thailand (MCOT) a state owned enterprise which directly operates Modernine TV (formerly Channel 9), a network of 63 radio stations and the Thai News Agency, and in which the Ministry of Finance retains a controlling share of 75% (BEC World Public Company Limited 2007).

The Maleenon family has played an important role in Thai politics in recent years. They were one of the main financial backers of the *Thai Rak Thai* [Thais Love Thais] party which gained an overall majority in the House of Representatives in the 2001 general election and which remained the governing party under Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra until 2005 when the military mounted a coup and sent Thaksin into exile. Under the Thaksin administration, the family's support was rewarded by political office when Pracha, the son of the dynasty's founder Vichai, was successively Deputy Interior Minister, Minister of Social Development and Human Security, and Minister of Sport` and Tourism.

Looking at the contrasting histories and political connections of the two channels, it is tempting to suggest that they articulate different approaches to managing modernity and globalisation. On this reading Channel 7 can be seen as closer to the established centres of power, particularly the army, and therefore perhaps more inclined to emphasise stability and balance whereas Channel 3 is more oriented to change and openness to cosmopolitan influences. Table 8.3 offers some support for this conjecture with Channel 3 news being the most popular choice among younger groups while working and older indigenous adults favoured the news on Channel 7.

Similarly, because of its ties to the army, Channel 7 might be more likely to celebrate traditional ideals of the 'Thai people' rooted in established notions of nation and order whereas Channel 3 might be more inclined to flirt with a populist strategy of speaking for urban middle class people and the younger generation. More imporatantly, it seems that both channels do not speak for 'ordinary people' against traditional power centres. In this connection it is worth noting that the *Thai Rak Thai* party was based on a loose coalition of groups and elected on an openly populist platform.

However, under the 'traditional power' and new capitalists, the Sorayuth Morning News Talk programme on Channel 3, the favourite of working and older newcomers, offers a potential space for questioning and satiring the elite groups. The programme features Thailand's best known television presenter, Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, accompanied by his female colleague, Ornpreeya. She plays a secondary role, dealing with 'soft' news areas such as children, health, women and entertainment, while he addresses major issues in politics and the economy.

The programme is broadcast for two hours every weekday from 6.30 to 8.30 am. It is based around Sorayuth recounting selected stories from that day's national newspapers and adding his own comments on the events and the coverage, with occasional inserts of live interviews and moving pictures extracts. The format is unique in breaking with the long standing convention within Thai journalism, strongly influenced by US journalism training, that news reporting should always be separated from correspondent's comment. As analysts (for example, McCargo, 2000) have pointed out this rigid demarcation has resulted in Thai news reporting becoming primarily an assembly of quotations or press releases provided by external sources leaving it open to capture by governmental and corporate public relations.

At the same time, the channel 3's economic viability depends on its ability to deliver the mass audiences demanded by advertisers. As the company's website notes, it 'is obliged to schedule programmes, arrange and modernise the programming format in order to attract as many viewers as possible' (BEC World Public Company Limited, no date). We might hypothesise that this need to assemble viewers from across the whole social spectrum, a commercial variant of populism that Channel 3 shares with Channels 7, will lead the main news bulletins to approach globalisation through the prism of consumption and celebrity, the most visible representatives of individualised contemporary life styles, rather than issues around production, work and environment.

To explore these conjectures further, I undertook two major analyses of the information, interpretation and comment in the four news programmes nominated as favourites by my respondents.

A quantitative content analysis of the overall coverage of issues related to globalisation

Intensive qualitative analysis of three selected stories using approaches drawn from Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA)

The sample period, shown in Table 8.4, ran from mid August to mid September 2005.

Table 8.4 The sampling period

The sampled media programmes	The sampling periods
Evening TV news channel 3	13/8/05 - 14/9/05 (30 days)
Evening TV news channel 7	13/8/05 - 18/8/05, 20/8/05 - 8/9/05, 11/9/05 - 18/9/05 (32 days)
Sorayuth Morning News Talks, channel 3	15/8/05 - 15/9/05 (22 days, the programme was shown only Monday-Friday)

This timing, mid way through my fieldwork stay, helped integrate the textual analysis and the study of villagers' responses to change in two ways. First I could use the results of the initial questionnaire and the general fieldwork to identify the issues around change and modernisation that most concerned different groups of respondents together with the news outlets they relied on most. Second, I could select items from the overall news sample that dealt with issues that had particular resonance for villagers to use as a basis for focus group discussions.

The quantitative content analysis was based on a purposive sample which involved 'the researcher makings a decision as to what units he or she deems appropriate to include in the sample' (Neuendorf, 2002:88). Two main considerations underpinned the sampling strategy.

Firstly, independent research indicated that the sampled television news bulletins were the second most viewed category of programming in Thailand after soap operas (Tangkijvanich, 2004:14) and their high popularity among villagers in this study was further confirmed by the results of the questionnaire survey of residents. It was therefore reasonable to suppose that they constituted a major source of mediated information and argument that respondents could draw on in constructing accounts and responses both to contemporary issues and to the process of change more generally.

Secondly, the time frame for a content sample was chosen to overlap with the timing of the focus group exercise so that the issues reported on would still be active and salient for respondents

Any sample based on a single continuous month runs the risk of being unrepresentative but since there was no major sporting tournament or political event (such as an election campaign) during the sampling period, there is no strong reason not to accept that the pattern of news coverage revealed by the analysis represents the standard organisation of national news representation in Thailand.

The discourse analysis of these stories will be presented in the next chapter. In this present chapter, I want to summarise the main findings from the content analysis. But before I do, it is important to stress that only those stories concerning the process of globalisation were included in the sample. Stories were coded only if they related to those areas of modernisation accelerated by globalisation which the fieldwork had revealed as salient to the villagers' experience of change. These included:

new technologies and scientific innovations (eg media and communication technologies)

shifts in the organisation of production (eg industrialisation, exports, labour migration, international capital)

changing patterns and practices of consumption (eg consumerism, shopping malls, tourism)

celebrity culture

changing leisure (eg sports, entertainment)

changing quality of life (eg health, environmental integrity)

During the analysis period a total of 589 items across the three sampled programmes dealt with these aspects of globalisation. The coding manual together with details of the categories used can be found in Appendix B and C.

Inter-coder reliability

Kosum Omphornuwat, a native Thai who is a PhD student in Loughborough familiar with the country's social and political organisation, was trained to be a second coder to check the reliability of the quantitative content analysis. This exercise was based on a 5 percent sample (30 items) of the 589 news items included in the full analysis. The 30 items for recoding were selected on the assumption that all had equal significance, producing a distribution that has constant probability (WolframMathWorld, 2009). The degree of inter-coder reliability was assessed using Holsti's formula which calculates 'the ratio of coding agreements to the total number of coding decision' (Holsti, 1969:140):

C.R. = 2M / N1 + N2

Where M = the number of coding decisions on which the two judges are in agreement

N1 and N2 = the number of coding decisions made by judges 1 and 2 (Holsti, 1969:140).

By this calculation, inter-coder reliability was 0.77 %.

The content analysis had three main aims

(1) To map the overall structure of news attention by identifying which areas related to globalisation received the most coverage, which were presented positively, and which were seen as problematic or negative.

(2) To map access to voice by recording which interest groups were most often quoted, directly and indirectly, and which were relegated to silence.

(3) To compare patterns of coverage across the three sampled programmes and the two nominated channels.

The Findings of Content Analysis

8.2.1 Sources

Figure 8.1 The Balance of National and International sources

	International news agencies and media	National sources
□ Series1	37.40%	62.60%
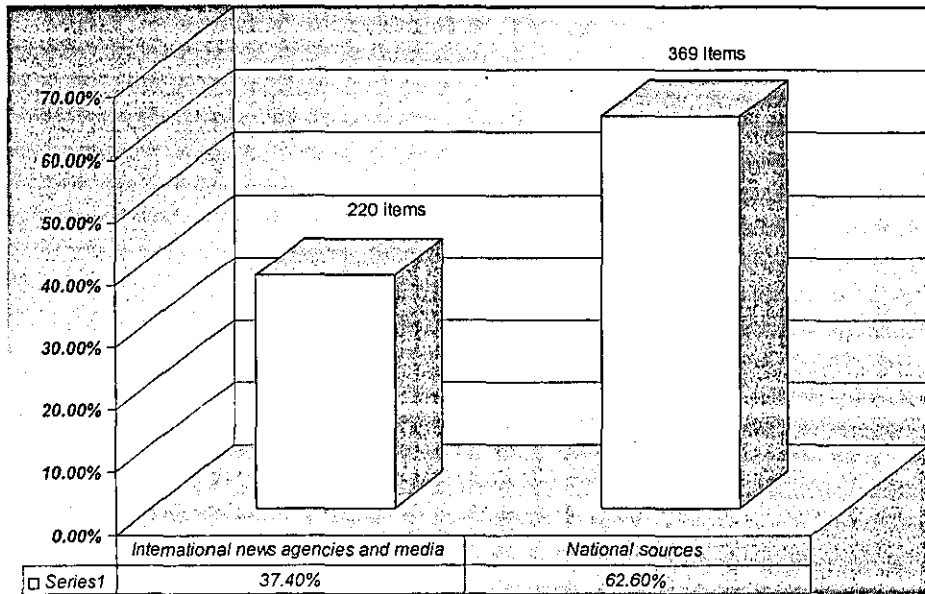
N= 589

As Figure 8.1 shows, over one third of the items coded (37.4%) were based on material provided by international news agencies and media. This reliance meant that in a substantial minority of its coverage Thai television news directly reproduced the structures of attention and news values of Western news organisations.

Figure 8.2 National sources
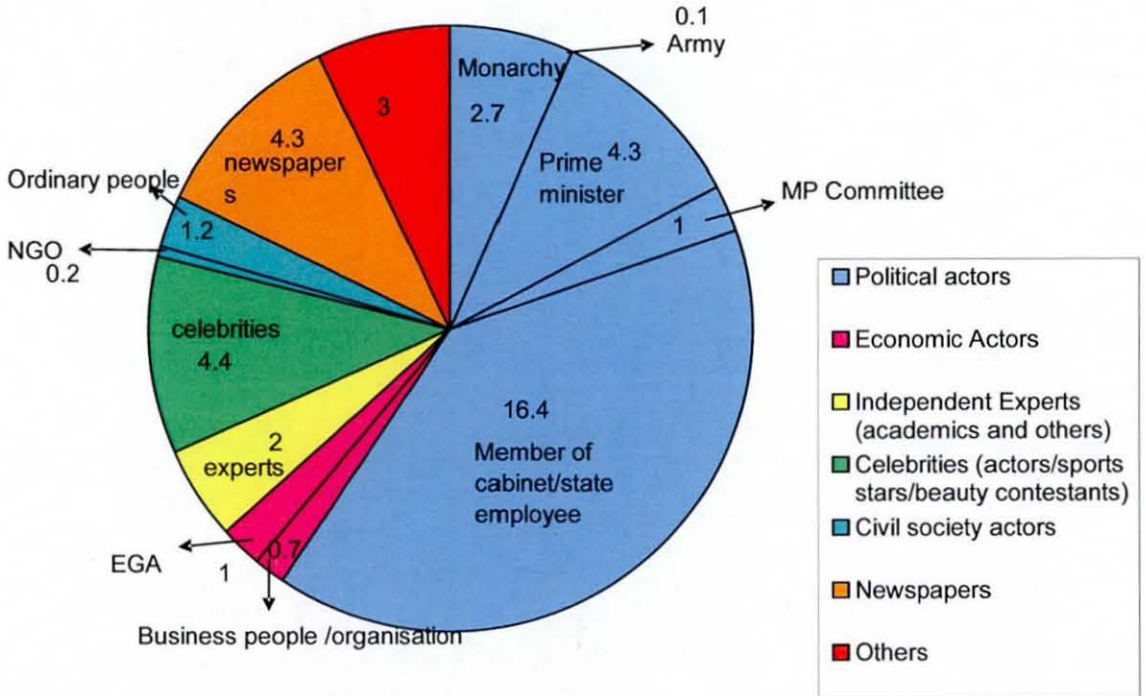
Note: Values in %
N=369

Turning now solely to national sources, Figure 8.2 confirms the Thai news system's heavy reliance on official sources in government and state agencies coupled with the almost total neglect of ordinary people or NGOs and the marginalisation of independent experts. Interestingly, very few items draw on material provided directly by economic actors.

We might interpret this as indicating that, in line with globalism's assertion that the present economic trajectory is inevitable, the routine operations of business are seen as the taken-for-granted and continuing context in which other news events occur and that corporate stories only cross the newsworthiness threshold when there is an accident, scandal or other unexpected occurrence.

Figure 8.3 Sources directed quoted
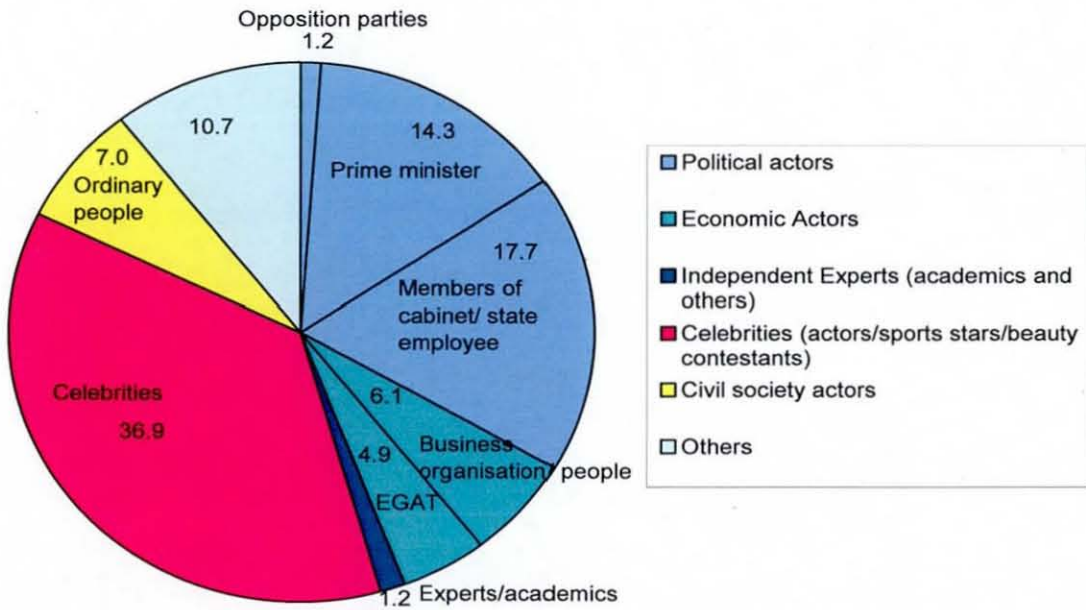
Note: Values in %

N=589

If however we look at access to voice, as indicated by who is quoted directly in news reports, we see business interests and other economic actors assuming a more prominent role, but one that is still eclipsed by some margin by the platform given to political voices in the person of the Prime Minister and to cabinet members and state employees. The only group that enjoys comparable access to voice with political speakers is celebrities. This structure of attention can be usefully understood using Francesco Alberoni's argument that the media system of modern societies gives relentless publicity to the what he calls 'the powerless elite' of celebrities and personalities from the worlds of consumption, sports and entertainment, while allowing the key holders of economic power, landowners, major businessmen and financiers, to go about their business relatively unremarked, thereby concealing the real structure of power and its operations (Alberoni,1972).

This conjecture is lent added support by the fact that independent expertise is almost never consulted. Ordinary people on the other hand are given a modest voice.

8.2.2 Foci: Spotlights and Shadows

Figure 8.4 The Relative prominence of difference sectors

Note: Values in %

N=589
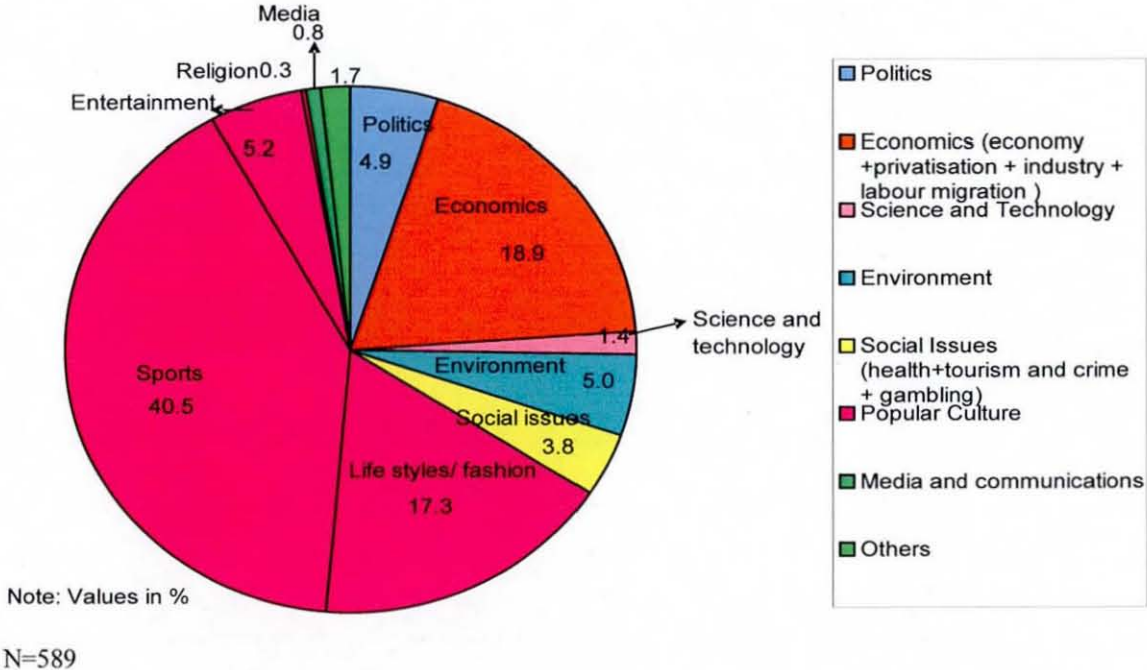
The importance of the worlds of sport, life style and fashion is confirmed by the distribution of news attention across different areas of activity shown in Figure 8.4 where they account for almost two thirds (63%) of items. In contrast less than a fifth of items (18.9%) focus on economic issues related to production. This suggests that the ideology of consumerism plays a central organizing role in public discussion in the major mass media.

Despite their salience to my respondents, questions concerning the environmental impacts of change and the social problems they are generating received very little coverage.

Figure 8.5 Themes presenting positive impacts of globalisation

Chart 5 Themes presenting positive impacts of globalisation

main categories of themes presented
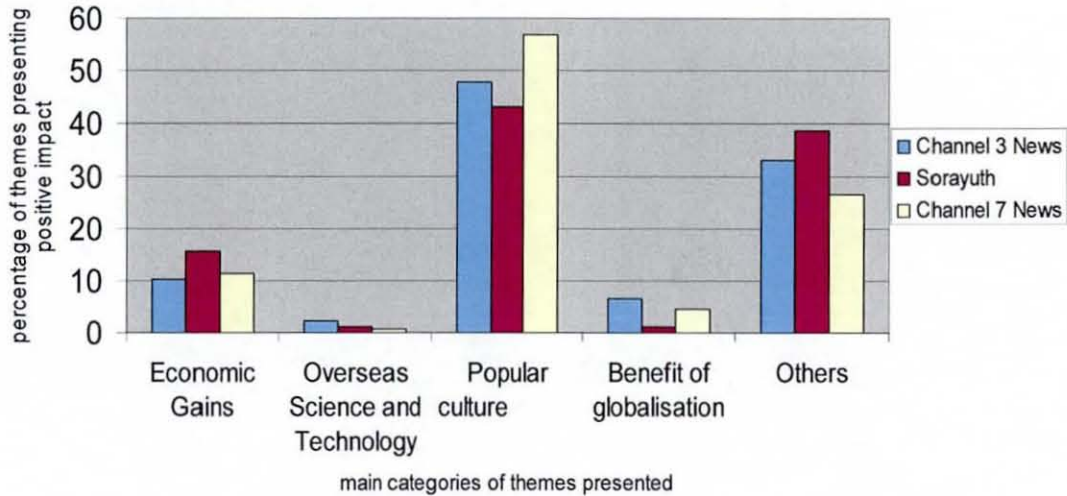
N=589

Table 8.5 Themes and sub-categories presenting positive impacts of globalisation

Economic Gains	Channel 3 News	Sorayuth	Channel 7 News
Increased wealth and income	2.3	4.8	0.7
FTA	1.4	0	0.3
Tourism	1.9	2.4	1.7
Industry	0.5	2.4	2.1
Income from sports	2.3	4.8	4.5
Consumption	1.9	1.2	2
Total	10.3	15.6	11.3
Overseas Science and Technology	2.3	1.2	0.7
Popular Culture			
International sports	15.3	31.3	30.7
Foreign cultures and life styles (both presenting and promoting+ pro c	16.7	2.4	10.6
Celebrities and their life styles (sports celebrities+beauty Contestants	13.9	9.6	14.9
Cultural hybridity	1.9	0	0.7
Total	47.8	43.3	56.9
Benefit of globalisation			
People benefit from glo	0.9	0	1.4
Nation benefit	0.5	0	0
Well being and healthy	0	1.2	0
Combination of pro-globaliation	5.1	0	3.1
Total	6.5	1.2	4.5
Others	33.1	38.7	26.6

N=589

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Figure 8.5- Themes presenting positive impacts of globalisation, shows that a comparison between the main categories of positive themes of three television programmes needs to be read accompanying table 8.5 which provides figures for sub-categories.

The celebration of the new, more cosmopolitan, popular culture as the most visible site where the positive benefits of globalisation can be seen is confirmed by the figures shown in Figure 8.5 and Table 8.5 where it accounts for between 43% and 57% of items. In contrast, the positive economic benefits were mentioned in just over 10% of items in the two main news bulletins.

Figure 8.6 Themes presenting negative impacts of globalisation

Chart 6 Themes presenting negative impacts of globalisation
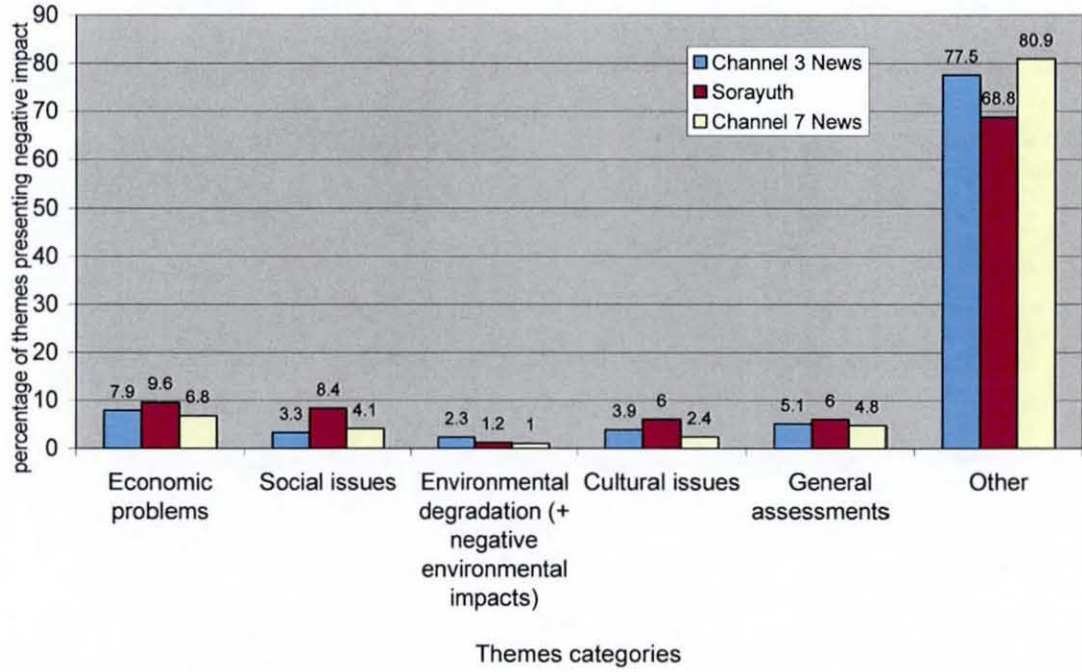
N=589

Table 8.6 Themes and sub-categories presenting negative impacts of globalisation

Themes and sub-categories presenting negative impacts	Channel 3 News	Sorayuth Channel 3	Channel 7 News
Economic problems			
-Labour exploitation/abuse	3.2	2.4	3.1
-Poverty	1.9	3.6	1
-Fuel price rises	0.5	2.4	1.4
-Impact on agriculture	1.4	1.2	0.3
-GDP/economic growth impact	0.9	0	1
Total	7.9	9.6	6.8
Social issues			
-Health	0.5	1.2	1
-Child abuse	0.5	2.4	0.7
-Gambling	2.3	4.8	2.4
Total	3.3	8.4	4.1
Environmental degradation (+negative environmental impact)	2.3	1.2	1
Cultural issues			
-Local cultures	1.4	1.2	1.4
-Impact of foreign cultures	1.6	1.2	1
-General culture impacts	0.9	3.6	0
Total	3.9	6	2.4
General assessments			
-combination of negative impacts	2.8	2.4	0.7
-Balance between negative and positive impacts	2.3	3.6	4.1
Total	5.1	6	4.8
-Other	77.5	68.8	80.9

N=589

Figure 8.6 and table 8.6 should be read together. Figure 8.6 shows the main categories of negative themes compared between Channel 3 news, Sorayuth and Channel 7 news. Table 8.6 displays sub-categories of each theme (main categories).

As Figure 8.6 and Table 8.6 show, overall the negative impacts of globalisation receive much less attention than the positive aspects. This sussgests that popular Thai television channel 3 and 7 present globalisation in positive ways mainly while negative themes of globalisation were ignored. However, across the three programmes sampled, it is

Sorayuth's comment show that is most likely to feature economic problems, social issues and cultural anxieties suggesting that it functions as one of the few sites for critical analysis. How it accomplishes this, and how the Channels 7 and 3 negotiate the problematic issues generated by the Thai government's championing of globalism are the major focus on the next chapter.

The tables presented here suggest that contrary to our conjecture, the variations in the news coverage between Channels 7 and 3 are minimal. As we shall see in the next chapter however, there are differences but they cannot be calibrated using broad content analysis categories. They are woven into the detailed language and imagery deployed in the stories and can only be captured by fine grained qualitative analysis and for reasons I will now explain I have chosen to use Critical Discourse Analysis for this task.

Chapter 9

Talking Change: The Discourse of National Television

9.1 Ideology, Power and Media Representations

In his influential conceptualization, John Thompson argues that to study ideology is

> to study the ways in which meaning serves to establish and sustain relations of
> domination. Ideological phenomena are meaningful symbolic phenomena in so
> far as they serve, in particular social-historical circumstances, to establish and
> sustain relations of domination (Thompson, 1990:56).

Compared to definitions that identify ideology with the expression of any kind of interest, this narrowing down of the term's scope has several advantages. Firstly, it opens the way for a consideration of counter discourses that challenge the terms of prevailing ideologies. Secondly, it directs attention to the ways in which the contest of discourses is organized in public culture and particularly within the major media of communication that occupy the center of this culture. Thirdly, it insists that to properly understand their operations, ideological initiatives must be placed in their specific social and historical contexts. More particularly, Thompson argues that:

> we cannot analyse the ideological character of mass communication by
> analysing only the organization features of media institutions or the
> characteristics of media messages; rather, media messages must be analysed in
> relation to the specific contexts and processes in which they are appropriated by
> the individuals who receive them (Thompson, 1990:267).

Also he focuses on the ways recipients 'make sense [of them] and incorporate them into their everyday lives' (Thompson, 1990:304). For Thompson, 'this ethnographic moment is indispensable' to a comprehensive analysis of the making and taking of meaning (Thompson, 1990:279). Responding to this challenge of finding ways of relating texts and contexts is one of the major aims of the work presented here.

There are a number of possible approaches to textual analysis but the analytic perspective that best fits with Thompson's framework and my own research approach is the Critical

Discourse Analysis (CDA) perspective developed by Norman Fairclough and Ruth Wodak. There are three reasons for this.

Firstly, in common with Thompson, they stress the need to contextualize the analysis of discourse both socially and historically. One particularly useful way of approaching this task is by way of Fairclough's idea of 'communicative events' as combinations of three key elements: texts, discourse practices and sociocultural practices. As he notes:

> 'texts' may be written or oral, and oral texts may be just spoken (radio) or
> spoken and visual (television). By 'discourse practice' I mean the processes of
> text production and text consumption. And by 'sociocultural practice' I mean
> the social and cultural goings-on which the communicative event is a part of
> (Fairclough, 1995:57).

As Wodak points out, this procedure is necessarily interdisciplinary (Wodak, 2001:15) since it requires analysis to draw on insights and methods from across the social sciences, from the political economy of production to ethnographies of reception. This commitment to combining different modes of inquiry is very much at the heart of this thesis.

Secondly, again in common with Thompson, CDA argues that discourse is ideological only 'in so far as it contributes to sustaining particular relations of power and domination' (Fairclough, 2001:126) and that public culture also supports counter discourses which deploy 'language...to challenge power, to subvert it' (Wodak, 2001:10-11). As a consequence media discourse needs to be approached not as a simple channel for prevailing ideologies but as a potential 'site of complex and contradictory processes' (Fairclough, 1995:47).

In the case of globalisation, commentators have identified two major currents of discourse. On the one hand, there is the discourse of globalism which originates in the meeting rooms of corporations, national governments, and transnational economic agencies, and which presents the prevailing market driven processes of globalisation as both inevitable and desirable. Fairclough characterizes this globalist discourse as endemically ideological, 'a strategy for hijacking globalisation in the service of particular national and corporate interests' (Fairclough, 2006:8). This discourse 'from above' has not gone uncontested however. It is challenged by a range of discourses rooted in experiences of 'globalisation

from below' which speak to the dislocation and dispossession of groups on the receiving end of globalist policies. Mapping the contest between the ideology of globalism and these contending discourses, as it is played out in the mainstream and alternative Thai media, is a major aim of this chapter and the one that follows.

The final reason for taking CDA as a departure point for my textual analysis is its commitment to:

> illuminating the problems which people are confronted with by particular forms
> of social life, and to contributing resources which people may be able to draw
> upon in tackling and overcoming these problems (Fairclough, 2001:125).

CDA's critical focus on social problems, social inequality and discrimination, and the abuse of power is one which I share.

Up until recently, Fairclough's work has focused primarily on discourses circulating within the United Kingdom and other major capitalist economies, but in his most recent book, 'Language and Globalization' (2006), he has turned his attention to discourses of globalisation. One of the case studies that he offers is an analysis of a flyer issued by Greenpeace, to enlist support for the campaign against toxic emissions form the power plant at Mab ta phut, a major industrial zone in Eastern Thailand. Given that worries about emissions from the TPI plant in the village were among the major concerns voiced by my respondents, this contribution is directly relevant to the present research. However, it is limited in one important respect. The text he analyses is produced by a transnational NGO (albeit in collaboration with local activists), rather than by nationally or locally based groups. The study presented here, of Thai national television and local activist media, addresses this gap and can be seen as extending Fairclough's work.

Proponents of CDA work on media texts are careful to stress that it does not provide a ready-made or self-contained toolkit of analytical methods. Rather they present it as directing attention to particular aspects of textual organisation but also open to contributions from other analytical traditions where these are useful. The analysis presented therefore draws on a range of concepts. The main ones are:

- Fairclough' s distinction between genres defined as particular ways of acting and interacting communicatively (and defined in the case of television by progamme

conventions) and styles, defined as ways of expressing personal and social identities within these generic spaces.

- The distinction between the macro thematic structures of a text defined by the issues and topics it addresses and the micro or schematic structures organized around semantic relations between propositions (relations of causality, consequences taken account of) on the one hand and lexical choices (the selection of adjectives, adverbs, pronouns and vocabularies) on the other (Van Dijk, 2001; and Fairclough, 1995:30).

- The distinction, borrowed from semiotics, between the literal, manifest or denotative level of signification 'where consensus is wide and most people would agree on the meaning' (Hall, 1997:38) of a particular word or image, and the connotations level which is an interpretation of broader themes of meanings, need to connect to 'wider semantic fields of cultures' (Hall, 1997:38).

- The conception of commonsense proposed by Gramsci alerts us to the way that ideological discourse strategies aim to cement dominant interpretive frames as the taken-for-granted way of understanding particular issues or events. Globalist ideology's assertion that there is no alternative to the market drive process of globalisation fits this characterisation well.

- Finally, since television programmes are audio visual as well as discursive, we need to pay attention to the use and organization of sound (music and location recording) and imagery (camera angles, shot composition, and editing).

These various schemas and concepts provide a repertoire of resources for analysis and interpretation. They will be drawn on here in varying combinations depending on the text under consideration.

The analysis focuses on four case studies. These have been chosen with two main criteria in mind. First, they deal with central themes in debates on the general process of market driven globalisation. Second, they address issues that my fieldwork has shown are particularly salient to my respondents. The four cases are:

- The news coverage of the attempts to massage the image of the Mae Moh power plant, Lumpang province, North Thailand, after concerted criticism of the health and environmental damage done by toxic emissions from the installation.

- News and commentary on the water shortage that occurred in 2005 in Rayong province and the accusations that the government was unfairly favouring businesses over ordinary householders in the distribution of scarce resources.

- Representations of consumer modernity and personal mobility in the variety show 'At Ten' which younger respondents nominated as among their top three favourite programmes.

- Coverage of the pre marital pregnancy of Kathleeya McIntosh, one of the Thailand's leading entertainment celebrities and the surrounding debate around moral values.

9.2   Industrialisation and Its Discontents1: The Mae Moh Power Plant

9.2.1 Context

The rapid expansion of both manufacturing industry and domestic consumption in Thailand in recent years has led to a year-on-year increase in demand for energy. In response, the government has embarked on major programmes for increasing electricity generation. Some have involved building dams for hydroelectric power. Other have involved the construction of new power generating plants. Both have attracted criticism and controversy from NGOs and citizens' groups who point to the alleged negative impacts on health and the environment.

The Mae Moh power plant, owned and operated by the Electricity Generating Authority of Thailand (EGAT), a state enterprise controlled by the Ministry of Energy, is one of the largest power generating sites in Thailand providing power for a large part of the North and the East of the country. It employs a generating process that uses lignite (taken from the large mine adjacent to the plant) and which produces acidic emissions of sulphur dioxide. There had been long standing claims that these emissions were causing skin and respiratory illness diseases among the local population and that children living near the plant were 50% more likely than other children to contact a variety of illnesses, including allergies and heart problems. Concern came to a head in October 1992 when emissions spread over a wide area. The Pollution Control Department, a government agency, claimed that only 1,000 people had fallen ill but a report in *Phujadkarn Magazine* in December

1992 (ANON, 1992a and ANON 1992b) put the figure at 5,000. Cattle also died or became sick and plants were burned. There was another major incident in 1998 by which time Mae Moh had come to be a by-word for the health and environmental damage caused by rapid and insufficiently regulated industrialisation.

As noted earlier, the fieldwork village, Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked, found itself in a very similar situation when a power plant was constructed to support the factory that TPI had built in 1992 and was found to be causing health problems and environmental damage. Coverage of Mae Moh is therefore highly salient to the villagers' experiences and concerns.

The analysis that follows focuses on a news item broadcast on Channel 7 on the 20th August 2005. It lasted for 2 minutes 30 seconds and was the thirteenth item in the bulletin. As we shall see, it represents an attempt to rehabilitate the image of the plant by emphasising its new found role as a positive contribution to the local environment and community and its new found role as an intended tourist attraction. The organisation and running order of the item is detailed in Extract 9.1.

9.2.2 *From Risk to Assess: Channel 7 Talks Up The Mae Moh Power Plant*

Extract 9.1 Mae Moh Power plant extract in Channel 7 news

SOUND	IMAGES
1.The male newsreader: Mah Moh nowadays is not only a coal mine. It, on the face of it, has changed a lot. Please follow the story with (the name of the reporter).	1.CU: the male newsreader read the introduction. At the left corner of the screen, there is the EGAT logo.
2.Male voice-over: In the past, media representation of pollution in Mah Moh may create the fear to Thais but after installing	2.CU and Zoom out Mae Moh power plant and see the reservoir as the foreground.
3.Male voice-over: but after installing ten sulphur dioxide filter machines, the pollution seems to disappear.	3.Pan shot: the emission of smoke from the power plant
4.Surasak: When they were installed, we've never had that problem anymore. Moreover, we invited some villagers to come and see our work. We did it.	4.CU: Surasak Supavitidpattana, a production manager speaks to the reporter.
5. Surasak: Whenever you want to come, at 2 or 4 am in the morning, you are welcome all the time. No need to let us know in advance. Do come and see how we are working.	5. LS: the emission of smoke
6. The reporter: From the viewing spot, you will see the coal mine and the EGAT has developed this land to be the tourism area as well.	6. LS of the sceneries around the plant and pan to the reporter.
7.The reporter's voice over: When the development works together with environment protection, the mine therefore is not different from a tourist place.	7. LS: the sceneries of mountains, the power plant and landscape. A group of people enjoy taking photographs.
8. The reporter's voice over: Mae Moh mine has been developed to have the viewing spot, Bua Tong (a kind of flower) field,	8.LS: a gorgeous Thai traditional shelter is settled amid the beautiful landscape.

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9.The reporter's voice over: botanical gardens, a slider filed,	9.LS: a walking path and a slider path. Some people are playing the slider.
10. The reporter's voice over: a golf course,	10. LS: a golf course
11.The reporter's voice over: and the Chulalongkorn King Lignite Centre Museum where gathered history of geology and the power plant-	11. MS: inside the museum, pan to the image of the Chulalongkorn King
12.The reporter's voice over: including environment and community management.	12. LS: people are seeing around the museum. Cut to MS: various kinds of stones.
13.Chuyod: we would like you to come here and prove that Mae Moh is not like the image which the media represented. I would like to promote tourism here as a strategy for correcting the image of the EGAT.	13.CU: Chuyod Suthawatchaiyaporn: a manager of planning and service of the plant speaks to the reporter.

In the opening studio shot, the newsreader presents the item as a story of positive transformation and change. This theme is elaborated in two ways: by highlighting the success of the new sulphur dioxide filter machines in solving the problem of pollution and creating a clean environment, and by emphasising the plant's new role as a leisure destination and educational resource. The legacy of negative connotations evoked by the early shots of smoke emissions in shots 3 and 5 is countered by the images in shots 2 and 6 showing the sparkling reservoir and the beautiful, unspoilt scenery surrounding the plant.

Having established the plant's new 'green' image, the story goes on to emphasise its emerging role as a tourist attraction and educational centre. Visitors are shown taking photographs (shot7) and there are shots of the new walking paths and golf course (shots 9 and 10) The story then moves inside the plant's newly opened geology museum named in honour of the king panning across the interior and settling on the prominently displayed portrait of the monarch (shots 11 and 12).The item ends with an open invitation to viewers to come and experience the changes for themselves and to see that the plant is now an amenity to be enjoyed rather than a threat to be feared.

This item is a perfect example of the 'ideology of globalism' in action with its message that industrialisation is necessary if the country is to modernise effectively, that problems

can be solved and that the end results will substantially improve the overall quality of communal life. The 'top down' nature of this perspective is confirmed here by the fact that access to voice is granted exclusively to two of the plant's managers and that no local people affected by its past performance or current changes or any environmental experts or activists are asked to comment.

There is however a potential problem of presentation. The crucial opening establishing sequence is delivered entirely as a voice over and contains the key claim that 'the pollution seems to disappear'. No empirical evidence is offered in support of this claim. It is anchored solely by images appearing to show a clean environment. This is could easily be read (by a sceptical viewer) as an instance of promotional discourse, an advertorial sponsored by or made on behalf of, the company. To counter this, shot 6 introduces the classic news discourse rooted in impartial first-hand observation, showing the reporter standing in front of the plant and describing what he can see.

By evoking the ideals of objectivity and impartiality, the item distances itself from the discourse of public relations and presents itself as articulating national rather than sectional interests, a claim reinforced by the prominent shot of the portrait of the monarch, the father of the nation. The king remains a potent symbol of nationhood for Thais, particularly those who value tradition. As we noted earlier, Channel 7, has close ties to the army and represents the more traditionally oriented elements in the ruling elite. It is therefore not surprising that it was the first choice of news programme among the older indigenous participants in this study. Its representations resonated with their experiences. As we shall see in the second case study, Channel 7's relay of official views contrasted sharply with Channel 3 more populist orientation.

9.3 Industrialisation and Its Discontents 2: The Water Shortage

9.3.1 Context

As noted earlier, Rayong was selected to be one of the three provinces to be developed under 'the Eastern Seaboard Project', a huge development programme aiming to build an industrial city in eastern Thailand Industry. By 2005 the area contained five industrial estates and 1,856 factories (Rayong Provincial Industry Office, 2005) placing severe pressure on water resources. Industrial production, households and agriculture mainly depend on water from two reservoirs, *Nongplalai and Dokkrai.*

Between the end of 2004 and August 2005, there was no rain causing the first severe drought in the area since the emergence of industrialisation in the 1980s. The two main feeder reservoirs were dry and the Water Supply Service had stopped periodically. In July 2005, national newspapers speculated that some factories might have to be closed if there was not enough water to support their production (*Thai Rath*, and *Matichon*, July 2005). The next day, they reported that the prime minister Thaksin Shinnawat had confirmed that the government would provide assistance to the industry as soon as possible and would take whatever steps were necessary to ensure that the water supply would be on full service. Local people were concerned that the planned assistance seemed to privilege the needs of industry while largely ignoring their own predicament.

Their concerns escalated when large scale construction works began along the Rayong river in an effort to divert water from the River and local canals to support industry. In July 2005, a crowd of local peasants, farmers, fishermen, household owners, and representatives of non-governmental organisations went out to the governor's residence and protested against the project, which they believed took advantage ordinary people. In addition, they argued that the excavation of the River to build a dam would destroy the existing ecology around water resources and harm local livelihoods. After this protest, the mainstream media, which had previously based its coverage of the crisis on statements from government agencies, ministers and industry representatives began to pay attention to selected local voices. As we shall see however, the way this contest of positions and

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discourses was organised and presented varied considerably across channels and between programmes.

News Reporting

9.3.2 The Evening News Programme, Channel 7

According to the questionnaire survey, channel 7 Evening News was the most popular television programme among the working and older indigenous villagers. The format emphasises formality with the three newsreaders dressed in formal suites. Over the sample period, the water shortage issue was given considerable prominence with reports on 13 days out of 32 days (there was no data recorded on 19-8-05 and 10-9-05).

Despite the large number of items on the issue, reports consistently employed a limited range of voices drawn almost exclusively from official sources. These included the prime minister 1 time, the Agriculture Minister 3 times, the Industry Minister 1 time, Deputy PM 3 times, the Environment Minister 1 time, the Army 1 time, the Irrigation Department 2 times, the Royal Rainmaking Office 1 time, and the head of Democrat party (the main opposition party) 1 time. As we can see, while government sources and the Army were reported 13 times, the opposition party was featured only once. Importantly, there were no ordinary people and civil society voices.

The official sources used encoded the story within three main frames.

Firstly, the ministers went to Rayong to follow and push all plans to ease the drought, including excavating the River to allocate water to industry. Also the programme reported the operation of rainmaking a couple of times. In addition, the ministers and the heads of state agencies offered some implementations to handle a drought next year.

The first frame operated as a 'promotional discourse' for the government, politicians and bureaucracies who were charged with tackling the problem. Whenever ministers visited Rayong, the news reported that they had gone to check on the progress of projects to relieve the drought. There were no contributions from local people and peasants asking whether these projects could tackle the problem and whether there were any negative

impacts on their lives. Accompanying news pictures of ministers walking in very hot and dry areas with temperatures over 30 degrees Celsius and observing the machines operating in Rayong conveyed an image of hard working, well informed, politicians and a government determined to sort out the problem.

The report on the 15th August 2005 for example, featured the Industry Minister's visit to Rayong to promote plans to allocate water from the two main reservoirs to industry. Although the drought spread over the wide area of the East of the country, there was no mention of the need to maintain irrigation for agriculture which remained one of the main economic sectors in the area and had existed for hundreds years in Rayong.

The second major frame reinforced the priority given to industry needs by de-legitimating the concerns of local people. On the 22nd August 2005, in a reported speech the prime minister argued that the difficulties facing industry were so urgent that examining the relevant projects was not necessary and that the protests of local people were orchestrated by activists, rather than being rooted in genuine concerns. The newsreader offered the following gloss;

> The prime minister stated that the people sectors and local people who had gone out to protest against the water allocation to the industry in Rayong had been incited by some groups. The prime minister said, it was not necessary to pursue Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the water allocation from the Rayong River. He said it was considered as an urgent matter to handle before water ran out of (Sasina Wimuttanon, 2005).

Interestingly, channel 7 never reported the protests of the Rayong locals at first hand. They simply relayed the Prime Minister's assertions. They made no attempt to canvass the opinions of locals and experts and never investigated why there was a battle for water in Rayong. By labeling local protests as an illegitimate political activity, they are constructed as an obstacle to solving the drought crisis. The failure of the EIA which is charged with protecting natural resources and conserving community cultures and local communities was also ignored.

In contrast to the Prime Minister's outright rejection of local concerns, after the protests, other members of the government adopted a more conciliatory tone as in the report on the 25th of August 2005:

> The newsreader: the Deputy PM, Pinit Jarusombat said that the drought had resulted from too much heat in atmosphere due to Rayong being bases of industries and petrochemical factories. Thus he would not allow to expand industry anymore in order to reduce heat from the sunlight (Sasina Wimuttanon, 2005).

> The Deputy prime minister (in direct speech): Industry here must be stopped and will be expanded in other areas. As I told, everything should have had a plan and we should concern about environment. If it (the industry) has too much, it will damage environment. Heat in the atmosphere lessens humidity so it is not possible to have accumulation of clouds. We must sort it out urgently (Pinit Jarusombat, 2005a).

Having made this concession to local feeling, however, the government made no attempt the 'sort out' the environmental issues or to reduce the number of factories in the region. Rather, this rhetorical gesture can be seen as strengthening their position in two ways. Firstly, by bolstering their claim to represent all groups within the 'nation', it reinforced the populist political platform which had delivered electoral success. Secondly, by appearing to listen to voice of the people, they reduced the likelihood of further protests. Nor did the channel itself follow up by investigating popular concerns and claims.

In the third frame, towards the end of the crisis period, promoting tourism was introduced. After the 29th August 2005, the situation in Rayong changed as the area experienced high amounts of rainfall. The coverage focused on the increase of water levels in the reservoirs, employing the head of the Irrigation Department and the Deputy prime minister as the main sources of the coverage. On the 15th September 2005, the Deputy Prime Minister stated that:

> It is expected that water consumption will increase 20 percents next year due to an increase of tourism in Pattaya. Therefore, what the government needs to do urgently is to allocate water from the Bangpra-Bangpakong project and aims to store water in the reservoirs 100,000 million cubic metres per day (Pinit Jarusombat, 2005b).

This frame presented tourism, alongside industry, as a priority in planning water usage. The Deputy Prime Minister's previous expressions of concern about environmental impact and plans to curtail the expansion of industry, including plans for helping peasants and locals were never mentioned again or returned to by the news team.

In summary, Channel 7 news coverage of the water shortage consistently privileged the interests of industry and tourism and relied almost exclusively on official governmental, political and bureaucratic sources, including the Army, the channel owner. Although, the Deputy Prime Minister admitted once that having too many factories in Rayong may have resulted in the drought and low rainfall, the news programme never undertook investigative stories to establish what the cause of the drought and never presented the views of non official actors: experts, scientists, environmentalists, peasants, and locals. Moreover, this single acknowledgement of local feeling was enveloped with a larger frame, anchored in the Prime Minister's characterisation, endorsed by the news reader, which cast off local protests as 'an illegitimate activity', thus, promoting only the privileged interest and undermining the locals' power. Also it became a hidden propaganda tactic of the government to maintain their status and popularity.

9.3.3 The Evening News Programme, Channel 3

As described in chapter 8, Channel 3 is owned by the Maleenon family operating through the family holding company, BEC World, under a contract with the state (see details in chapter 4 and 8). The family had close ties to the Thaksin government in power. They were one of the major sources of funds for the ruling party (*Thai Ruk Thai*) and Pracha Maleenon, who had previously managed Channel 3 was, at the time of the water shortage, Tourism and Sports Minister.

At the same time, in contrast to the news on Channel 7, the Channel 3 evening news does not operate as a simple conduit for government pronouncements. Its presentation is more populist in style drawing on both entertainment and colloquial speech. In a break with the dominance of male newsreaders on Thai television, on weekdays, the general news is presented by two newsreaders, one male and one female, with another male newsreader reading the sports news and ending with entertainment news read by an actress. At weekends, three female newsreaders read the general news and a male newsreader reads

the sports news. The introduction of female newsreaders with colorful and lively styles, which began in 2005, differentiated the channel sharply from its competitors.

Rather than 'reading' the news, the newsreaders on channel 3 'tell' the stories and provide 'comment' in natural and informal conversational styles. This story-telling technique, coupled with the banter between presenters and the introduction of humour, moves the presentation closer to the style of everyday conversation in the family. The female newsreaders dress fashionably and colorfully while the male readers are more informal than their rivals on other channels wearing a shirt and a necktie without a jacket. Taken together these signals of up-to-dateness, fashionability and approachability helped to secure the programme's popularity among the young people in the village.

Despite having considerable distinction in the reporting form, use of news sources of channel 3 was relatively similar to that of channel 7. Channel 3 also depended on government official sources but the number of the presented topics was lower than those of channel 7. Channel 3 reported the water shortage issue on 5 days out of the sampled 30 and in common with Channel 7 depended heavily on government sources including the prime minister 1 time, the Agriculture Minister 1 time, Deputy Prime Minister 1 time (Pinit Jarusombat), the head of the main opposition party 1 time (Apisit Vecchachewa), the head of the Irrigation Department 1 time, the Permanent Undersecretary of Agriculture Ministry 1 time and a report from a journalist 1 time. Accordingly, the raw content presented by channel 3 was almost the same as channel 7.

However, channel 3 news employed a different strategy to approach the audience. By utilising natural conversation and an informal reporting style and incorporating discourse strategies grounded in 'common sense', and popular myths, it can be argued that the channel was more successful in reproducing the dominant ideology of globalism precisely because it 'naturalised' the ideology of globalism rather than presenting it as coming from above. A short extract from the item broadcast on the 22nd of August 2005 illustrates this process at work:

> A female reader: Today, the prime minister said about the protests of the locals
> in Rayong due to water allocation to the industry. Today, the PM's mood was
> not good...Khun Theera [the male reader's name-author's comment]. He said,

> well, it should not have any problems. The locals came out to the street because
> they were incited. The water allocation to the industry did not need to pursue
> environmental impact assessment (EIA). *Tan* [a pronoun in Thai language -used
> for senior or high status people- author's comment] said the water shortage is an
> urgent matter. It must be worked out as he used to state. So, if we wait for EIA,
> it will be too late. So, it must be sorted out (Waraporn Sompong, 2005).

While channel 7 simply reported the speeches made by official sources, channel 3 also translated the arguments into informal language and natural conversation between the newsreaders. Core myths and Thai social values are hidden in the newsreaders' natural conversation and presented as taken-for-granted 'common sense' as Gramsci argued in his influential formulation. Common sense is constituted precisely through the process whereby

> values, meanings and beliefs which are implicitly contained in everyday
> practical activity, rather than being systematically set forth and developed as,
> for instance, in a philosophical treatise or academic paradigm. (Deacon *et al.*,
> 1999:152).

Thai social values place a high value on respect for status and seniority. Hence in the extract above, the newsreader is careful to show respect for the prime minister while at the same time maintaining a colloquial, conversational, style of presentation ('Today, the PM's mood was not good...Khun Theera. He said, well, it should not have any problems. The locals came out to the street because they were incited'). The use of the pronoun *'Tan'* to refer to the prime minister is also significant. Since *'Tan'* is a pronoun normally used for senior people or a boss or people who have high status in Thai society, its use here presents the respect and deference being accorded the Prime Minister as entirely natural.

At the same time, this item might provoke viewers to ask, why if the water allocation to industry was important for everyone, did the locals come out onto the streets and protest? By mobilising an informal conversational reporting style, the item arguably lends more plausibility both to the claim that the protests were incited and to globalism's core assertion that whatever benefits the industry sector also operates to the people's and the country's advantage. This rhetorical strategy has the added advantage of endorsing the official view of non governmental organisations as 'trouble-makers' and their protests as illegitimate.

Another instance of the way common sense was deployed to support the prevailing policy of industry led development occurred on 23rd August 2005, when the female presenter remarked:

> Another story is also about dams but this is good news because the cabinet has approved the budget for building dams in the East due to the drought (Waraporn Sompong, 2005).

This item takes for granted the claim that dam building is 'good news' for everyone. It does not go on to explore the argument that it will mainly benefit industry or to examine whether it will in fact solve the water problems facing local people or may even exacerbate them.

In common with channel 7 news, channel 3 also reproduced the frame stressing the priority of promoting and sustaining industry and tourism and maintaining investor confidence. In 4th September 2005, a speech by the Permanent Undersecretary of Agriculture Ministry was reported by a female newsreader as follows:

> Today, Mr. Prapot Hotong the Permanent Undersecretary of Agriculture Ministry said that the meeting was held today to set a plan to manage 25 problematic water resources. First of all, we need to be concerned to support for industry which will expand in the near future, especially in the East. This will call for confidence from investors back. Also there will be a plan for water management for industry, tourism and agriculture in the South. .... As we see from the vedio clips, water levels is very low. Now the East gets to grip with the drought because it effects the investment (Waraporn Sompong, 2005).

> The second female newsreader responded: because of the industry and tourism and investor confidence (Nitiporn Mannak, 2005).

This translation of an official pronoun cemented into colloquial expression is a striking example of Gramsci's (1971) argument that the hegemony of dominant views, in this case the ideology of globalism, is best secured by grounding them in common sense so that they become taken-for-granted. In the absence of any sustained investigation of alternative accounts and arguments, this connection between official positions and everyday understandings is repeatedly reproduced in the available news coverage confirming Deacon *et al* contention that:

> When common sense was operated together with the ownership of the media
> without examination of the issue, the media representations here serve the
> sustaining of unequal relations of power, especially the power of the elites
> (Deacon *et al.*, 1999:153).

When we turn from news to commentary and debates however, we see that the colloquial forms of presentation can also open a space for alternative voices and perceptions, albeit on a limited basis.

Commentary and Debate

9.3.4 *Morning News Talks (Reung Lao Shao Nee) by Sorayuth and Ornpreeya*

According to the questionnaire survey, another of the programmes presented by Sorayuth, Morning News Talk on Channel3 was the most popular TV programme among both working and older newcomers. In the sample period, from 15th August to 14th September 2005, this programme presented the water shortage only once on 18th August 2005. Sorayuth Sutasanajinda is one of the Thailand's best known television presenters. The format of this programme is based on Sorayuth retelling stories taken from the day's newspapers and adding his own commentary, giving him considerable license to construct his own interpretive frames.

In analysing Sorayuth's performance, we can usefully draw on Teun A Van Dijk's notion of 'a model of a situation in memory' which he defines as:

> the memory representation of accumulated experiences and information about a
> given situation as they were interpreted by an individual (Van Dijk,1985:81).

Sorayuth introduced the water shortage issue using *Matichon*, a 'broadsheet' newspaper as the source of his report. 'A model of the situation in memory' appeared in his comment and questions when he provided some background of the water shortage problem. He claimed that although the present crisis resulted from the drought, it also reflected the inefficiency of the state water supply management system. He asked why 'even knowing this difficulty [there was no sufficient water in the reservoirs], why let it happen?' It can be seen that there is no subject in this the sentence. In the Thai language, subjects of sentences are omitted for several reasons, for example speakers may not want to blame anyone

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directly or avoid creating conflict if the story involves sensitive issues. In this case, Sorayuth intentionally employed ambiguity to avoid indicating 'the subject agent' which actually implied 'the state agencies or the authorities'.

The sentence: 'even knowing this difficulty (there was no sufficient water in the reservoirs), why let it happen?' did not appear in the national newspaper which he used as the source. Rather, it was 'a model of the situation in memory', derived from the accumulation of his journalistic experience. His questioning of the official position also refers back to the debate on the '*Thung Luk Thung Kon*' programme, which he hosted the previous week (and which we analyse in the next topic). The local participants on that programme asked the Irrigation Department representatives: why, 'despite realising that there is not enough water in the reservoirs, why does the Department not solve the problem beforehand?'.

Here we see how the process of 'a model of the situation in memory' establishes an intertextual relation between the Sorayuth's discourse on the Morning News Talk show and the debate in *Thung Luk Thung Kon*. A question initially introduced by local people who are rarely given a voice by the mainstream media is then redeployed on the Morning News Talk show to pose a critical question to the authorities and to frame the situation in terms of the 'inefficiency of water supply management' and 'inability of the Thai state in managing systems and natural resources amid industrialisation'.

Intertextuality was again applied in his subsequent comments:

> Things reach breaking point again. Look at the headline of *Matichon*. It states, 'Banchang-Mabtaphut'
>
> Divided zones, shared water
>
> East Water reduced water supply 50% (Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, 2005)

Then Sorayuth asserted, 'It is the breaking point because whatever you want to do, you can do, but don't bully people'. At this stage, Sorayuth did not state whose breaking point he was referring to but in subsequent comments, it became clear that he was referring to the local people's breaking point due to unfair and inefficient water supply management.

> Excuse me, it (water shortage) occurs in Rayong..Rayong..Rayong. It is very close to Bangkok, only over 100 kilometres from Bangkok. Oh, Pra chao chuay kluay tod (oh..my God-author's translation) (Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, 2005).

The literal translation of the phrase 'Pra chao chuay kluay tod' is 'God helps, fried bananas', which is meaningless. In the Thai language, use of this exclamation phrase aims to create a sense of humour by using a rhyme of a phase 'Pra chao chuay' and a word 'kluay tod'. This rhyme phase is normally used when confronting a surprise or frightening events. Sorayuth utilises this phrase to connote that the water shortage in Rayong was unbelievable and shocking, while mobilising humour and irony to underline the seriousness of the mismangement of resources. He repeatedly used this strategy in later comments:

> Oh..Lord Buddha helps. It is happening in Rayong which is very closed to Bangkok. How can [we] let it happen? The world is stunned by this story (Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, 2005).

Ambiguity was another strategy which Sorayuth employed when he criticised the authorities. He stated,

> Sorayuth: Industry needs water, we understand. But the planning finally effects ordinary water users. Ok...we can contribute for the nation. So, industry can produce goods to contribute for the nation...or whatever you want to say. But don't bully...the group of.... You recognise that? (Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, 2005).

> Ornpreeya: the group of ordinary people (Ornpreeya Hunsart, 2005).

In this extract, Sorayuth assumes that viewers share his interpretive frame and will be able to fill in the gaps in his exposition, for example the phrase 'the planning finally affects the ordinary water user' does not specify whose planning and what plan. At the same time, his use of irony as in the sentence, 'So the industry can produce goods to contribute for the nation...or whatever you want to say', clearly distances him from the ideology of globalism's central claim that industrialisation will benefit everyone .

This note of scepticism is further reinforced in his closing remark that 'scrutinising the state work was necessary':

...otherwise you should explain why and what it is going on, and how to sort it out. This is a big matter (Sorayuth Sutasanajinda, 2005).

In summary, by breaking with the strong separation of news and comment in Thai journalistic culture, Sorayuth's performance in the Morning News Talk opened spaces for critical commentary on government performance and on the wider impact of the changes set in motion by globalisation on ordinary people. These opportunities were pursued by employing a series of devices that avoided direct confrontation with official views and required viewers to 'read between the lines'. These included ambiguity, humour, and irony. This balancing act allowed Sorayuth to articulate a populist position that gave voice to ordinary people's concerns while squaring this with the constraints of working for a channel with close ties to the government.

9.3.5 Thung Luk Thung Kon, Channel 9

Thung Luk Thung Kon is a current affairs programme organised by Sorayuth. It was broadcast on weekdays in a late night slot between at 10.45-11.45 pm on channel 9. Although, channel 9 was not on the list of the media nominated as favourite by villagers, Sorayuth is one of the most popular presenters among my respondents and a number watched this programme.

In July 2005, two groups with opposing positions on 'the crisis of the water shortage in eastern Thailand' were invited onto the programme. The first group consisted of two representatives from the Irrigation Department, a state agency with responsibility for allocating water from the Rayong River to industry. The other group was made up of three male locals, Rutchayuth, Sompong, and Chalermporn; and a people sector worker in Rayong, Suthi.

Sorayuth introduced the debate by summarising the main arguments over the issue. He said while the Irrigation Department was pushing through the project of water allocation, the locals complained that the state had no plan to manage scarce natural resources equally and had proceeded without a public hearing to canvass local views. The locals believed that the dam project might have major long term negative effects on agricultural livelihoods, the ecological system, mangrove forests and marine life.

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Introducing the debate, Sorayuth started with a question about the project to representatives from the Irrigation Department who insisted that building a dam across the River would not have a negative impact on the environment and people's livelihood. Statistics and figures of water level were shown as evidence. A power point presentation showed how the dam could help to manage water supplies. English terms (for example watershed) and technical terms were employed to explain the allocation process (see Extract 9.2).

Extract 9.2 Thung Luk Thung Kon debate- water shortage, 26th July 2005

Sound	Images
Shot 1 Net (the head of Rayong Irrigation Section): if *Khun* Sorayuth observed [the picture in the power point] carefully, he will see the mouth of the three basins, and its 'watershed'. (Sorayuth is using the English)	**MS:** Net is speaking to Sorayuth and explaning the powerpoint.
Shot 2 Net: the area covers about one thoudsand spuare Kilometres. Let's compare this with the Dokgrai basin which is on the bottom left of the picture.	**MS:** Background is the power point showing the water flow of the three basins. Foreground showing Sorayuth with his back to the screen. Dissolve
Shot 3 Net: The actual watershed covers about 300 [square kilometres]. **The local people ask:** what is the 'watershed'? **Net:** The watershed is the drainage capacity of an area for storing water. As for the Nong Pla Lai basin, this is about 400 [square kilometres]. *Khun* Sorayuth, try to compare then, between 300 and 400 [square kilometres].	**CU:** The power point is showing the mouth of the Rayong river and how much the three basins can store water.
Shot 4 Net: These two basins don't have the same volume of water as the mouth [of the Rayong river], which has a massive amount of water.	**CU:** The power point is showing the mouth of the Rayong river.
Shot 5 Sompong: Khun Sorayuth, but they have forgotten that villagers have been living in these areas. As you [Tan- in Thai] said, the water at the mouth of the river, is always left to drain [into the sea], [Actually] this water nourishes the villagers who have been making a living. Our homes are there.	**MS:** Sompong is speaking to Sorayuth and Net.

Shot 6 Sorayuth: How does it affect [your life]?, say it clearer.	**MS:** Sorayuth
Shot 7 Sompong (a local): The impact is... [he has not finished his sentence when Sorayuth interrupts...].	**MS:** Sompong tries to explain.
Shot 8 Sorayuth: Here, he (Net) is comparing that the two basins have a small watershed compared to the mouth of the river. It is a pity, he said, [to lose water from the mouth of the river]. Do I understand correctly? **Net:** yes. **Sorayuth:** then [the mouth of the river] can be put to good use; but this side [the locals] argues that ...	**MS:** Sorayuth **MS:** Sorayuth is pointing at Sompong [to invite his arguement].
Shot 9 Sompong (voice shaking with emotion): They have acting like we have not been living there.	**MS:** Sompong is speaking in a sad and emotional tone.
Shot 10 Sorayuth: Where have you been living?	**MS:** Sorayuth
Shot 11 Sompong: [We] have been living down at the end of the basins. To make a living, we have been cultivating rice and fruit farms; agriculture and fisheries.	**MS:** Sompong is speaking to Sorayuth.

In contrast, the local participants' discourses were informal, emotional, and metaphorical. Their intimate relationship with the river as a force of nature was forcefully expressed in their plea; Chalermporn, a local participant said 'I want to make a plea..don't disturb the artery (the Rayong river). Don't disturb the Mother of Rayong locals' (see Extract 9.3).

Extract 9.3 Thung Luk Thung Kon debate- water shortage, 26th July 2005

Sound	Images
Shot 1 Ratchayuth (a local): [The Government] must admit that the crisis has resulted because of the Government's [mis – management].	**MS:** Ratchayuth
Shot 2 Sorayuth: yes, it can be set up another debate [on the Government's mis-management]. It's a separate matter. But at the moment, how do we sort out?	**MS:** Sorayuth
Shot 3 Sompong (a local): In our opinion, if any areas which are already under construction (dikes for allocating water to industry] to alleviate the water crisis, [proposed further digging of the riverbad in] other areas should cease. Keep these areas for the villagers' benefit. Don't take it all, until Rayong is dry. No!	**MS:** Sompong
Shot 4 Sorayuth: We (You) don't believe that the amount of water [in the river] is still the same?	**MS:** Sorayuth
Shot 5 Sompong: They are about to extend to *Natakwan* **Other local participants:** [we] can't believe them (the state/Government agencies). [We] have been deceived for a long time.	**MS:** Sompong
Shot 6 Sompong: They say one thing, and do another. What they say and what they do are not the same.	**MS:** Sompong
Shot 7 Chalernporn (a local): Just now, he (Net) made a plea for us to do right by the nation. I also want to make a plea for the nation and its people. Don't forget that at the moment, the Rayong river is almost dead. Don't forget that [the Rayong river] is the lifeblood of Rayong locals. I have grown up here.	**MS:** Chalermporn is talking and looking seriously.

Shot 8 Chalernporn: My parents reared me [in this area]. I have grown up in this area. I want to make a plea..<u>don't disturb the artery</u> (the Rayong river). <u>Don't disturb the Mother of Rayong locals</u> (in a trembling voice). As I said before, all the mangrove forests and the local ecological system have been established for hundred of years.	**MS:** Chalernporn is stressing his voice and looking serious. Cut Net is smiling and looking at Chalernporn.
Shot 9 Chalernporn: [The Government] will block water for up to four months. If salty water is blocked for four months, what will happen, I ask you?	**MS:** Chalernporn

At the end of the debate, the impact of the project on ordinary people's lives was again expressed through metaphor, by comparing 'water in the river' to 'their tears' (see Extract 9.4).

Sound	Images
Shot 1 Sorayuth: Why didn't you consult the villagers before you started [constructing the dikes]?	**MS:** Sorayuth
Shot 2 Ratchayuth (a local): *Tan..Tan,* can I pass you this before you reply? Ratchayuth is reading a poem: 'Please cancel the reallocation of water urgently. It is so chaotic and disturbing, and because of whom? The state ordered this without consulting the local people. The drainage pipes suck water from the poor. Industry's lack of water-whose fault is this anyway? Concealing [the truth] ; making up [positive] images; afraid that people will see [the truth]. East water, Irrigation Department have aggravted the situation of the poor. The Mayor of Rayong, try thinking new: who uses water for agriculture farms? Farmers and water supply are still in a state of chaos. [The Government] still allocates water from [our] tears. I would like to petition the King-to ask for equality for everywhere. At the moment, Rayong locals are in trouble. [Petition the King] to protect water resources for our children.	**MS:** Ratchayuth is reading a poem.
Shot 3 Sorayuth: Why didn't you consult them from the outset?	**MS:** Sorayuth is asking the two Irrigation officials.
Shot 4 Sompong: *Tan* ministers were not born from the bamboo stalks. *Tan* have their own homes. I want to ask: if this were to happen in your own neighbourhood, would you accept it?	**MS:** Sompong

At the same time, Suthi, the people sector worker who accompanied the local participants, supplemented their emotionally charged discourse with more deliberately rational arguments, drawing on official discourse. The local people's contributions were not entirely based on emotional appeals however. They also voiced a number of specific criticisms of industry, the state and the impact. First, they argued that the plan for tackling

the water shortage that could damage the ecological system and their livelihood had proceeded without democratic participation from local communities.

Second, they complained that the project had been undertaken without an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) of the possible environmental and community damage that might ensure and without a public hearing at which local people could voice their concerns. Third, they argued that the government did not have an efficient strategy for managing natural sources amid the growth of the city and industrialisation and that the benefits of industrialisation were unequally distributed leaving ordinary people to bear the costs of globalisation. As one of the locals said,

> If you allocate water for farmers and the poor, we won't argue. But the allocation is done for the industry who have a large budget to work it out themselves'... 'when they (the industry) earn money, they earn a billion baht and have a luxurious life but when they have difficulties, they try to drag ordinary people into the trouble with them'... 'they (the industry) take everything, rain water, ground water, sea water from us, and this time, the river. Please leave it for us (Rutchayuth, 2005).

Interestingly, both sides claimed 'the interest of the nation' to support their argument. At the end of the programme, when asked by Sorayuth for a closing statement, the supervisor of the Irrigation Department said, 'please support it (the dam) for the nation'. The local participants immediately countered by saying , 'we also would like to demand (don't build the dam) in the name of the nation, and the name of citizens'.

We see two very different definitions of 'the nation' at work here with a 'top-down' definition pitched against a 'bottom-up' conception. The Irrigation Department, a government agency charged with allocating water supplies in line with government priorities equates the 'national interest' with the government's interests. In contrast, for the locals 'the nation' is a popular rather than a legal entity, made up of ordinary people, acting as citizens, with rights to scrutinise polices and projects affecting their lives and the land, forest, and other natural resources that support their livelihoods.

The programme presenter, Sorayuth, played a key role in organising this contrast of conceptions. He decided what topics were discussed, who could talk and for how long. His

leading questions opened the way for statements articulating the negative consequences of industrialisation and globalisation, for example:

> The local: 'They (the industry) take everything rain water, ground water, sea water from us, and this time, the river'.
>
> Sorayuth: 'Do you think that the factories are the cause of the drought now?'
>
> The local: 'Yes, because the massive heat from all the factories in Rayong floats in the air and reduces humidity' (Thung Luk Thung Kon programme, 25 July 2005).

From the extract, it could be seen that the Sorayuth's leading question determined the direction of the debate, in a sense of negative consequences of globalisation. If considered from the leading arguments to the ending questions, it is likely that the host opened more time and spaces to advocate anti-globalisation frames.

In short, the frames of globalisation from both sides were transmitted through the television debate. For the state side, official knowledge and formal language were strategies in creating legitimacy and state power in order to carry on their project. It seems that the frame of globalisation from the state agency was ambiguous. Whereas the local participants created frames of inequality of globalisation, the exploitation of natural resources and local livelihood by the industry, inefficiency of the state management, and lack of democratic participation of local communities as crucial issues. Most importantly, all the strategies- metaphors, signification of the nation, informal and emotional language- that the locals proposed were advocated by the media (Sorayuth) who initially framed the first argument that 'why does the Irrigation Department not prepare a good plan for water crisis? And the locals do not trust the state power'.

9.4   Selling Mobility – At Ten (*Tee sib*), Channel 3

The third case study, the variety show At Ten, was one of the three most popular programmes nominated by younger participants. It offers a useful way into exploring how the promises and gains of modernisation and globalisation are integrated into everyday pleasures.

The show, which goes out on Channel 3 every Tuesday night at 10.40 pm has been on air continuously for more than a decade. It is fronted by three presenters with different personas and personalities designed to appeal to different segments of the audience. They are; Vitawat Sunthornvinetre the male owner of the programme, Kuensit Suwanwattakee, known as Pui-Tee Sib, a male comic and Kritthreera Indharavijit, known as Kem-Tee sib, a glamorous model who hosts the programme. The programme was monitored for one month, from 16th August 2005 to 6th September 2005. But the analysis presented here will focus particularly on the episode broadcast on 18th August 2005.

The programme lasts for two hours and is divided into three segments. The first is a talent contest in which three judges in studio award marks to amateur performers. The winner receives a cash prize 10,000 Baht, the runner up 7,000 Baht and the third placed 5,000 Baht. The second segment is a prize draw in which members of the studio audience and viewers at home with winning tickets receive the product made by the programme's sponsor. The final segment is an interview with a celebrity. Since I will explore the emerging culture of celebrity, and the tension around it, in the next case study I want to focus here on the first two segments and explore the way they work with and on three major dimensions of globalisation and modernisation; cultural, ideological and hybridity, dreams of personal mobility; and consumerism.

Ideology, Culture and Hybridity.

The tensions around the programme's combination of national and global elements is evident in the opening sequence (shots 1-2 of the Extract 9.5) which shows a young sexy girl, the epitome of a consumer style strongly influenced by western popular culture, dancing to a popular song. At the same time, her spoken greeting to viewers, 'Sawadee ka

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(hello), let's hold the principle of sufficiency economy for sufficiency life. This is At ten' evokes a national spirit of moderation and austerity.

Extract 9.5 At Ten, 18th August 2005

Sound	Images
Shot 1 A popular song fades in with sound up.	**MS:** A young female dancer in a sleeveless top and tight-fitting jeans is dancing.
Shot 2 A lady dancer: *Sawaddee ka.* Let's hold to the principle of a sufficiency economy for a sufficiency life. This is 'At Ten'.	**Ms:** The dancer is talking to camera.
Shot 3 Vitawat: *Sawaddee krub*, 'At Ten' in the period of economy recession. **Kuensit:** Today it's the anniversary of Kru Suraphol's death, and also that of Elvis Presley.	**MS:** three presenters-Vitawat, Kuensit and Krittheera are standing and talking to the camera. The two male presenters are in suites. Krittheera is wearing a strapless top and tight-fitting jeans.
Shot 4 Krittheera: So, 'Dan dara' today we will show three competitors performing songs of Elvis and Kru Surapol.	**MS:** Krittheera is talking to the camera.
Shot 5 Kuensit: (singing Kru Suraphol' s song) '16 years ago, both love and hate, sweet and bitter...'. (At the same time) Vitawat is narrating: Kru suraphol was born in....	**MS:** Kuensit and Vitawat are standing side by side. Kuensit is singing the song '16 years ago' while Vitawat is reading from 'the legend of Kru Suraphol'.
Shot 6 Vitawat is singing: 'Love Me Tender'by Elvis while Kuensit is reading an extract from Elvis's biography.	MS: The same scene but Vitawat is singing Elvis's song while Kuensit is narrating beside him.
Shot 7 Vitawat: Today 'Dan dara' memorializes Kru suraphol and Elvis Presley. Every year, in mid-August, almost all around the world, and around the country, people will pay homage to Elvis. For Thailand-Elvis and Suraphol, including *Dan dara*.	**MS:** Kuensit and Vitawat are standing side by side. An old fashion microphone is in front of them.

Shot 8 Vitawat: Act one	**MS:** Vitawat is standing and introducing act one.
Shot 9 Female voiceover: Lamoon, when he was three, he fell and suffered brain damaged. He entered into the Buddhist monkhood for several years before leaving to take care of his parents. He was a driver, gardener, and cleaner. He used to run a chicken noodle stall, but it was not successful. Then he came back to stay (work) with Jim-Mayurachat [an actress] again.	**LS:** Lamoon, a short, 30 year-old man, in a plain T-shirt, is working on his daily routine - cleaning the house, washing cars, watering plants, mowing lawns.
Shot 10 Lamoon: I have been staying (working) with celebrities for so long. But today please let me be a star.	**LS:** In Mayurachat's place, Lamoon is in a white T-shirt, a baseball cap and a hanging bag. He looks casual and humble.
Shot 11 Kuensit [in the studio]: he will sing 'Tears of The Sergeant' and 'Why Are You Single?'. Though his life is sad, he is a good-tempered man.	**CU:** In the studio, the old fashion microphone draped with several colourful cloths tied is appearing in the foreground on the left hand side of the screen. The background is the stage.
Shot 12 Lamoon is singing 'Tears of The Sergeant.	**CU:** The old-fashioned microphone appears in theforeground on the left hand side of the screen. In the background: Lamoon is singing.
Shot 13 Lamoon:[singing "Why Are You Single?']	**LS:** Lamoon is gyrating like Elvis in rock and roll steps.
Shot 14 Kuensit: Mhaaa [a Thai exclamation], [Lamoon] has also danced like Elvis. What do you do (for a living)? Wash cars, mow lawns, clean. Vitawat: collect dog waste? Lamoon: yes, that's my routine.	**LS:** Lamoon is standing next to Kuensit.
Shot 15 Lamoon: I like it **Kuensit:** dog and cat waste ?	**CU:** Lamoon is smiling.
Shot 16 Vitawat: The second act, Banchong is a guy who loves Elvis. How much does he love Elvis? Please look at his profile.	**CU:** Vitawat
Shot 17 Female voiceover: Banchong, an older guy who is crazy about Elvis, the King of Rock 'n Roll.	**MS:** Banchong is walking and finding Elvis music cds in a shop.

Shot 18 Female voice-over: Although at first, he didn't like Elvis at all, his brother liked to play Elvis's songs.	**CU:** Several Elvis's CD covers in a music shop.
Shot 19 Female voiceover: He also accompanied his brother to many Elvis's song contests.	**MS:** Banchong is carrying a pile of Elvis's CDs.
Shot 20 Female voice over: He started by practising Elvis's songs.	**MS:** Foregound: His dancing likes Elvis's steps. In the background: the Elvis puppet. Banchong is moving his arms and legs around , imitating the puppet.
Shot 21 Female voice over: ...and has been playing the guitar.	Tilt down to Bangchong legs gyrating like Elvis. Cut **LS:** Banchong is practising Elvis routines. Cut **CU:** Bent legs of the Elvis's puppet. Tilt up **CU:** The puppet's face.

Older audiences would immediately recognise the phrase 'Sufficiency Economy' as taken from the initiative launched by the King of Thailand when Thailand was in economic crisis in 1997. Based on the so called 'New Theory' of development, and designed to improve the sustainability of the economy and society, especially the poor rural areas, it followed one of the cardinal principles of Buddhism in advocating moderation in both consumption and the exploitation of natural sources (The Government Public Relations Department, 2006). As Chalongpob Sussangkarn, has argued it represented an attempt to find a 'middle way' in coping with consequences emerging from globalisation and other changes (Sussangkarn, 2006).

As such it was in conflict with globalism's core argument that only all-out market-led modernisation would deliver life styles based on extended choice and personal expression. This promise is translated into tangible terms in the show in the 'liberated' figure of the young sexy dancer in provocative clothes.

Although the principle of 'Sufficiency Economy' has been widely publicised few Thais have actually practiced it and there have been no major policy initiatives to support it, with the result that it has become a catch-phrase signifying respect for the monarch but emptied

of any real substance. Nevertheless, the latent tensions between the ideologies of old and new elites remain inscribed in the show's text. The fact that this is only evident when visual representations are taken into account reinforces the argument made earlier, that when dealing with audio-visual media Critical Discourse Analysis needs to examine what is being shown as well as what is being said.

9.4.1 AT TEN (Tee Sib) Analysis

By moving from ideology to culture the show's opening substantive segment, the talent contest 'To be a star' '(*Dun Dara*) ensures that these tensions remain latent by presenting western and traditional elements as part of a shared stock of expressive resources available to be assembled in new ways. The broadcast, on Tuesday 18th August 2005, for example featured tribute performances by three competitors singing songs by both Elvis Presley and Surapol Sombatcharoen, a famous Thai folk singer who had died on the same day as Elvis but nine years before. In the Tuesday 23rd August episode, all three competitors imitated Thai folk singers but one opted to rearrange his chosen song as a hip hop number complete with a hip hop dance routine. This particular variant of hybridity was repeated on 6th of September when three pairs of young twins turned up with fashionable and luxurious costumes. Two sung Thai popular songs but the last pair opted to perform a hip hop and break dance number dressed in the classic hip hop style of hoody top and a clench fleece pants.

Dreams of Personal Mobility

Globalism presents globalisation's creative destruction of the old order as opening up multiple spaces for personal advancement, a promise that finds its most potent expression in 'rags-to-riches' stories recounting how 'ordinary' people can be released from a life of drudgery by a combination of talent, determination and luck. In 'To be a star' on 18th August 2005 (shot 9 to 11of the Extract 9.5) the first competitor, Lamoon, was shown on video clips working as a servant in the mansion of an actress. These images and the accompanying narration presented an ordinary person from the lower class who worked as a cleaner and a gardener and had had a depressing childhood. His identity as a lower class worker was stressed again after he finished his performance when the hosts asked him about his job as a servant underlining the contrast with his on-stage person as a talented singer and aspiring star.

The representations employed in the show operated ideologically in two ways. First, the continual emphasis on successful celebrities (both those interviewed in the third segment and those imitated by the talent show contestants) held out the possibility that ordinary people now had opportunities to move from poverty to riches solely through their own efforts. Secondly, by providing concrete opportunities to become a pop star they anchored this promise securely in everyday life, they domesticated dreams.

The strong association between personal mobility and a life style built around western popular culture and consumerism can be seen in the presentation of the second competitor, Banchong, a 55 year-old middle class man who was passionate about Elvis Presley. The video extract introducing him (shots 19 to 25) showed him walking and looking at Elvis CDs Close up shots of images of Elvis on the covers not only emphasised how the American King of Rock and Roll had influenced him, they also evoked Elvis's own migration from his dirt poor rural origins to his opulent life style as a mega star. The constant movement of the camera between Banchong and the Elvis puppet (shots of 22-24) repeatedly underlined the centrality of American popular culture, not only as an expressive resource for Banchong but as the essence of a capitalist modernity capable of delivering both new opportunities and new pleasures.

Consumerism

Arguably, the whole programme was a practical promotion of the pleasure of the new worlds of goods, from the opulent sets to the fashionable style of the presenters and celebrity interviewees. However, the link between commodities and opportunities was expressed most stridently and obviously in the show's second segment when the two main presenters. Pui and Kem, staged the lucky draw of tickets given away with the sponsor's product with the winning tickets attracting a substantial cash prize. They urge everyone in the audience to send in their tickets.

> It is very easy to win gold! Just drink U-Nif [the brand of green tea product] and
> send a ticket to the studio. Getting this priceless gold is very easy and we will
> increase the value of gold every week. This week, we will begin with 10 baht
> gold [about 150 Pounds] (Kritthreera Indharavijit, 2005).

This promotional pitch presents consumption as a double opportunity, firstly to purchase a useful and pleasurable product, and secondly to share in the general benefits bestowed by

the rapid growth of the corporations at the heard of the new capitalism. The association between the phrases 'only drink' and 'very easy to win gold' and the translation of tickets into cash prizes establishes powerful new links being everyday purchases and the wider opportunities being opened up by a consumer economy in which companies act as the new benevolent patrons.

9.5 Moral Values and Celebrity Culture – The Scandal of Kathleeya

Celebrities represent the new possibilities held out by consumption in their most concentrated form. Their life styles offer models for aspiration and emulation but they also dramatise the potential dangers of having too much too soon and the uneasy balance between personal choices and social goods. They distil both the hopes and the anxieties generated by transition and change. The last case study explores these tensions by examining the media coverage of the scandal that followed the announcement in September 2005 by Kathleeya McIntosh, a Thai female superstar, that she was pregnant outside marriage.

9.5.1 Context

In Thai society, pregnancy outside marriage is considered unacceptable. Indeed, the traditional ideal of Thai womanhood still frowns on expressions of affection in public such as kissing and touching among unmarried couples. However, a growing number of young people consider this, and the disapproval of sexual relations among teenagers, as an out of date custom. A Suandusit Poll of 12-20 year olds in Bangkok and major metropolises conducted in 2002 showed that 29.14 percent saw nothing wrong with having sexual relationships while still at school, citing the right to personal choice and social change as their reasons, and that 4 out of 10 female students claimed to have had their first sexual relationship while they were still studying (Suandusit Poll, 2002). This trend is supported by research conducted by Suwanna Ruangkanjanaset (2003), a doctor from Ramathibbadee hospital, who found that Thai teenagers are tending to have their first sexual relationship at a much younger age (16) compared to their parents (21) (Ruangkanjanaset, 2003).

This shift in sexual behaviour has produced rising rates of school girl pregnancies, HIV, and leaving school early together with an increasing number of abandoned infants.

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According to Napa Setthakorn, the Director of Protection of Trafficking Women and Children Institute, in 2005, 20-25 infants were abandoned in public places every month (Setthakorn, 2005). In the more serious cases, infants were killed or the mother committed suicide due to the fear and stress of confronting social censure (Limsuwan, 2005).

In academic and public discussion of this shift in sexual mores, the media, in particular television films and VCD are frequently nominated as the primary cause of the mounting costs of increased 'permissiveness'(Suandusit Poll, 2002; and Suandusit Poll, 2003). This view is shared by a substantial number of young people with an ABAC poll in 2005 finding that 42.2 percent of teenagers in Bangkok believed that the mass media should take more responsibility for the inappropriate youthful sexual behaviour of teenagers and 37.8 expressly pointing to the particular responsibility of actors and actresses (ABAC Poll Research Office, 2005).

These concerns were widely shared by the villagers of Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak ked, with the respondents to the questionnaire survey nominating unruly teenage behaviour, particularly violence, drug dependency and sexual behaviour, as one of the three most serious problems facing the community. This concern was confirmed by participant observation work, which found that teenage pregnancy and unmarried teenage mothers were a major concern of most older people in the community (Sawong Sangroj and Niran Promchan, interviewed 2005).

Against this background of general anxiety about the social costs of sexual 'liberation' and concern about the role of the media, and celebrities, in exacerbating the problem, it is not surprising that Kathleeya's announcement of her own pregnancy should provoke widespread commentary and condemnation.

A Ramkamhang's survey of Internet users' opinions found that 81.1 percent of respondents denounced Kathleeya's conduct and 38.6 percent believed that she had deliberately lied about her condition when asked about it earlier in her pregnancy. This group also expressed extreme disappointment with her behaviour and 19.9 percent believed that she would be a bad example for the youth (*Kaosod* 6 September 2005; and *Manager Online* 6

September 2005). The strength of public anger, particularly on the internet, was in part a function of the fact that she had fallen from grace from such an elevated height.

Before the announcement of her pregnancy, she had been a hugely popular actress working under contract with channel 3 and the Polyplus company, which had a close connection with *Thai Rath*, the highest circulation newspaper of Thailand. She had been named as 'a princess of Thai entertainment', acclaimed as a model of Thai Womanhood, and appointed as the UNICEF Ambassador for Youth in 2000.

However, on 2nd September 2005, Kathleeya finally admitted that she was five months pregnant after previously denying it several times. In her press conference, she turned up with her boy friend, his father, her mother and brother. That was the first time that the public had seen her boy friend. She said that she only 'just had realised' that she was pregnant the day before and that she was very glad to have a baby.

In addition to breaking faith with her public by compromising her position as a model of Thai womanhood she was in disgrace for repeatedly lying about her condition. Before the announcement on the 2nd September 2005, the media, especially some entertainment newspapers, had suspected that she was pregnant but she had fiercely denied this claiming she had gained weight because of taking 'Benlo', a brand of vitamin. One month after her announcement, she delivered a son in the US, confirming rumours that she was seven or eight months pregnant when she released the news of her pregnancy to the public, rather than the five months she had claimed.

The case of Kathleeya illustrates the tensions in a Thai society in transition where traditional ideals of sexual abstinence before marriage still command substantial support but where increasing numbers of young people see sexual pleasure as an individual right and where celebrities dramatise the possibilities presented by life styles rooted in consumerism and cosmopolitanism but are still expected to be models of national norms and culture.

9.5.2 *Channel 7 News: Undermining the Superstar's Identity*

As we noted earlier, Channel 7, with its links to the army places a strong emphasis on the maintenance of social order and the defence of traditional values. Despite its newsworthiness, the item on the press conference in the evening news was low down the running order, in tenth place, and lasted only three minutes. This positioning gave a clear signal that the channel's priorities lay elsewhere, a message reinforced by running a report on violence in the south of the country as the lead story.

The structure of the item, choice of information and the language used combined to displace Kathleeya from her former position as a model of Thai womanhood and an ambassador for the country.

1) The headline:

> **The male reader:** "Let's follow the hot news today. Mam-Kathleeya Mcintosh brought her boyfriend to the press conference and admitted she has been pregnant for 5 months. The wedding will be held as soon as possible".

2) Lead sequence:

> **The male reader:** "Both Kathleeya's family and her boyfriend's are very pleased and happy that she is pregnant. She did not disclose this news before because she had not realised that she was pregnant. Her boyfriend said he has been proposing to Kathleeya for a long time and will get married soon. He will take excellent care of Kathleeya".

3) Main event 1

> **Kathleeya:** "For several months past, some news was not true and some might be true about me. Moreover, one wrote this and that. I just felt I gained weight. I want to say I don't have any secret but I really didn't know (I am pregnant). I didn't think I had something wrong but thought...it's only I was fatter".

> **Her boy friend:** "I have wanted to get married for a long time but Mam avoided it. Finally, I am very happy today because I love Mam very much and promise to everyone that I will take care of her well".

4) Background

> **The male reader:** "Before this, the media wondered about her figure because she looked fatter. However, she refused to say that she was pregnant. She gained weight because she took the vitamin".

5) Main event2

> **The male reader:** "UNICEF will reconsider the appointment of Kathleeya as the National Ambassador for Youth".

The lead sequence summarises the three main rationalisations put forward at the press conference (a) that she had only just discovered that she was pregnant (b) that her family were pleased by the news, and (c) that she had accepted her boyfriend's proposal of marriage. This is immediately followed by quotations from Kathleeya and her boyfriend confirming their positions. However, this seemingly disinterested relay of their statements, is topped and tailed by segments that undermine her credibility and cast doubts on her future role.

The use of the word 'admitted' in the news' readers introductory statement to camera carries a clear implication that she had been lying up that point and that despite her vocal denials, she had know that she was pregnant for some time. This calls her personal integrity into question. Her position is then further undermined in the news reader's final remark at the end of the item, that UNICEF are 'reconsidering' her role as the National Ambassador to Youth. Added to which, by selecting the portion of her statement that emphasises her concern with gaining weight, and her boyfriend's happiness at hearing that she is pregnant, the item hints that she is now too westernised, too much like a western female celebrity, to represent the 'true spirit' if Thai womanhood.

Hence, without openly condemning her behaviour or explicitly reasserting the traditional Thai belief in virginity before marriage, the channel performs a symbolic exorcism, expelling Kathleeya from the ranks of the worthy to be admired. She is presented as having simultaneously betrayed the trust of her fans by lying to them and betrayed the trust of the country by failing to set the moral example expected of a female National Ambassador.

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9.5.3 Channel 3 Evening News: Implicit Statements of Condemnations

The story presented particular dilemmas for Channel 3. On the one hand, the revelation of a major celebrity's premarital pregnancy fitted snugly with the channel's commercial populism which aimed to maximise its audience, especially among young people, by foregrounding cosmopolitan consumption and celebrity life styles (as in the final segment of At Ten). On the other hand, Kathleeya was an employee of the station and one of its premiere 'brands'. This tension was addressed in the evening bulletin coverage of the press conference by running the item as the lead story but by distancing the station from its erstwhile star.

The second part of the bulletin ran the video clip of her announcement for ten minutes detailing the rhetorical strategies she employed to repair and maintain her image as a model Thai woman and entertainment 'princess'. In a show of family solidarity she was accompanied by her brother, Willy, her mother, her boyfriend and her boyfriend's father. Her self presentation was based on two key propositions. That she had only just discovered that she was pregnant having previously though that she was simply putting on weight (I just realised yesterday that I'm pregnant after seeing the doctor) and that accusations that she had lied to the public were therefore unfounded.

That both families were delighted by the news and that she publicly committed herself to accepting her boyfriend's proposal of marriage and to becoming a dutiful wife and a good mother in conformity with accepted social expectations.

The family's delight at the announcement of the pregnancy is confirmed in the newscast by her brother.

> **Willy:** My family has had good news and I am very happy now.
>
> **Kathleeya** (happy and smiling face): I didn't do anything wrong...haven't been offensive to anyone. Today I have good news to tell and I believe that everyone will be pleased with me. It was yesterday that I went with Willy to check my health. After that, I got good news. I was pregnant. (she laughed and turned to Willy). This person is very pleased.

Willy: I am quite excited, transformed from an actor to an uncle without realising.

Kathleeya: I believe that everyone is pleased with me. I'm pleased with this because I love children and want to have a baby like other women. For several months past, some news was not true and some may have been true about me. Moreover, one wrote this and that. I just felt I gained weight. I want to say I didn't have any secret but I really didn't know. I didn't think I had anything wrong but I thought...it's only I was fatter (Willy and Kathleeya McIntosh, 2005).

Her statement; 'I love children and want to have a baby like other women' is carefully crafted to return her to the ranks of good mothers and to replace an image of transgression with one of conformity. This adherence to accepted norms is reinforced at the end of the announcement when she cheerfully accepts her boyfriend's marriage proposal, insisting that her commitment is now a matter of public record ('everyone is recording the tape. It is evidence').

Her boyfriend: I love Mam [Kathleeya's nickname] and wanted to get married to her a long time ago but she tried to avoid it. Today, I'm very happy.

Kathleeya (is laughing cheerfully): This was a commitment. Everyone is recording the tape. It is evidence.

Willy: The wedding will be held very soon?

Her boyfriend: When we are ready, we will find time to have a wedding. It should be as soon as possible. I have been waiting for a long time. The time is coming (Songkran Krajangnet, Kathleeya and Willy Mcintosh, 2005).

Despite the lengthy coverage given to her efforts at image repair, the bulletin's earlier strategies for framing this self presentation successfully distance her from the station by ventriloquising popular doubt and anger. By using the words 'admits' and 'claims the introduction to the story at the top of the bulletin immediately casts doubt on her denial that she had only just discovered her pregnancy'. An admission is usually secured after hostile questioning based on the suspicion that the subject is not being entirely truthful. A claim is a statement that remains unverified in the absence of reliable corroborating evidence.

The entertainment world is shocked. Mam-Kathaleeya McIntosh, a famous presenter and celebrity admits that she is five months pregnant. She claims that

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she just knew after seeing the doctor. The wedding reception will be held soon (Channel 3 Evening News, 2 September 2005) .

The lead paragraph then moves from the protagonists to the public, characterising the story as 'today's talk of the town, no story is so hot and vehement as Mam-kathleeya's'. The newsreader then goes on to detail the scale of the public response to her press conference.

> The male reader: "you [the audience] just heard that Mam is 4-5 months pregnant and she has just only realised that. This has led to her fan clubs accessing many websites to express so many of their opinions [*Kwarm kid hen*-in Thai] that the websites have collapsed".

> The female reader: "before this, in many websites, there have been so many critical comment [*Vijarn*-in Thai] on this issue. When she announced [her pregnancy] today, it made us realise what a huge number of fans she has, spread all around the country. Such a large number of people have expressed their opinions that the websites have collapsed" (Channel 3 Evening News, 2 September 2005) .

Although this extract employs terms that are relatively neutral in the Thai language, 'opinion' (*Kwarm kid hen*) and 'criticism' (*Vijarn*), viewers familiar with the avalanche of internet postings, which would include the majority of youthful viewers, would know from first hand experience that the majority of opinion had been negative.

The sense of Kathleeya can no longer be trusted is then further reinforced by the female newsreader's relay of a reporter's description of the press conference as a 'talk show'.

> Today's press conference, our reporter said it was like seeing a talk show. It was like Willy [Kathleeya's brother] was an interviewer and everyone [Kathleeya, her boyfriend, Kathleeya's mother and her boyfriend's father] are the guests of the programme. The atmosphere was not serious (Channel 3 Evening News, 2 September 2005) .

Talk shows are carefully stage managed performances, giving celebrities a platform for selling both themselves and their latest productions. The clear implication is that far from offering her public a candid and spontaneous account of her situation, Kathleeya was drawing on her expertise as a celebrated soap opera star to stage a dramatic bid for sympathy, possibly based on a fictional scenario. That she was not sincere, that she was acting. That she was in role rather than being simply herself.

9.5.4 *Morning News Talks by Sorayuth, Channel 3*

As we noted in our analysis of the coverage of the water shortage, the Channel 3 Morning News Talks presented by Sorayuth Sutatsanajinda and his female co-host, Ornpreeya, provides a more flexible space for the articulation of popular concerns than the news bulletins. On the 5th September 2005, the Kathleeyna scandal was the first item and lasted for 20 minutes.

Extract 9.6 Sorayuth Morning News Talk 5th September 2005

Sound	Images
Shot 1: Sorayuth: The question today is whether you think the media should stop reporting on Mam's (Kathleeya's nickname) news.	**CU:** Sorayuth
Ornpreeya: let's look at the newspaper headlines. *Daily News* has P'Bird (a Thai superstar singer) photo. While he was performing his 'Volume One concert', he teased [Kathleeya].	**CU:** *Daily News* front page
Sorayuth: P'Bird used to be invited onto '*Samakom chomdao*' programme and recommended a health and fitness diet for Mam. Then they ran around the studio together. I also thought the other day that.. hoo...P'Bird also got it (got deceived by Mam).	
Ornpreeya: Yes, he teased.	
Shot2: Ornpreeya: While performing his concert, Bird-Thongchai teased Kathleeya that [I] am really single, not 'Benlo' (the name of vitamin). This provoked screaming from the audience. At the same time, there was a media report saying that Yelly travelled with Mam. While P'Bird was performing, I was at the back stage but someone told me about that...	**CU:** Headline of *Daily News*, "Mam flew to the US. Bird teased [he's] really single, not 'Benlo'".

Shot 3: while P'Bird was performing, before singing a song 'a person without a partner', he said that 'but Bird myself, I'm really single, not 'Benlo'. Then the audience screamed. Also at the end of the concert, [he] said 'don't eat Benlo'. **Sorayuth:** That's it. [He] didn't go further...brother (Bird is like a brother of Mam).	**LS:** Bird'concert cut **CU:** The priminister Thaksin Shinnawatre and Paiboon Dumrongchaitham were watching Bird's concert.
Shot 4: Ornpreeya: Yes, it's only a joke. **Sorayuth:** Then [Bird and Mam] have a close relationship. [He] may not express more than that.	**MS:** Sorayuth and Ornpreeya
Shot 5: Ornpreeya: *Thai Rath* stated that 'Mam-Yelly quietly flew to Detroit' to stay with an auntie, an obstetrician. Entertainment people cheered her up. And there was a picture of khun Mam and Khun Yelly flying together, accompanying. They may stay with the auntie who is an obstetrician.	**CU:** Headline of *Thai Rath* Pan **CU:** The photo from *Thai Rath* showing Kathleeya and Yelly at the airport. Kathleeya (Mam) is wearing a maternity black dress.
Shot 6: Ornpreeya: [Kathleeya] is preparing to have a baby there (in the US).	**MS:** Sorayuth and Ornpreeya
Shot 7: Ornpreeya: Here we are, Mam and Yelly were going to Los Angeles to prepare having a baby.	**CU:** Ornpreeya is raising *'Kao Sod'*, a newspaper and showing the banner headline: A pregnant [Kathleeya] took the Thai Airway (plane) at 7 am yesterday. 'DSI-lawyers' warned about the use of [rude] words appearing on the Internet. 'Lay' [a brand of chips] urgently discussed its advertisement contract with the Princess.

A careful reading of this transcript suggests a gendered division of labour in which Sorayuth articulates the position of the station and by extension, the entertainment community, and Orpreeya voices the concerns, and distrust, of viewers and fans.

Sorayuth not only expresses personal sympathy for Kathleeya and her partner, appealing to the audience to 'give them time to sort out their problems' (Extract 9.6 Shot 15) but argues strongly that celebrities also have the right to protection from abusive public comment and on the Internet (Extract 9.6 Shot 12) describing the outpouring of public hostility on

websites as 'violence' (Extract 9.6 Shot 14). At the same time, he is careful to stress that, in substance, what has appeared on the Web is no 'different from criticism in many corners' (Extract 9.6 Shot 14) and that 'fair criticism' is fine if expressed 'reasonably' since Kathleeya is a public figure who must expect public scrutiny (Extract 9.6 Shot 12). This opens the way for the main theme of the item, that it was not Kathleeya's sexuality that had attracted condemnation but the fact that she had lied to the public and had not apologised for doing so when given the opportunity

As Ompreeya noted 'Most [ordinary people] said they don't blame [her] for falling pregnant' but they got upset when she 'didn't tell the truth …In her press conference she should have apologised' (Extract 9.6 Shot 15). This pivotal theme of betrayal of trust is announced in the opening sequences of the item, where it is translated into vernacular speech by using her nickname 'Benlo'

Benlo is the brand of vitamin that Kathleeya claimed that she was taking and that she thought accounted for her unexpected weight gain earning her the popular nickname 'princess Benlo' with its strong connotations of lying and deceit. Shots 1-4 reinforce this popular ridicule with Ompreeya recounting the showbusiness anecdote of how one of Kathleeya's friends, the male singer Thongchai McIntai, nicknamed 'Bird', had taunted her during one of his concert performances by introducing a song entitled, 'Person without a Partner' by declaring 'I'm really single, not Benlo' and ending the set by advising the audience, 'don't eat Benlo' (Extract 9.6 Shot 3). This story suggests that her pregnancy was an open secret some time before she decided to hold her press conference and that repeated denials were all too easily seen as a calculated affront to her fans.

The follow up report on the programme broadcast the following day, 6th September 2005 (see Extract 9.7) began by noting that people she had met in Detroit, on her way to have her baby delivered in the US, had been welcoming and helpful. But the centrepiece was the report of a survey recording that 81 percent of the Internet users asked condemned Kathleeya's conduct and that 38.6 percent of these believed that she had lied. Despite Sorayath's relay of an undisclosed source's opinion that Katheleeya might have had unknown 'private reasons' for not disclosing her pregnancy earlier, the weight of the

coverage, in both programmes, supports the popular judgement relayed by Ornpreeya (in her role as voice of the people) that 'a decent actress [had] become a disgraceful person'.

Extract 9.7 Sorayuth Morning News Talk, 6th September 2005

Sound	Image
Shot 1 Sorayuth: Now we come to this issue. Khun Akarath, tell this story please.	**MS:** Sorayuth is passing a newspaper to Akarath.
Shot 2 Akarath: Thai people in foreign countries were pleased to welcome Mam...	**CU:** the second headline of *Thai Rath* and the picture of Kathleeya and a lady (Geena).
Shot 3 Sorayuth: ...by helping to take [Kathleeya] to check in to a domestic flight to Detroit. The female actress, Mam-Kathleeya showing her pregnancy flew to LA with her sister-in-law,Yelly. This was an exclusive photo from *Thai Rath*. **Ornpreeya:** *Thai Rath* said that when the people there saw [Kathleeya], they came to give her sympathy.	**CU:** the picture from *Thai Rath*-Kathleeya were standing in the airport and talking with few people
Shot 4 Ornpreeya: [Thai people in Detroit] offered their congratulations to Mam who is going to have a baby. The Detroit flight [that Mam needed to catch] had only 8 minutes [before departure]. Then a Thai person helped to tell [staff in the airport] that Mam was pregnant and had an appointment with the doctor. [We/They] must help each other.	**MS:** Ornpreeya and Akarath
Shot 5 Sorayuth: Well... it's different feeling with this one. Then, Khun Akarath...	**MS:** Sorayuth, Akarath and Ornpreeya pick up some newspaper to show to the camera.
Shot 6 Akarath: In a poll of drama fans- 81% were upset about Mam – that she concealed the truth. · **Sorayuth:** [*Thai Rath* and *Kao Sod*] presented different view points. **Ornpreeya:** We have have the Ramkhamhang Poll,- the topic was the lesson from kathleeya's pregnancy- the moral consciousness of people in Thai society. They did a survey of people in websites	**CU:** The headline of *Kao Sod* – in a poll of drama fans- 81% were upset that Mam – concealed the truth.

Shot 7 Ornpreeya: [the poll] stated that 81% blamed her for her behaviour. 38.6% were dissatisfied and thought [Kathleeya] didn't tell the truth. [These respondents] were greatly disappointed because in their image, a decent actress became a disgraceful person. 19.9% saw that [Kathleeya] was not a good example and were afraid that the youth would imitate her behaviour. The second group, 12.6% expressed sympathy for the actress. 8.7% cheered for her. 1.8% said that we should forgive her. 0.9% took Kathleeya's side. This is a very slight number. 0.6% answered that those criticising did not understand women's lives. **Sorayuth:** Someone holds the view that maybe she had a private reason which is why she was not able to tell anyone. We don't know her reasons. But a feminist academic, and a media lecturer as well has asked whether this has violated her private life.	CU: Kathleeya was talking in her press conference

To summarise, the different popular news programmes represented the issue of the scandal of Kathleeya in different ways. However, it was found that no news programme seriously and directly questioned or criticised the issue relating to violation of the Thai norm of decent women. Moreover, the announcement of pregnancy before marriage, which contradicts to the Thai norm, was positioned as the first priority topic of the news. In this respect, it was likely that Kathleeya's discourse of announcement was a reproduction of western values (acceptance of pregnancy before marriage) by the Thai superstar through the Thai media. Meanwhile, in her discourse, it appeared to attempt to pursue the Thai norm as well, but in order to maintain her own identity.

However, the representation of maintaining the Thai norm was not so prominent as the representations of unacceptable lying. To illustrate these representations, each programme had their own implicit statements to scrutinise Kathleeya's discourse. To do this, channel 3 used the ironic metaphor, 'a talk show' and certain lexical choices while channel 7 used the other source, UNICEF. Although Sorayuth in the Morning News Talks showed his

sympathy with Kathleeya, his programme offered the new reference of 'Princess Benlo'. The frames in these media programme were constructed through the strategic discourse namely, metaphors, the new reference and lexical choices.

Chapter 10

Contesting Change: Activist Media in the Village

10.1 Activist Media in Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked

As mentioned earlier, during my fieldwork I chose to stay in the office of the Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO), the NGO responsible for developing and distributing the activist media in the village. This allowed me to observe the decision making and production processes at first-hand and to interview the key personnel.

Over the fieldwork period, the RCDO were responsible for three activist media initiatives: Radio FM 106, which both the activists and the locals described as 'community radio'
VCD
The newsletter, Power of Community.

When I arrived, radio FM106 had been in operation for about six months, the first VCD was in the production process, and the first issue of the newsletter, *Power of Community* was actively being planned. It was eventually launched in May 2005, with a second issue two months later and a third and final issue, in September. By end of 2005, radio FM 106 had also ceased broadcasting due, according to Suparat Kwanmuang, the head of RCDO, to a thunder storm damaging the broadcasting equipment (Suparat Kwanmuang, interviewed 2005).

Altogether then, the activist media distributed in Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked lasted for only a short time. The radio station operated for approximately one year and a half. Only two VCDs were produced and distributed, one concerning reviving traditional ways of life and the other traditional groups in the village of Chengnoen, each in about than 250 copies, and '*Power of Community*' managed only three issues.

This chapter will focus on the 'senders and texts' of activist media, focussing primarily on '*Power of Community*', analysing the ideologies and practices that underpinned its production and the way it constructed its counter globalisation position through the

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discourses and imagery displayed on the pages. Audience responses will be discussed in chapter 12.

10.1.1 Community Interventions and The Ideology of Localism

Although the activist media initiatives were designed and operated by the RCDO, they were supported financially by state agencies wanting to extend their implementation to the grassroots level through NGOs or local communication organisations. Table 10.1 shows these sources of support.

Table 10.1 State financial sponsors of activist media

Activist media	Sponsors
Community radio	The Thailand Social Investment Fund (SIF); Anti-Drug Office (under Prime Minister Office); and the National Health Security Office
VCD	*Community Organizations Development Institute* or CODI (under Ministry of social development and human security)
newsletter	CODI (under Ministry of social development and human security)

My fieldwork with activist personnel confirmed that between 2004 and 2205 the RCDO's work centred around 'the Revival of Local Ways of Life Project', and that (other NGOs in the East region) the organisation saw activist media as a major tool for disseminating concepts of community development (Suparat Kwanmuang, interviewed 2005).

This strategy was rooted in the head of RCDO, Suparat Kwanmuang's, direct experience. It derived from a significant lesson which he had learnt from his previous community work for several years. He criticised past NGO-development work and state-development policies as a top-down 'patronage' system and was convinced that people needed to be given the tools to decide for themselves what needed to be done and the opportunities to create their own ways of strengthening their communities, not in the way of demanding from NGOs or state. He had worked in community development for several years and found that it was difficult to work successfully with communities if the communities were not aware of their rights. 'The Revival Local Ways of Life' in his opinion did not involve

only traditional cultures or natural resources but also 'consciousness' (*Jitsumnuk*-in Thai language). Therefore, in his notion, activist media should be a tool to change villagers' consciousness in order to empower their own communities. Additionally, he saw activist media as a non-violent means to oppose industry and globalisation, a lesson he had learned from witnessing the violent initial protests against industrialisation (described in chapters 5 and 6) which had resulted in local people being killed.

For him, activist media were a critical and non-violent tool for promoting change by reconstructing popular consciousness, rather using state power or violence as in the past (Suparat Kwanmuang, interviewed 2005).

RCDO's local media initiatives and the more general community development programme of which they were a part, were underpinned by the ideology of localism advanced by its major funder, CODI (The Community Organisations Development Institute). Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked was one of seven villages targeted by the 'Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project' which had begun by looking for leaders in each community to co-operate with and by trying to disseminate the community culture concept .

In pursuit of these aims RCDO staff had visited villages and discussed with the leaders. One local leader from Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked was a fifty year-old lady, Niran Promchan who worked as a bus driver (*Song-taew*) in Rayong town centre. Although she was not an official head of village (*Phuyai ban*), she was accepted as a leader by a small group of indigenous people in Soi Suksun, an area of Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked and had taken advantage of several opportunities to gain training from state and professional organisations outside the village.

In informal interviews she expressed ideas that were fully in line with an ethos of localism and the conservation of traditional cultures. She stressed the close relationship between traditional village livelihoods and natural resources such as the mangrove forest and the sea shore, and the connection between *putsa* farms and local knowledge of farming, relationships that were confirmed symbolically in the Songkran festival (Thai New Year). She believed that rich natural resources contributed to the social well-being of society and

the adverse environmental impacts and cultural changes resulting from industrialisation had led to a deterioration in both her livelihood and quality of life. She approached the RCDO with an offer to launch a revival of 'hand-made mat weaving' project under the general umbrella of the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project arguing that mat weaving required 'local knowledge' to complete every stage of production, from knowing how to find sedge (*kok*-in Thai), how to die and dry it, design the texture, and how to use a wooden weaving tool. She believed that reviving these skills would help to teach the young generation to be proud of their community and, if suitably supported by the local authorities, generate income (Niran Promchan, interviewed 2005).

The head of RCDO, in contrast, viewed mat weaving primarily as a channel for teaching the value of conserving nature since the weaving process, could only begin if suitable raw materials could be found. However, both Niran and Suparat viewed 'traditional mat weaving' as 'social capital', that might help to strengthen the community and local identity (Suparat Kwanmuang, interviewed 2005).

10.1.2 Activist Media and Popular Inattention

While the first issue of *Power of Community* was circulating, the questionnaire survey of 298 villagers was carried out in June 2005 with two main purposes: to explore media consumption in the village; and to explore actions and attitudes toward globalisation. According to the survey findings, villagers engaged with activist media much less than with mainstream media.

Table 10.2 shows that although the number of '*Power of Community*' users was relatively high when compared to the other two activist media, only 6-16 percent had looked at it while the VCD only reached between 0-8 percent. Interestingly, the number of people who received the VCD was almost the same as the number who had received '*Power of Community*', but most VCDs owners never bothered to watch it.

Overall working age newcomers were the most likely to engage with activist media with 16 percent reading '*Power of Community*', 20 percent listening to community radio and 8 percent having the VCD. However, as Table 10.2 also shows while the radio service was

also popular among indigenous youth (with 20% listening) the newsletter commanded a respectable readership among both the older (16%) and younger (14%) indigenous groups.

Since *Power of Community* was the most widely consumed of the three activist media with a readership dipping below 10 % only among older newcomers, it was decided to take it as the primary focus of research. The next section, which examines its production and circulation is followed by a critical discourse analysis of the three issues, designed to uncover the ways it represented globalisation.

Table 10.2 The consumption of the activist media

Activist media	Group YI	Group YN	Group WI	Group WN	Group OI	Group ON
Power of Community	14%	14%	12.5%	16%	16%	6%
Community radio	20%	8%	8.3%	20%	6%	2%
Community VCDs	2%	2%	0%	8%	4%	2%
Received VCDs but never watch	8%	4%	12.5%	6%	8%	8%

N= 298

10.1.3 Producing and Distributing Power of Community

The first issue of *Power of Community* was published in May 2005 with approximately 2,000 copies distributed over the seven villages of Tumbon Chengnoen, and in schools, state agencies, local administration offices and some NGO organisations in other regions. Approximately 300 copies were spread around Ban Noen Putsa-Pluak Ked. The first issue comprised eight A4 pages, with only the front page printed in colour. A male RCDO staff member, who was also the main radio broadcaster took responsibility for gathering stories from the villages in Cheongnoen. He also undertook computer-based artwork for the newsletter. He stated that this was difficult for people who never created artwork using computer software before and that he had to learn by himself. The real problems occurred at the distribution stage however since the RCDO did not have a clear strategy for reaching its intended audiences. Finally, copies were distributed by two staff driving to the villages

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and leaving them in temples, schools, village shops, leaders' houses, Local Administration Offices, Health Centres, and hospitals.

The size of the second issue was increased to 12 pages and to 16 pages in the last issue. By then community members had begun to participate in production. There was more popular participation with villagers sending in their writings to be published in the newsletter (although still edited by the activists) while the front page was adjusted to present community news in a format similar to a popular newspapers. However, since local people had been largely excluded from involvement in the first and second issues these innovations were arguably a case of too little too late. Gathering stories in the later issues seemed to be changed, in particular in the last one.

10.2 Unpacking the Text: Localism Versus Globalisation

The presentational strategies adopted by the newsletter were similar to those deployed in the mainstream television news programmes (analysed in chapter 9), with some elements adapted to suit print media. The four key elements taken as the focus for analysis here are:

- Text includes headlines, sub-headlines, and written texts.
- Still images includes selection of images, size, placing and composition, and relations between image and text.
- Discourse strategies (see chapter 9)
- Discourse practices includes the contexts of the ownership of activist media, professional concepts and principles, and the process of production and distribution, discussed above.

To provide a general overview of what type of stories the newsletters presented, Table 10.3 shows all the headings and briefs for the stories in each issue.

Table 10.3 Contents of three issues of Power of Community

Issue	Names of columns	*Headlines* and contents
1 (May2005)	Ink drop	*Editorial by the head of RCDO
	Health lovers	* *"National Health Security Office":* promoting National Health Security Office work and how to use the health card.
	Power of Revival	*Encouragement from community leaders on the Revival Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project. *A community-stories poem from a local poet.
	Power of senior people	*"Honourable senior people..older age-higher values..high experience": activities of the senior people club in Rayong
	Power of media fanatics	* Introducing community radio
	Thoughts from workers	* A RCDO staff wrote about difficulties in community work in the Revival Community Ways of Tumbon Cheong noen Project.
2 (June 2005)	East men	*Pictures tell stories:* showing pictures of RCDO activities
	Ink drop	*Editorial by the head of RCDO
	Health lovers	*"National Health Security Office":* promoting National Health Security Office work and how to use the health card.
	Power of revival	*"Cheongneon joins forces to revive Thai (freedom) ways":* details of seven villages under the Revival Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project.
	Media fanatics	*"Young Radio Broadcasters":* the radio broadcaster set a training for youth in FM 106 community radio

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Issues	Names of columns	*Headlines* and contents
2 (June 2005)	East men	*"CODI's Active Practices": promoting CODI work and introducing East regional managements.
	Thought from workers	*"Communities, Dreams and Development": dreams of an ideal community, for example tradition of mutual assistance, honest politicians dedicating for public interest, and participation of villagers.
	Ink drop	*Editorial by the head of RCDO
3 (August-September 2005	East men	*Thai Musical Instruments: a male youth in Ban Neon Putsa wrote about his experience on Thai musical instruments practice and did not deny western cultures. *Knowledge From Rubbish: a leader of the sixth village wrote about recycling rubbish in his community. *knowledge on Thai herbs *The Tumbon Cheongneon welfare fund: its principles, benefits and who are the committee. *Klong yao vs. Nasef (Thai and Muslim traditional performances) * "Kon Punk" mangrove forest, our last heritage: Niran, a Ban Noen Putsa leader wrote to demand the community to conserve Kon Punk or mangrove forest and promoted the mat weaving project. *A Diary of Power of Community: activities of the villagers i.e. public hearing about waste water; training young people to carve Nang Yai (leather used in Thai performance). *The 30 baht Centre for People: Promoting National Health Security Office work and how to use the 30 baht health card. *Thoughts from workers: a staff wrote

		about communities work, tradition of mutual assistance and development. * "Preserve Thai traditional culture: Buddhist Lent candle festival and Klong yao folk": atmosphere, myth and custom in Buddhist Lent Candle Festival days. the sixth village.

From this map of contents, we can see that *Power of Community* combined coverage of the need to preserve traditional Thai ways of life and items on the activities sponsored by the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheong noen Project. These stories were always displayed on the front page and accounted for 3-11 pages of each issue. Additionally, promoting the work of the National Health Security Office and advice on how to use the 30 Baht Health Card occupied at least 1-2 pages of each issue. Promoting CODI's other work and its principles, such as activist radio's refusal to take advertising, also took up space ranging from a small column to a full page. The Editorial page written by the head of RCDO or 'Ink Drop' was presented in a full page of all issues.

In order to examine the frames through which Power of Community represented globalisation I have selected three key sections: (1) the front pages of all three issues; (2) the editorial; and (3) 'Power of Community...Power of Revival', an opening manifesto article of the Revival Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project published in the first issue.
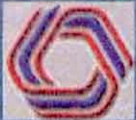
Figure 10.1 The front page: *Power of Community*, the first issue, May 2005

10.2.1 Critical Discourse Analysis of 'Power of Community'

The Front Page: The First Issue, May 2005

The choice of images suggests four resources that can be mobilised in the service of community development and empowerment; religious institutions and ideologies; traditional culture represented by a performance of *Nang Yai* (which recounts Thai myths by moving crafted leather figures; traditional ways of life symbolised a variety of aspects of cultural heritage in Cheong noen, and finally, ordinary people, an old man and an old woman symbolising the participation of the locals.

The position of these elements on the page however created the idea of the power of community in different ways. The pictures of key religious leaders, a Buddhist monk and a Muslim Imam, were displayed in the left hand top corner, one of the most attractive positions on the page, allowing them to be seen clearly when the newsletter was first picked up. In this representation religions are accorded two significant roles: being a fundamental institution base for Thai traditional ways of life, and more particularly for the practices of mutual assistance that both religions support and supporting an alternative concept of development by providing leadership and a focus for local mobilisation.

The defence of traditional ways of life is one of the key tenets of the concept of the community development. This message is reinforced by displaying images of a traditional cultural performance and a traditional craft practice on the front page as a fundamental element in recreating the power of community. The image of ordinary people, an old man and an old woman, was the biggest picture on the page. It highlighted the commitment to encouraging the participation of ordinary people which was a core principle of the Revival of Thai Ways of Life Project. In fact, encouraging participation in the project was the main purpose of the first newsletter. The arrangement of the pictures of the religious leaders and the ordinary people, traditional leaders and local residents strongly suggested this preferred reading, but to reinforce it, the headline on the front page states:

> Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI) co-operating with the
> people's sector and Local Administration of Tumbon Cheongnoen join forces to
> revive local ways of life (Power of Community, the 1st issue, 2005).

In addition, at the top of the page, a sub-headline also demanded people's participation. It stated:

> Revive ways of community to sustainability……custom, good things, Tumbon Choengnoen [in Thai language, the three words are in rhyme]/ power of the recovery (Power of Community, the 1st issue, 2005).

As this example makes clear, activist media had their own methods to attract the audience, which were rarely found in the mainstream media. Using a rhyme or a poem is an important element in popular written and spoken traditional communication in Thai society. In the sub-headline, the rhyme of custom, good things, Tumbon Choengnoen offer a good illustration of this technique in action.

The Front Page: The Second Issue, June 2005

In the second issue of *Power of Community*, encouraging the locals to participate in the project was still the main aim. On the front page, the main headline, 'Cheongnoen joins forces to revive Thai (freedom) ways of life', was displayed almost at the top of the page. Below it was a map showing 'some social and cultural places' in seven villages of Tumbon Cheongnoen, which is captioned as 'a map of social capital of Tumbon Cheongnoen'. At the bottom of the page, there are two pictures, the first is of a Muslim leader, giving a souvenir to a naval officer and the second shows a group comprised of two community leaders, the head of RCDO and a moderator in a TV programme.

The map of social capital operates as an iconic sign of the participation of the locals and the significance of traditional ways of living. Besides three main streets and some minor roads, Buddhist temples and an Islamic mosque in each village are shown as landmarks. The traditional activities or performances of each village are also highlighted. There are no signs of globalisation or industry. In reality, in Tumbon Cheongnoen, the most prominent landmark is the TPI factory in the fifth village, which is located on enormous land. Also we see rows of new metropolitan western-style houses, which have been popular since the arrival of the factory in 1981. Neither the factory or the modern houses appear on the map because they are not regarded as social capital essential to a sustainable society.

Figure 10.2 The front page *Power of Community*, the second issue, June 2005

Figure 10.3 The front page *Power of Community*, the third issue, August-September 2005

By the third issue, the layout of the Front page has changed. In the two previous issues, images take a large amount of the space on the page accompanying a banner headline. The front page of the third issue is displayed in a form familiar to the daily press with six items of news and three small pictures scattered across the page. Headlines and leads of each item are displayed in order of priority as follows:

Headline of the first item:

> "Surprised! teenager loves the nation."

Lead:

> "Team, a male high school student urges Thai youth to pay attention on Thai traditional music."

Headline of second item:

> "So pleased, the religious custom.
>
> The preservation of Buddhist Lent"

Lead:

> "Joyful atmosphere of the Buddhist Lent Carnival of Ban Shark Yai, Moo six offers to the Ban Don temple, Tumbon Cheong Noen, Rayong, in the way of preserving the local tradition."

Headline of the third item:

> "A story of rubbish,
>
> Which is not rubbish!!!"

Lead:

> "Who says rubbish is worthless. When things are thought to be worthless, they always have their own value."

Headline of fourth item:

> "The mangrove forest-Kon Pungk, is
>
> the last heritage left
>
> [we] must help to preserve it. If we ignore,
>
> Absolutely (it will) be all lost!!"

Lead:

> "Aunty Niran Promjan, a leader of the committee warns everyone, including
> users of the mangrove forest or Kon Pungk, which is an important source of
> Moo five and other communities."

Headline of the fifth item:

> "A meeting of the welfare fund"

Lead:

> "The committee of the welfare fund have a meeting to amend the regulations of
> the fund. It will be effective from the 1st May 2005 onwards."

Headline of the sixth item:

> "Thai Buddhist-Thai Muslim"

Lead:

> "The two cultures join in peaceful music of society."

Thematically, three items (the first, the second and the sixth) are related to the conservation of cultural heritage, two items (the third and the fourth) reflect attempts to conserve the environment in the community, while the fifth item is a report about the welfare fund, one of the activities in the Revival of Community Ways Project. All evoke various aspects of traditional ways of life.

The first item carries the banner headline: '*Surprised! teenager loves the nation*', accompanying a portrait shot of the boy who plays traditional Thai music instruments. The lexical choice in the headline, '*teenager loves the nation*' attracts the reader to be curious

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about the boy's action and his affection for the nation, which might be seen as an exceptional case in the present day. The phrase 'the nation' in the headline was connected to 'the Thai traditional music' in the lead. The details in the lead, thus suggest that practising traditional Thai music symbolically contributes to the nation.

Team, a high school student, was the only source for the item and the image of a male teenager accompanying Thai traditional music is in contrast to the general public perception of teenagers embracing modern western life styles influenced by globalisation and implies that the new generation is still a potential source of preservation and continuity of traditional practices. However, the article on an inside page written by Team in the form of a personal comment, makes clear that he does not reject western cultures. As he states in two places:

> I myself do not completely deny western music but I do not quit Thai traditional music neither. What about you, guys? Do you still have Thai traditional music in your heart? (Team, 2005)

> We do not reject western cultures. At the same time, we do not abandon Thai culture. What is the Thai identity? Everybody can answer it but why don't we help to maintain it? (Team, 2005)

These discourses clearly suggest, particularly to young people, that it is possible to enjoy western cultures without abandoning Thai traditional cultures.

At the same time, the other two items presenting cultural activities emphasise only the revival of traditional performances in the community, both Islam and Buddhism. The employment of the lexicon in the headline, 'preservation, Thai Buddhist-Thai Muslim' emphatically promotes Thai religion-based traditional ways. Some adjectives, 'so pleased, joyful atmosphere and peaceful music', including two pictures of joyful traditional performances elaborate a sense of happiness.

This strategy of championing traditional practices can be seen as an implicit discourse of anti-globalisation. As the third and fourth items demonstrate it is often combined with a defence of environmental integrity. Both items refer to the negative consequences of the expansion of urban areas and the arrival of industry. There is no explicit denunciation statement of industry or the giant factory, TPI. But some of the sources used are ex-leaders

of the community who protested against TPI ten years ago. They make a request for participation in the conservation of environment without blaming anyone. Interestingly, as we shall see, this item attracted particular attention and comment from the indigenous villagers who participated in the focus groups in September 2005.

To explain why the adverse impact of industrialisation remained implicit, we need to take account of the history of the community, particularly the pitched battles between the locals and the TPI factory in 1996-1997. At that time, the impact of pollution from the factory on the mangrove forest was becoming obvious. The locals and a group of ex-leaders protested and contacted national media to report the impact. However, this initiative was substantially weakened after the factory had successfully established positive relationships with other local leaders (Pannina Laosiripot and Prayote Pindech, September 2005).

Following this reversal, the locals and their ex-leaders were reluctant to fight again, particularly when they were no longer the local representatives in the Chengnoen Local Administration (Pramuk, interviewed 2005). Faced with this loss of power and authority, some joined the Revival of Community Ways Project and chose to express their opinions through activist media, *Power of Community* and community radio. Acutely conscious of the lessons of the past, they have tried to avoid any conflict and violence. Moreover, with members of families of the ex-leaders now working in the factory, confrontation would have direct consequences for household economies. Consequently, the force previously exercised through political authorities has been translated into ideological power pursued through activist media.

But why did this item attract attention in the focus groups? The lexical choice of dialect: '*Kon Pungk*' (mangrove forest) in the headline helps makes the news more attractive to the locals. Furthermore, the words, 'the last heritage [we] must help to preserve' suggests that their shared cultural heritage is now in danger and that everyone must help to save it. In addition, this request has an intertextual relation with other perceptions associated with pollution in the community. The locals, especially the indigenous villagers, have experienced pollution since the factory arrived. When they read the news, they immediately refer back to their lived experience prompting considerable comment about the issue.

10.2.2 Editorial Page

The First Issue

On page 2, the editorial column 'Ink Drops' by the editor, spotlights the failure of mainstream development and its dependence on western patterns (See original Thai version of editorial pages in Appendix D). He also advocates the 'primary social capital' concept. The editor does not clarify what exactly he means by this but indicates that it would be a tool to create a strong community and encourage people to participate in local development. He states in the third paragraph,

> Using the primary social capital as a tool to develop a community leads to encourage the locals to have more participation. This is because primary communities loved their own social capital. The state and the community organisations (the people's sector) have a role to encourage and support budget as well as bring the concept of local participating development to direct a plan of their own local development. These, thus result in creating cultures on our physical actions, mentality, intelligence and spirit, which are power of collective benefits of society (Kwanmung, May 2005a).

The failure of mainstream development, is emphasised by highlighting the corruption it supports:

> The local governmental system blocks freedom of information reception.
>
> There are so many cases of corruption in local areas.
>
> Local politicians are getting richer but the villagers never use their own rights, only nagging. If so, how will our society be better?
>
> Some local areas have a local budget of millions, but we let few people take advantages from this amount of budget (Kwanmung, May 2005a).

At the end of the article, he uses a set of adjectives, 'silly, poor and sick' to characterise the negative consequences of mainstream development in Thailand. This set used to be popular among social critics in 1970-1980 when communism had influence among some social groups of Thailand and would be familiar to at least some of his older readers.

The Second Issue

In the editorial section, on page 3, the negative consequences of mainstream development are still focused upon but the main social actors change from local administrations to be 'trans-capitalism, western-capitalism and Thai capitalists who betray the nation and sell natural resources'. All descriptors characterise globalisation negatively. As he describes in the third paragraph:

> At present, we see wrong social values such as materialism and unawareness of identity. We think that western-capitalism is a real way of survival for Thai people. Everyone thus competes to attain more power and money (Kwanmung, 2005b).

In subsequent paragraphs, 'power of community' is emphasised as a way of surviving and countering the materialist society as he describes:

> The power of community is a way of survival which helps everyone with many problems. Unity and collaboration to protect community rights will help us to survive in any crisis (Kwanmung, 2005b).

'Community rights' is repeated as a key tenet of the power of community concept. The principle of community rights is stated in Article 46 of the Thai Constitutional law (1997) and has become the cornerstone of the philosophy of the Community Organizations Development Institute (CODI), the main funder of the newsletter. According to Article 46, primary communities have rights to preserve or revive local customs, folk wisdom, arts or cultures and participate in maintaining and a balanced use of natural resources.

In addition, the article links nationalism and national identities with community rights and power of community. The national anthem is presented in the next paragraph as a core expression of nationhood where it is argued that the unity of people will contribute to the nation. We can dedicate our life and blood to maintain sovereignty. As the editor states:

> We will see that the national anthem is meaningful. Our Thai ancestors built the nation for liberty and freedom but at present, someone is destroying and robbing the nation. The natural resources are exploited and invaded (Kwanmung, 2005b).

In the last paragraph of the article, he states:

> As for contemporary social problems, state organisations are inefficient because of the bad system of local decentralisation. State employees lose their own moral support and aspiration. People do not have supporters because local administrations do not pay attention to them, but only build roads to exchange with the percentage gain (commission of a project-author's comment) of the cost. They provide advantages for trans-capitalism and Thai capitalists who betray the nation and sell natural resources. Also they build a security protection system for a few capitalists but destroy the process of people's participation. If …[we] do not get up to protect [our country], what do we have left for the next generation? Stand up to call for the community rights which are stated in the Constitution law to strengthen Thai, freedom (in Thai language, another meaning of Thai is freedom-author's comment) and contribute to the next Thai generations(Kwanmung , 2005b).

In this discourse, constructing the national identity evoked in the national anthem necessitates participation in the revival of traditional ways of life. In this respect, he uses 'nationalism' to counter globalisation by linking the negative meanings of 'trans-capitalism, western-capitalism and Thai capitalists' with the adverse consequences of development in Thailand. The emphasis on 'Thai identities', in particular in the anthem, is a crucial strategy in this excerpt. In the anthem, the values of unity, peace, courage, independence and sacrifice are highlighted to encourage readers to stand up and protect their communities.

Meanwhile, at the national level, he directly criticises 'the state' as ineffective. As for the local level, he denounces 'local government organisations and local groups who asks for a commission from the construction of road facilities. 'Trans-capitalism, western-capitalism and Thai capitalists' appear as the business cronies of 'local government organisations and local reinforcing of the values of materialism and eroding the 'true' spirit of Thai society and rural communities. In contrast, CODI and RCDO are mentioned in paragraphs five and six, as social actors who encourage and support people to participate in developing communities. This contestation between the frames of globalisation and a localism frame might be seen as reflecting a clash within Thai society expressed through the overlapping binary oppositions shown in Table 10.4.

Table 10.4 Contestation of a globalisation frame and a localism frame

Globalisation	Localism
Trans-capitalism, Western-capitalism Thai capitalists	Nationalism Thai-identities Localism
Thai state Local governments (local administrations)	Community rights Power of community CODI and RCDO
Materialism, power and money Destroy the country Rob natural resources	Thai (freedom) independence Strength of community

Although mobilising these binary oppositions could be an effective strategy to illustrate the negative impact of globalisation and capitalism, and encourage and persuade people to join the community development project, the editor refers to 'local government organisations' in an implicit way. Their is no indication of who exactly the 'locals' are. It seems to be a 'metonymy' which connotes the local Administration Offices, made up of representatives from local elections who have a substantial amount of budget to support each community. This was certainly how it was interpreted in local government circles. On the first day the newsletter was circulated, it immediately upset the head of the Local Administration of Cheongnoen who demanded to talk with the head of RCDO. Although there was no serious conflict between the NGO and the local government in this case, it reflects the power and checks in Thai society.

The Third Issue

In the first two issues, the editorial comments focus on the negative consequences of globalisation and are against local administrations while encouraging the locals to participate in the Revival of Community Ways Project. In the third issue, the editor changes his style.

"Today, if any locals spend more budget on developing human resources, community potential groups and organisation, there will be more improvement in the potential of the locals. Learning will take place in communities. It is more likely that the local problems such as health, livelihood, economy and security will be solved.

In any local administrations and municipalities allocating budget, for constructing (facilities) which have an old pattern of implementations, people should consider voting for better local representatives in the next election.

Today, if there is no more human development in communities so that they have potential to learn and realise people's right according to the Constitution, local people will seem not to know anything. Well-informed people who are those who do not want other people to know more than them.

The local budget is a considerable amount of money. Who is the manager?

Today, after four years working in communities. [they] declared themselves to be honest. [they] may get a low salary but four years have passed, and still more to come...

People have known who is good and who is bad; and know who contributes to the country.

Today, the Cheong noen Local Administration is working actively in developing personnel, groups and organisations in communities to respond to government policy and create an advantage for the locals. People in all sectors are able to check them. In the meeting on local budgets, [I] have heard that there will be an agenda of allocating more budget for people as well. Is it true or not? Local people can inquire of the head of the Cheong noen Local Administration. He is open-minded and friendly with everyone" (Editorial section, 2005).

This article does not contain negative lexical choices or binary oppositions as in the first two issues. It does not mention the negative impacts of globalisation and capitalism, or refer to dishonest and unreliable local governments. The activities and principles of the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project are also ignored. Rather, it focuses on people's rights in checking and participating in meetings concerning the local administration budget.

At first sight, it seems that this article is relatively polite about 'the work of local government. Nevertheless, it employs discourse strategies that place pressure on the head of the Cheongnoen Local Administration, and encourages people to participate in budget allocation for example:

> The local budget is a considerable amount of money. Who is the manager?...
>
> ...People in all sectors are able to check them. In the incoming meeting on local budgets, (I) have heard that there will be an agenda of allocating more budget for people as well. Is it true or not? Local people can inquire with of the head of the Cheongnoen Local Administration (Editorial section, 2005).

This excerpt develops two main perceptions. First, that development should prioritise the improvement of human potential, not the construction of material facilities. And second, as the construction of facilities tends to encourage corruption and is not 'real' development, people should participate in the budget allocation process.

It encourages people to directly speak to the head of the Cheongnoen Local Administration to check how the local administration allocate budgets. Also, it claims that the head is 'open-minded and friendly'. This praise seems to be double-edged in the context of the complete text and can be read as a satirical way of being critical while avoiding direct confrontation. Meanwhile, by disclosing information about the budget meeting which the readers may not know and raising the question of whether it is merely a 'pseudo-event' it encourages people to directly check on the head of the Cheongnoen Local Administration.

10.2.3 'Power of Community...Power of Revival', the Opening Article in The First Issue.

The article shown in Extract 10.2 was published in the first issue of the news letter in May 2005 and was used with the focus groups in September 2005 (See original Thai version in Appendix D). It was selected because it is an opening statement that announces the aims of the Revival of Community Ways Project and outlines the newsletter's views on globalisation

In the first paragraph, beautiful and graceful Thai traditional ways of life are mentioned before moving to a comparison with capitalism. This binary opposition of globalisation

and localisation provides a master interpretive framework. The traditional Thai values are underlined: firstly, 'a rich artistic and cultural heritage', secondly, 'fruitful and lush landscapes'; and lastly, 'brotherhood and harmonious relationship'. These three values signify various aspects of resources held in common, namely traditional and community heritage; natural resources; religious belief and rural moral values. These values are closely associated with local identities which the writer values as 'virtues' in the last sentence of the first paragraph. Additionally, these values are considered as the building blocks of 'power of community' when they connect with the head line, 'Power of Community...Power of Revival'. It is apparent that to survive negative consequences of globalisation, people need to recreate a type of power rooted in local values and identities.

The sentence, 'however, at present, the life styles have changed due to several factors' suggests that this potential has been undermined by the advent of capitalist modernity. Here the word 'change' does not mean an acceptable change but connotes the deterioration of traditional ways of life. Importantly, the word 'capitalism' is the subject of the verb 'interfere' which links to the noun 'virtue' in the next sentence. Capitalism here has a major role as a key sign of the negative aspects of globalisation which are opposed to 'the virtue' embedded in traditional values and practices inherited from the past.

In the second paragraph, a binary opposition between two development concepts is introduced. The first emphasises the negative aspect of globalisation while the second introduces the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project. The word 'globalisation' is used to link to capitalism and refers to 'a process of unconsciously transferring to be modernisation, spendthrift and an unbalanced life'. In contrast, 'local wisdom and local knowledge' are presented as the cornerstones of a localisation model of development. In other words, the article represents localisation as the principle alternative to globalisation and the main bulwark against its negative effects. As Suwat Kongpan, the Public Relation Manager of CODI, said,

> ....while a stream of capitalism has flowed forcefully, integration of a stream of
> the development of local communities; use of local wisdom and local
> knowledge in developing communities, although it is unable to stop the stream
> of capitalism, is capable to weaken it (ANON, 2005).

Power of Community...Power of Recovery

(Original Thai version was shown in Appendix D)

In Tumbon Cheongnoen, there used to be a variety of ways of life. There was a rich artistic and a cultural heritage;   fruitful and lush landscapes; as well as a brotherhood and harmonious relationships. These used to be common values in the community. However, at present, life styles have changed due to several factors. The most obvious factor is that it is unavoidable to confront capitalism which has come to have a role and interference in the people's ways of life. It has gradually worsened the virtue of the ways of life.

The Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project was established to solve poverty and to revive local communities. It is an activity which reflects people in various communities in Thai society. Changing to be a society of globalisation and capitalism has led people unconsciously to a process of modernisation. Therefore, the people are spendthrift. The (globalisation) process leads to an unbalanced life. In the meantime, although, the government has tried to create an economic balance, they have forgotten the existence of an awareness in living within a sufficiency economy. Arjarn (teacher) Suwat Kongpan, the Public Relation Manager of the Community Organizations Development Institute (Public Organization) or CODI has talked about a stream of globalisation at the moment. He said that, whilst the stream of capitalism has flowed forcefully, the integration of a stream of the development of local communities; along with the use of local wisdom and knowledge in developing communities is (although unable to stop the stream of capitalism) capable of weakening it (globalisation and capitalism).

A Muslim leader in the community, Imam Saad Soesalam gave ideas on, 'how to encourage people to see the importance of traditional things, such as traditional customs or activities which older generations did before. How to encourage people to see what benefits and what values they have. Everything has its own values and benefits. Old things have disappeared but new things have replaced them. So, how much trouble are we in?'

Nikom Tisa, a Muslim teacher gave some thoughts, 'the revival of ways of life is a very good job. If we go deeper, we will get many benefits, especially in this age, in the slump, if we turn to awaken both youth and the villagers and study, I think it will make our families happy by having economical ways of life, systematic expense and an account for life (a way of taking note of everything you spend money for and considering why you spend for it). When families are good, society also is good' (ANON, 2005).

In the second paragraph, the phrase 'an awareness in living within a sufficiency economy' is linked to local development. As we noted earlier, the idea of a Sufficiency Economy was introduced by the King of Thailand in the 1997 economic crisis. Philosophically, Sufficiency here means moderation in ways of life, starting from an individual, families and communities. The principle also champions the balanced development of the nation in the mist of the power of globalisation (Sussangkarn, no date). Here a popular expression: 'Sufficiency Economy', closely associated with the monarch and his legitimacy, is combined with appeals to localisation to strengthen a concept of community culture which represents and alternative to globalisation.

The discourse practice of this article also relies considerably upon religious leaders as social actors. The second theme of the second paragraph launches the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project. The concept of the project is reinforced by the discourse of two Muslim leaders in the community. While the first queries the benefits of traditional ways, the second introduces practical applications, 'Having economical ways of life, systematic expense and an account for life [a way of taking note of everything you spend and considering why you spend it]', which promotes the well-being of society. By using religious leaders to pioneer the new project, the newsletter seeks to capitalise on their established authority and legitimacy.

Composition and Pictures

On page 4 of this newsletter, the headline 'Power of Community...Power of Revival' is in the left corner. The headline is simple and in black and white. Pictures of a Muslim leader are on the right hand side, accompanying a picture of a group meeting. This position is the most attractive part of the page. At the bottom of the page, a small cartoon of a meeting group and a boy, with the text, 'help brainstorming. A gold chance reaches us. Let's help brainstorming what you want to revive'.

The presentation of the pictures of the religious leaders, on the one hand, symbolised acceptance of the Revival of the Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project and its concept. On the other hand, it connotes that the principle of the project is associated with the principles of religion. Positioning the image of Muslims leaders together with a picture of a group meeting cements an image of the power of community project as a common

endeavour with deep roots in the existing formations of traditional culture. In the meantime, the miniature cartoon issues a request to locals for collaboration in establishing the power of recovery.

10.3 Discussion and Conclusion

The activist media interventions in the fieldwork area lasted for a comparatively brief period of time, only one year and a half for activist radio, approximately six months for both the VCD project and the newsletter. The head of RCDO claimed that funding was the main problem (interview of Suparat Kwanmuang, 2006). He claimed RCDO could not gain continuing financial support for producing activist media from CODI at the end of 2005. As a result, *Power of Community* had to be discontinued. Nonetheless, participant observation and informal conversations pointed to other problems that compromised the success of the media initiatives namely, lack of production and technology skills, the irregularity of distribution, and the lack of community participation.

At the time, using media to promote their own community development work was a relatively new departure for RCDO or other Thai NGOs. They were therefore at an early stage in learning how to produce and use modern media. In Thai society, personal media, for oral communication by monks and leaders; and community media such as folk songs, traditional performances and jokes have had significant roles in various ways for a long time. These traditional channels had been substantially displaced by the rapid growth of commercial printed and electronic media but as an RCDO staff member said (Puth Somnok, interviewed 2005), learning how to produce media and compete effectively with the mainstream media while retaining some of the successful techniques of traditional media was not easy. Lack of training and experience in producing media considerably reduced the effectiveness of NGO activists operating in the area.

In contrast, mainstream media enjoyed the substantial competitive advantages of being professionally produced and circulated regularly and continuously. By contrast, *Power of Community* was delivered irregularly and seemed to have an ineffective circulation system. Although, its producers had proximity to the community, in terms of physical distance and the principles of localisation (such as local knowledge or religious belief), the participation

from local people was weak and the fist steps towards wider participation which started with the third issue remained confined to the level of production. There was no local participation in pre-production such as discussion on media content and forms; or at the level of post-production, assessment and distribution. These points were picked up by audiences, as we will see in chapter 12.

As we have noted, promoting the Revival of Community Ways of Tumbon Cheongnoen Project and encouraging the locals to participate in the project were the main purposes of the newsletter. Consequently it operated more as propaganda for a particular activist position already decided in advance rather than as a forum for community debate on possible alternatives. The newsletter's organisation around the binary oppositions between localism and globalisation shown in Figure 10.4 offered little room for either discussion or dissent.
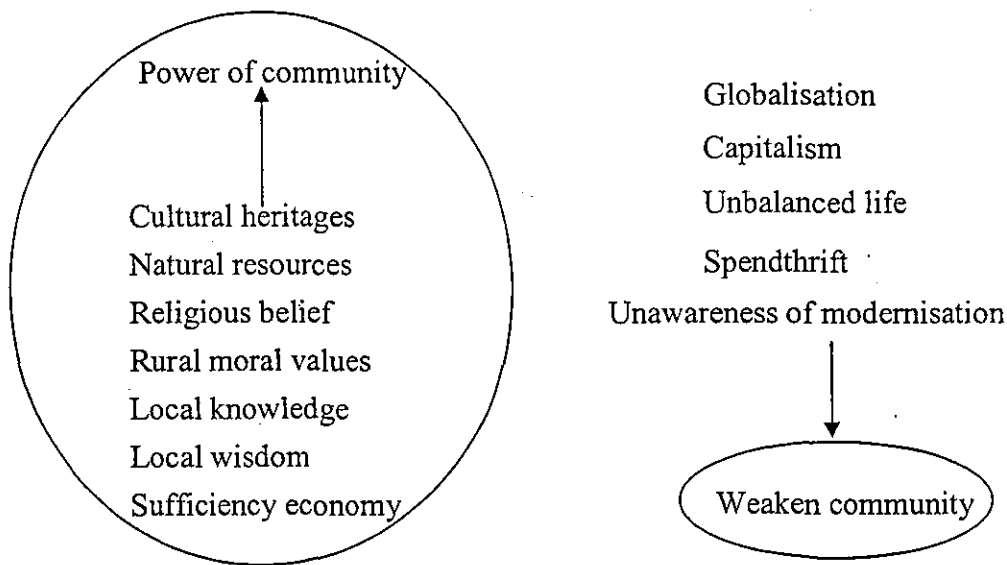
Figure 10.4 the module of directions in strengthening and weakening community in the activist media's notion

Part five Interpreting Globalisation: Audiences and Resources

Chapter 11

Talking Back: Villagers Making Sense of Mainstream Media

This chapter focuses on audience responses to selected examples of mainstream television's coverage of globalisation drawn from the corpus of material analysed in pervious chapters using critical discourse analysis techniques. Before moving on to the findings however, it is necessary to briefly outline the focus group method employed.

11.1 Methodology: Audience Analysis: Design and Re-organisation

Kim Schroder and his colleagues have criticized CDA for moving directly between micro-textual analysis and macro-sociocultural circumstances without considering the ways discourses are received and reworked in everyday interaction (Schroder *et al.*, 2003:107). To some extent however, this critique misrepresents the CDA approach since some of its proponents (eg Wodak, 2001; and Scollon, 2001) strongly support ethnography as way of exploring discourse 'from the inside' and as a precondition for any further analysis and theorizing' (Wodak, 2001:69). Rarely has this proposal actually been put into practice however.

The research reported here is based on focus group sessions with six groups drawn from participants in the initial survey exercise. The sessions were conducted in the village between August and September 2005.

The analysis has three main aims:

Firstly, to detail how villagers understood and responded to mainstream media representations of globalisation.

Secondly, to explore the ways in which they drew upon grounded experience in constructing interpretations.

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Thirdly, to see if there were systematic differences in perception depending on whether or not respondents had engaged with activist media.

As we have seen however, villagers' experiences of change, their responses to it, and their consumption of television news and comment programmes were stratified by both age and length of residence. Taking these factors together generated the six focus groups shown in Table 11.1

Table 11.1 The mainstream media consumption pattern

Categories	Groups	The most popular media of the group
1.Indigenous people	Working age group (WI)	Evening television news, channel 7
	Older group (OI)	
2. Newcomers	Working age group (WN)	Sorayuth Morning News Talk, channel 3
	Older group (ON)	
3. Young people	Indigenous group (YI) Newcomers group (YN)	Evening television news, channel 3

As we have also seen however, of the various activist media available in the village it was the newsletter, *Power of Community*, that had the highest number of users. In order to explore whether reading the newsletter impacted on participants' constructions of globalisation the focus groups were rearranged dividing respondents who only consumed mainstream media from those who also engaged with the activist media, as shown in Table 11.2.

Table 11.2 The Six focus groups

Categories based on the most popular mainstream media consumption patterns	Mainstream television users	Activist newsletter users (*Power of Community*)
Indigenous groups (Evening television news, channel 7)	Group one- WI and OI	Group four- WI and OI
Newcomers groups (Sorayuth Morning News Talk, channel 3)	Group two- WN and ON	Group five –WN and ON
Young people (Evening television news, channel 3)	Group three- YI and YN	Group six- YI and YN

This classification produced six groups:

Mainstream media users

Group one (WI and OI) Indigenous villagers of working aged 31-50 years old and over 50 years old

Group two (WN and ON) Newcomers of working aged 31-50 years and over 50 years old

Group three (YI and YN) Young people aged 15-30 years descendents of both indigenous villagers and newcomers)

Activist Media Users

Group four (WI and OI) Indigenous villagers of working aged 31-50 years old and over 50 years old.

Group five (WN and ON) Newcomers of working aged 31-50 years and over 50years old .

Group six (YI and YN) Young people aged 15-30 years both indigenous and newcomers

The focus groups sessions were divided into two main sections. In the first segment, which focused on responses to mainstream media, participants were asked to view and comment on extracts from the coverage of aspects of industrialisation and globalisation that villagers had direct experience of and which we subjected to detailed textual analysis in an earlier chapter:

(1) The debate on the handling of the water shortage in Rayong from the *Thung Luk Thung Kon* debate hosted by Sorayuth.

(2) The coverage, on the channel 7 evening news, of the new environmental policies implemented by the Mae Moh power plant.

Whereas the first extract pointed to problems with the rapid pace of industrialisation and inequalities in the treatment of business interests and ordinary citizens, the second emphasised the public benefits of corporate initiatives. With the exception of the working age and older newcomers, all the groups discussed both these topics.

(3) It was clear from the general ethnographic work that the scandal surrounding the pre marital pregnancy of the celebrity, Kathleeya, provoked considerable discussion and talk in the village. Since this issue touched on a key cultural dimension of modernisation, it was decided to add it into the agenda for focus group discussion. However, since the story first broke at the beginning of September, after the first two focus groups had been conducted, it was only possible to include it in discussions of the last four groups.

(4) In addition, both groups of young people also watched a clip from At Ten, the most popular programme with those age groups.

In the second segment of the group discussions, all participants were shown the activist newsletter, *Power of Community*, and asked to comment on it. The results of these discussions will be examined in the next chapter.

The agenda of discussion topics for the various groups is summarised in Tables 11.3 and 11.4.

Table 11.3 Discussion topics in each focus group

Groups			Water shortage	Mah moh	Kathleeya	At ten	Activist media
Mainstream media users	Indigenous	WI+OI	✓	✓			✓
	Newcomers	WN+ON	✓				✓
	Young people	YI+YN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Activist media users	Indigenous	WI+OI	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Newcomers	WN+ON	✓	✓	✓		✓
	Young people	YI+YN	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

The topics and themes discussed are summarised in Table 11.4

Table 11.4 Discussion topics, media shown and themes of discussion in focus groups

Topics	Media shown	Themes of discussion
1.water shortage	Thung Luk Thung Kon (TV debate)	Debate between local people's ideology (anti-globalisation /aiming to help farmers and ordinary people) and official ideology (aiming to build dams for industry)
2. Environmental impact	Mae Moh power plant (TV news)	Pro-globalisation: industry preserves environment and creates clean benefit to communites
3. Pregnancy before marriage: the case of Kathleeya	None	Thai culture and western cultures
4. Celebrities and western cultures	One episode of 'Dandara' of At Ten variety TV show, channel 3	Celebrities and pop-western cultures
5. Activist media-localism	Power of Community: -the article 'Power of Community...Power of Revival'. -front pages of three issues -	Localism/ anti-globalisation/ Renewal of traditional ways of life.

11.1.1 Focus Group Analysing

This method employed to analyse the focus group materials was adapted from the proposals on qualitative data analysis developed by Krueger (1998), Richards (2005) and Mason (1994). It involved three main steps:

First, after transcribing all six focus groups, I classified the discussions using the case studies developed in the media analysis (the water shortage, the Mae Moh power plant, the announcement of Kathleeya's: pregnancy before marriage, *At Ten*, and the activist media) as the basic frame. This allowed me to explore how the participants reacted to different issues in different ways and to identify underlying themes and frameworks of interpretation that cuts across these differences.

The transcripts were re-read several times in as open-ended a way as possible in an effort to fully understand how the participant's constructed issues. This exercise followed Krueger's suggestion that close reading should 'consider the words, consider the context, consider the internal consistency, consider the frequency of comments, consider the extensiveness of comments, consider the intensity of comments, consider the specificity of response, consider what was not said, and find the big ideas' (Krueger, 1998: 31-38).

The second step in analysis was to classify the data in order to identify patterns. As Mason (1994:91) suggests, data analysis involves 'drawing a distinction between the processes of making data manageable – or amenable to analysis – on the one hand, and actually developing an analysis on the other'. In this connection it is important to note that while theories are essential in helping to interpret data, they time can also impose frameworks of meanings that distort or misrepresent participants' world views. This risk is especially high when we apply theories developed in relation to western society circumstances and experiences to fieldwork work settings in Asian societies.

Each group's responses to the discussion topics were mapped onto a matrix table step (see the example in Appendix E) in order to identify relations and contradiction between different topics in the same group. This classification was then used to address the key research questions of how the participants negotiated or opposed media accounts, how they responded to globalisation and what resources, practices or ideas they drew on to make sense of globalisation.

These results were then reinterpreted using the core analytical categories deployed in the thesis: theories of globalisation, constructions of modernity, the negative impacts of industrialisation, the ideology of globalism, and consumerism (see chapter one).

However, not all the topics raised in the focus group discussions and central to the participants' responses were addressed by these theoretical schemas. Comments on the patron-client system and the displacement of mutuality by a money oriented society (discussed in chapters 11 and 12.) emerged as particularly salient. Paying close attention to these themes led me to examine more carefully the situated resources provided by grounded experience and local knowledge that the villagers employed in order to

accommodate to or resist globalisation and media representations. These are discussed in chapter 13.

In analysing these dynamics I also drew on the numerous informal conversation that had taken place in the course of my ethnographic work in the village. The additional insights generated by these interchanges were particularly important in shedding light on central aspects of village life that respondents were reluctant or unwilling to talk about in public, most notably the exercise of hidden sources of power, dark influence *(Ittiphon)*. This experience underlined the limitations of focus group methodology in the village setting and confirmed the importance of employing a multi-method approach that included a substantial element of ethnography.

It is important to note that, although I have presented the process of analysis here as a series of steps, it was not a once-and-for-all sequential process. Rather, checking developing analytical threads involved continually moving back and forth between the transcripts, the matrix tables of categories, and the theme tables.

11.1.2 Limitations and Problems of Focus Groups

Before looking at the findings, it is worth noting two problems with translating the focus group methodology, a technique developed in the West to Thai society.

Firstly, although the invitations to participate had been carefully planned to recruit 6-10 people in each group, it was difficult to control the numbers who actually turned up and in the end the groups ranged from 4 to 12 people. Some participants who had accepted the invitation failed to attend while people arrived who had not been invited. They included the village head and the wives or husbands of the invited participants. Rejecting these people was not possible since it would adversely affect the relationship established between the researcher and the villagers.

The village head's participation in the adult indigenous villagers' group (Group 3) was particularly problematic since he dominated the discussion and participants deferred to his authority and said very little. This does not mean that everyone agreed with him. Rather that their silences and expressions need to be carefully interpreted.

Secondly, in Thai culture, people do not always feel able to express their opinion in public or in open groups which are not made up of close relatives or peer groups or their families, particularly, if the topics are controversial and sensitive. To counter this and stimulate participation and open expression certain topics, such as drug addiction and the link between football and gambling, were excluded, even though ethnographic observation indicated that many villagers were concerned about them.

These limitations suggest that it would very unwise to rely solely on focus groups when investigating audiences in transitional societies and further reinforces the general case being made in the thesis for a multi-method approach that also employs ethnography and informal interviews and conversations.

11.2 Negotiating Industrialisation: The Power Plant and The Water Shortage

11.2.1 The Mae Moh Power Plant

Mainstream Media Users' Perspectives

Indigenous villagers (Group one- WI and OI)

The participants of this group all are indigenous villagers who have backgrounds in tradition ways of life, for example fishing, rice farming, and fruit farming. After the arrival of the factory, their livelihoods have changed. One is the village head. One is still planting *putsa*. One is a primary school teacher. One is a bus driver. Four are housewives. One is the owner of car renting business. One is a retired fisherman.

Participants in this group criticised the presentation of the plant's new 'environmentally friendly' policies as 'fake, unrealistic and propaganda'. After watching the channel 7 news clip of Mae Moh, no one believed the stories being advanced. Rather, they employed their 'lived experience' to question and oppose the official account. Hom, a retired indigenous man, drew on his own grounded observation;

> I don't believed (Mae Moh news) at all. I've been there. Go and see it, the dust
> is thicker than here...I don't believe the news at all. I stayed so far away from
> Mae Moh power plant but when I stepped down on my place, my foot are so
> black like a clay pot. It (the dust from the factory) was so thick. If we sweep the
> dust, we will get it eight or nine kilograms. It (the news) is not true. This village
> (in Pluak Ked area) is also like Mae Moh. When the wind comes,...hoooo. In
> the past, there was no partition at all. All the house were so black (dirty). When
> it rained, you could see the coal on the roofs. They (Mae Moh power plant) are
> not working good...whatever the media said, I think it (the environmental
> protection) is not working (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

At this point, other members of the group drew on their experience of pollution in the village.

> Udom: I don't agree (with the news) because there was so much the pollution.
> (Lignite) came to our village. It depends on the wind. If the wind comes this
> way,...can you come here more often? I will sweep the dust and show you.

Boonruen: I don't agree (with the news).

Sombat: this way (Pluak Ked area), we have got lots of coal 8-10 months (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

This grounded experience was then mobilised to provide the basis for a general critique of media representations which was most clearly articulated by the village head:

They all (the news) are made up. If we go and see reality, it is not like the news. When they show us, they have to show good things but when they don't make news, it is so dusty (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

He went on to argue that efforts 'to convince the locals' that problems have been solved are due to powerful 'influences' operating behind the scenes to ensure that the news operated effectively as public relations for business supplementing their initiatives in the community.

The media always present positive images but they never presented bad things, I speak directly. The more the media present positive images of factories, it proves that the more problems they have. So, they need to convince the locals. It is same as our village now. A factory has so many polluted problems, so they do lots of work of Community Relations while TPI also serves free medical services. Then we need to consider why they are so good with us. That is because there is something. If not, why are they so good with us?....seeking interest. Everything has interest behind (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

His critique was strongly supported by the farmer who complained that the news always supported officialdom and never listened to local experience and opinion or attempted to compile an independent account, and by the female fisherman who challenged me to go and see the state of the mangrove forest for myself.

Group members with relatives working in the factories declined to contribute to this discussion but as we note above, their silence cannot be interpreted as consent. My general ethnographic work suggested that they were more inclined to stress the material improvements to living standards that the factory had brought, rather than the problems, but the presence of the village head and his domination of the conversation was a power barrier to free expression. Since he still played a central role in the local patronage system it was important to maintain his good will.

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Young People (Group three-YI and YN)

Six young people participated in this group. Three were the descendents of indigenous villager sand three came from newcomer families. Five were students and the other a male factory worker.

Opinion in this group was less uniform than in the adult group, as the following extract demonstrates.

> Meaw (indigenous): I agree (with the news) if this factory can control (pollution), people will be healthy
>
> The facilitator: How about factories in our village?
>
> Meaw: it's not good at all.
>
> The facilitator: Do you believe in news although in your lived experience shows that factories can't control pollution?
>
> Meaw: yes
>
> Pla (newcomer): I don't believe the whole news. I believe because they have been already broadcast. So it should have something true. On the other hand, we don't see the facts. We don't know it well. So we can't give conclusion. What I don't believe is, look at Rayong, for example a factory in the village, they said they had ISO but it is not good. They still emit smoke and waste water, sucking sand, releasing waste water into the sea illegally, building patrol pipes onto the seashore. The water is contaminated and fish dies (Mainstream media users – Group YI and YN).

As the comment by Pla shows, participants were more inclined to be critical where they had direct experience of continuing problems that were ignored or denied by officialdom. But where this grounded knowledge was absent they were more inclined to give the official account the benefit of the doubt, as in Meaw's comment.

Activist Media Users' Perspectives

Newcomers (Group five- WN and ON)

This group was made up of two female factory workers, a housewife and business owner, a retied female who had been one of the pioneers in the mat weaving project organised as part of the Renewal of Traditional Ways of Life project supported by RCDO, and a female retired kindergarten teacher.

Here again participants drew on the personal experience of continuing factory pollution to dismiss the news report of Mah Moh 's success in cleaning up the immediate environment as lacking credibility. As the former kindergarten teacher recounted:

> Wherever has factories, they all are the same. The Mah Moh news is not credible. Like here, they (factories) said they would sort it out but nothing is better. Here is closed to an ice factory, they have...emm....what substance? When kids finished lunch, we will get them to bed. It leaks (chemical substance from the factory). We had to bring all kids out of the nursery. The kids vomited, were dizzy and could not sleep. I asked a teacher to run to the factory and ask them to sort out now because the kids couldn't sleep...this happened several times (Activist media users- Group WN and ON).

Although all the members of the group had read the activist newsletter, with its strong advocacy of localism and a counter to the adverse effects of industrialisation, none of them saw any real prospect of either conserving natural resources or living in a clean environment. They saw the patronage system and offer of jobs in the factory as an intractable barrier to change. This view was expressed most forcefully by Chalerm, the business woman who recounted her failed attempts to protest against the Mae Moh plant.

> Chalerm: "My house was against them (Mae Moh) since he (her husband) had not been retired. The Mae Moh projected has been protested for years. Finally, money can beat everything.
>
> Paiwan (female worker): because only money can beat everything nowadays.
>
> The villagers had to accept industry because of money. And some villagers could not protest industry because they worked for industry and money.

> Chalerm: Capital (money) is so thick. Another thing is …the villagers have to surrender because when we had a factory, they had jobs. Like you (Paiwan) you can't protest it because you gain money from them (by working) (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

Again, the two members of the group who worked for the TPI factory declined to comment and question this emerging collective consensus.

Indigenous Villagers (Group four-WI and OI)

There were nine participants in this group. Almost all had experience of traditional economic activities such as putsa planting and fishing, but most had gone on to do other jobs. There was a female bus driver who was also the leader of the mat weaving project , two male farmers, the assistant to the village head, a factory worker, a female fisherman, a housewife, a female farmer, and a female employee of a private company.

The social dynamics within the group however were rendered problematic by the fact that one of the invitees was accompanied to the session by her husband, who then tried to dominate the discussion with aggressive expressions and a loud voice.

Members again drew on their personal experience to argue that while creating a visitors' centre might be feasible at Mah Moh, it was impossible in the village due to the secrecy of the factory management. They saw this decision to 'lock them out' as indicative of their general powerlessness and exclusion from participation in decision making, as the following interchange illustrates:

> Facilitator: Do you agree that Mae Moh factory can be changed to be a tourist attraction and they can maintain environment?
>
> An older woman: it is possible at Mae Moh only.
>
> Ratree: yes, but here is not possible.
>
> An older woman: here, we don't know anything about factories. At Mae Moh, they make it to be a tourist attraction but ours have no visiting factories. The factory doesn't allow us to see. So we don't know what it is inside there…In the past, they (the factory) almost carried us into the factory. They let us see a building but didn't allow us to go anywhere. They said going this way was dangerous…going that way was also dangerous. There is only danger

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everywhere in the factory. Then we suspect... But channel 7 said it was
good...good. They just gave their opinion (Actisit media users –Group WI and
OI).

They saw this situation of 'being kept in the dark' compounded by the media's ignorance
of local conditions and failure to consult local people. As the female company employee
noted:

Channel 7 doesn't stay here. They don't know this area well. People who know
well are the indigenous people who were born here since the age of
grandparents. (We) know even attribute of soil here (Actisit media users –
Group WI and OI).

Even when journalists did show an interest, they were seen to be silenced by hidden
powers and 'dark influences', *Ittiphon*. As the farmer recounted, the television reporter he
had told about factory pollution turning the local water salty, had subsequently been placed
under pressure and removed from his post.

Young People (Group six- YI and YN)

Once again, the reactions of younger viewers were more varied than those of older
participants. Although most members of the group did not believe in the story as presented
some were more equivocal. One young indigenous male argued that while 'some part of
the story may be true' the situation might equally well 'be as terrible as [the factory] in our
village'. But it was left to a girl from a newcomer family to stress that industrialisation had
delivered gains and improvements as well as problems

Industry has both negative and positive consequences. They generate electricity.
They create electricity for us but emitted unpleasant smell sometimes,
especially in school. The unpleasant smell is so strong when I am in school area
(Actisit media users –Group YI and YN).

This stance is close to the proposition at the heart of the official ideology of globalism, that
on balance change has delivered more benefits than deficits, and that problems that have
arisen can be successfully addressed.

11.2.2 The Water Shortage

Mainstream Media Users' Perspectives

Newcomers (Group two-WN and ON)

This group combined a variety of careers; a middle class hospital staffer, a male shopkeeper, a sixty-year-old farmer, two female factory workers, a male motorcycle driver, and a retired village head man.

Three members of the group, the hospital worker, the retired village head and the male shopkeeper , all argued strongly that since the future viability of Rayong now relies on the success of the industrial sector it is imperative that the factories get the water they need to continue operating. At the same time they felt that the agricultural sector should get a fair allocation . As the hospital worker noted:

> If the industrial estate dies, Rayong will die as well. So, water should be shared. Thung Luk Thung Kon is ok but the locals see too much local livelihood. The Irrigation Department staff tried to explain that water is enough. They explained in terms of academic knowledge but the local argued that it is not enough. It is confusing. I don't know whom I should believe...if factories are closed down, everything will be gone because it is a chain. If factories are closed down, workers won't have jobs. Shopkeepers will be gone...it is a chain that affects everything (Mainstream media users –Group WN and ON).

The hospital worker noted that the media tended to pay more attention to the needs of industry because business interests were able to employ public relations professionals to press their case whereas local farmers lacked effective representation. The female worker added that the state was bound to give their demands priority since industry contributed more to the public purse.

> Female worker: newspaper and state give more importance to industry? I think I'm right because most of tax income comes from industry. State collects tax from people less than get it from industry. But I feel why state has to pay more attention on industry than people (Mainstream media users –Group WN and ON).

At the same time, several group members expressed resentment at the lack of attention given to local voices.

> Hospital worker: The media don't analyse at all.... the media just publish although it is not fact...sometimes in newspapers, only one person writes news and then they claim that the news reflects the locals' voices
>
> The male shopkeeper: they (the media) think people think like this, and then they write it without asking people (Mainstream media users –Group WN and ON).

The reference to newspapers here is not accidental. Watching the clip of the debate on the water shortage on the current affairs show, Thung Luk Thung Kon, hosted by Sorayuth, (where he reads extracts from the day's press coverage) prompted several participants to argue that the press was even more likely to present partial or distorted accounts than the television news. At the same time, their rhetorical support for the ideals of fair and balanced reporting that gave space to both sides of the argument, was cross cut by their commitment to the ideology of globalism and their belief that Thailand has no choice but to embrace industrialisation and globalisation in order to 'compete with other countries'.

Indigenous Villagers (Group one-WI and OI)

As we noted in earlier chapters, whereas on balance newcomers had benefited from the new opportunities opened up by the factory, many indigenous villagers felt a strong sense of material and cultural loss. For them, the priority given to industrial needs, as against their own, in allocating water supplies, offered strong confirmation of their subordinate position. Their comments were threaded with anger and resentment at both officialdom and the media.

> Female teacher: As they said just now, the Irrigation Department tried to explain but their explanation was not clear. If considering the news (*Thugn Luk Thung Kon*), in my opinion, they rather would give interest to industry.
>
> Local farmer: The state supports only industry. They don't care about ordinary people. I saw Suriya (the then Minister of Industry) at the beginning of this month. He would see water at Rayong.But he seemed not to care about the locals. He concentrated on factories it's like he did not listen to the locals' voices (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

Young People (Group three-YI and YN)

Young peoples' opinions were divided, but in contrast the older groups, differences did not coincide neatly with the division between indigenous villagers and newcomers. This suggests that this separation, with its original freight of memories and aspirations, is less salient to young people who have lived most or all of their lives in a landscape dominated by industrialisation and consumerism, and that other factors, including education, may be more significant as a stratifying dimension.

While a young newcomer girl opposed favouring industry in the allocation of water, and a male factory worker argued that households should be given priority, an indigenous boy advocated compromise so as to avoid conflict between industry and locals. Subsequently, two indigenous girls advocated prioritising households, arguing that 'those with money' had a responsibility to help those less well off. But it was left to a newcomer girl to argue that local needs and natural resources should come first because preserving 'our roots and life' takes precedence over the requirements of industry.

> Our roots and human life did not come from industry. Our life did not get rich
> from industry. If we don't have water few days, we will die but we don' have
> money, we can live for a year. We need to create good environmental first then
> we can live in this world. When we can live and survive, we then think about
> industry. We need to preserve 'life and (social and natural) fund' first
> (Mainstream media users –Group YI and YN).

At first sight, the fact that the most traditional views were voiced by a girl from a migrant family appears counter intuitive but one possible explanation lies in the fact that most newcomer families came to the village from North Eastern Thailand, where traditional belief and values are particularly strongly-rooted.

Activist Media Users' Perspectives

Indigenous Villagers (Group four-WI and OI)

Rather than commenting on the politics of the water shortage issue or the news presentation, this group used the opportunity to discuss the bitter experience of the village head assistant who had attended the meeting about the water shortage with state officers from the Irrigation Department (one of whose representatives appeared in the debate in

Thung Luk Thung Kon hosted by Sorayuth). He told them the state officers had claimed that they had more advanced knowledge about the water shortage than he did and that because they occupied a higher administrative position he felt unable to challenge them. This anecdote provoked a heated discussion of the arrogance and ineffectiveness of officialdom in sorting out the problems faced by local people and their insulting behaviour in not listening to their opinions, a view confirmed by their reading of the Mae Moh power plant coverage.

The local farmer again returned to his encounter with the journalist who had tried to investigate the problem with salty water in the village and had subsequently lost his job, and went on to contrast this with Sorayuth's ability to raise contentious issues ;

> A farmer: Sorayuth gives enough details in his reports and opens for arguing. (I) ask that ITV in the past, who came to Noen Putsa, was he fired? Why?
>
> Facilitator: he gathered the story of factory?
>
> A farmer: salty water. The villagers had troubles.
>
> Facilitator: how about Sorayuth?
>
> A farmer: someone said water is not salty, only brackish water. That water makes fish dies. I like Sorayuth because he reports details, directly and gives knowledge to people.
>
> Ratree: he talks and we understand it.
>
> Everyone: listen and understand
>
> Niran: he talks the local language.
>
> A farmer: I also watch ITV, but that reporter got that (was fired).
>
> Nok (a farmer): I like Sorayuth. He gives us speak. We can talk with him (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

This interchange also points to a strong desire within the group for media outlets which speak for them, provide usable knowledge in a language that they can understand, and offer ordinary people a platform from which they can question the accounts of privileged groups.

Newcomers (Group five-WN and ON)

These issues were taken up and discussed at length in the newcomers group where attention was focused on Sorayuth's style and way of working.

After watching the television clips of the debate from Thung Luk Thung Kon and the news coverage Mae Moh power plant, the group pursued two themes.

Firstly, they felt strongly that Sorayuth spoke for ordinary people and was open to their problems. Chalerm, the female business owner said 'when I watch him, I feel safe because if I have any problems, it is possible to call him and ask for advice'.

Secondly, they argued that unlike most other journalists Sorayuth was prepared to investigative reports independently, rather than simply relaying official accounts, as in the Channel 7 news clip. As the female business owner noted,

> He sent his staff to investigate the truth about the Rayong river explosion. I feel
> that he is a people's friend. I like Sorayuth because he was easy-going and
> approachable (Activist media users –Group WN and ON).

Young People (Group six-YI and YN)

This group was made up of four participants, a male student and a male factory worker from indigenous families and a female student and a male factory worker from newcomer families.

Once again, grounded experience was drawn on to critique the media coverage. The most sceptical member of the group was the newcomer factory worker. He argued strongly against believing news representations, claiming that during the water shortage his own factory had not experienced problems because it was able to use a motorised pump to draw water and store it in a tank.

In contrast, along with the male student, he argued that the debate on the water shortage issue mounted on Thung Luk Thung Kon was more credible because it opened the debate to both sides and allowed local people to put their point of view. The female student, who had originally been more prepared to accept the news report on the water shortage, after

listening to the arguments put by other participants, was persuaded that the discussion format was more trustworthy.

11.3 Mobility, Morality and Celebrity: At Ten and the Case of Kathleeya

11.3.1 Pregnancy Before Marriage: The Case of Kathleeya

Mainstream Media Users' Perspectives

As noted earlier this story broke after the first two focus groups had been carried out so the young mainstream media users group offered the first opportunity to include it on the agenda for group discussion

Young People (Group three-YI and YN)

As the extract reproduced below demonstrates, attitudes within the group were strongly divided by gender. Two female participants (Pla and Ang) had both seen a number of unmarried teenage girls in the village become pregnant. They regarded Kathleeya's case as an entirely normal and acceptable contemporary event and refused to censure her. Both began their remarks by saying that they 'were ok' with her behaviour. The other girl (Rat) was not so sure but it was left to the male members of the group Pornthip and Nu, to express outright condemnation.

Here then, gender appears to be more important than family origins in structuring attitudes. Both the two girls who accept Kathleeya's behaviour and the two boys who reject it come from both indigenous and newcomer families. This suggests that what is work here is a 'double standard' whereby men demand that women remain virgins until after marriage but are happy to play the field themselves before settling down. It also suggests that girls growing up in a modernised environment are more inclined to value personally taking control over decisions affecting their sexual and reproductive lives.

> Porthip (The male worker newcomer): I don't agree (with Kathleeya' behaviour). It is not good example.
>
> Pla (newcomer girl): I'm ok with it. but I feel sympathetic why she had to lie and did with her baby like that. I don' think to condemn her. I'm ok because she is not Thai. She is *farang* (white people).

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Facilitator: don't you think she is a bad example?

Pla: it depends on what one think. If we think positively, it will bring us in the good way. If we think in bad ways, we will follow those way.

Ang (indigenous girl): I'm ok. People can be pregnant before marriage. Why celebrities can't do it? Many teenagers nowadays are pregnant before marriage. Some people are not pregnant before marriage but they live together for so long before marriage.

Rat (newcomer girl): emm...don't know, because Kathleeya is not one hundred percent Thai as Pla said. Another thing is, this age, it's not necessary to imitate

Nu (indigenous boy): it's not right. She is a famous actress. She shouldn't have done it. It will be a bad example (Mainstream media users –Group YI and YN).

Activist Media Users' Perspectives

Newcomers (Group five-WN and ON)

All the participants in this group disapproved of Katheleeya's behaviour but they were concerned less with the fact that she had become pregnant before marriage and more with the way she appeared on screen when she made the announcement. Everyone accepted that pre marital pregnancy was an inevitable feature of modern life. They had all seen a number of village girls in this situation and two of the participants had had personal experience of their sons getting their partners pregnant.

What they objected to was the way Katheleeya had made her announcement with a smile and no trace of regret which they felt betrayed the trust placed in her as a prominent public figure and a UNICEF Ambassador for Youth, charged with addressing teenage problems, including pre marital pregnancy.

Chalerm: it was her ownself. She (Kathleeya) laughed cheerfully (in the news). Life was not miserable. Good!...life! when she came (in the TV new), I shut off television immediately....ohhh, this actress!

Facilatotor: how do you feel?

Chalerm: she was cheerful. She didn't teach the youth that we should get married. She said pregnancy before marriage was not a problem....and it (her story) should not have been distributed through media.

Thongpun (female worker): she always said that didn't do this, didn't do that. It was not good but she did all that she had said about.

Onsri (retired woman): it's not right. It convinced young generation too much.

Chalerm: actually, everyone has right to do (being pregnant before marriage) but it should not have been on the media like this. When I saw it, I shut off (TV)then (Activist media users –Group WN and ON).

We might suggest that underlying this interchange is a general anxiety about the shifting boundary between public and private life. Traditional mores draw a sharp distinction between domestic and communal space, between what should be confined to couples and families and what it is appropriate to display and discuss in public. Celebrity culture blurs this boundary, cultivating a public demand for more and more intimate information on the private lives of those in the public eye. As we saw above, while younger people have little difficulty accepting the public performance of private events adults are more likely to find it problematic, particularly, as with the newcomer group, they grew up in a milieu where traditional boundaries were strongly policed.

Indigenous Villagers (Group four- WI and OI)

As noted earlier, this group included two participants who were not invited by the researcher, a male newcomer and the assistant to the village head. Their inclusion altered the social dynamics of the group and may have impacted on other participants' willingness to speak candidly.

Although, like the newcomers, everyone in the group accepted that pregnancy before marriage was a fact of modern life in the village, they saw this as a regrettable decline for two reasons. Firstly, they felt strongly that whereas in the past pre marital pregnancy, particularly among teenagers, was a cause of shame and personal 'agony' for family members and especially mothers, it had now become normalised even though the personal pain and damage to families continued.

Secondly, they felt that the situation was exacerbated by the more overtly sexualised images relayed by popular television, a feeling summed up by the peasant participant's lament that 'the mainstream media destroy Thai traditional custom'.

Ratree: it's normal. All ages, every generation had pregnancy before marriage.

Niran: if asking in mother's hearts, it's agony.

Facilitator: in the past, was there this problem?

Niran: no, but we don't know how to.....In mother's hearts, how much (we) feel agony so that we can't explain it. Then the mass media today, dramas, I don't them at all. For example, a main actress (nang ake) wears a top that shows her tummy. What are they thinking? They are still main actresses, not a jealous character.

Ratree: it's normal. I could accept it because all kids are the same. Girls have sexual partners since they are 14-15 years old. They told us, mum...I am going to study but no...go to the beach. I accept reality and I'm not embarassed. But in old ages, it was not acceptable. If anyone does like this, we would feel a serious shame. But this age....but in my deep heart, as a mum, I feel so hurt to see kids doing this because I never did it.

Niran: nowadays, we have to accept. I'm thinkink that for my grandchildren, I will give them pills then.

Ratree: I will get them to be strilised (laughing) (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

As the last section of this interchange demonstrates, adult anxieties are grounded in comparisons with their own teenage years and in contemporary experience. The female bus driver, who had also led the mat weaving project, pointed to the problem of unwanted children in the village saying; 'it is very sad to see toddlers without anyone taking care of them'. She went on to blame Kathleeya for setting a bad example but not having to bear the consequences of her action in the same way as a village girl.

The bus driver: teenagers will think that even the superstar could do it

Ratree: yes, it becomes an (bad) example absolutely. Even the famous actress is not afraid of loss of reputation, what about them (local teenagers)? Who are they? They don't have anything to lose like actresses, so they can do it. Teenagers think like this. Then, children in 14, 15 and 16 years old are pregnant nowadays (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

Young People (Group six-YI and YN)

Unlike the mainstream media users young peoples group, these young activist media users were divided more by family background than gender. The two indigenous young men disapproved of Kathleeya's behaviour and saw her, as a prominent public figure, setting a bad example that was likely to influence teenager attitudes.

In contrast the two newcomers, while not endorsing her behaviour, saw it entirely normal and blamed neither her nor the media. At the same time, the normalisation of pre marital pregnancy did not, in their eyes, lessen the personal damage it might do. As the male participant noted, 'I feel very sad when I see young girls are pregnant' while the girl added, 'although it is normal to be pregnant before marriage, as a woman, it is a shame'.

11.3.2 The At Ten Variety Show

Since, as we have seen, At Ten, was the most popular media programme among the young people who completed the questionnaire, it was included as a topic for discussion in the two youth focus groups.

The responses of both the mainstream and minority media users' groups was very similar and focused on three main issues

Firstly, they consistently described the programme as 'entertaining' pointing to its combination of humour and its embrace of a range of emotions typified by the talent contest that dramatised both the joy of winning and the disappointment of loosing.

Secondly, they enjoyed the window it afforded into the lives of celebrities and their life styles. In a rapidly expanding consumer culture, celebrities dramatised the range of desirable choices and possibilities. Some participants, particularly in the mainstream users group, confessed to dreaming of becoming celebrities or at the very least, moving within their orbit. One indigenous girl wanted to be an entertainment journalist while a female newcomer dreamed of being the programme's host.

Thirdly, and most importantly, all the participants pointed to the talent contest segment of the show, *Dandara*, 'To be a Star', as a major source of viewing pleasure. Their enjoyment

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in watching ordinary people display their talents and compete for prizes had two roots. Firstly, it offered one of the few sites on Thai television that gave people like them a platform on which to show what they could do and, if their luck held, from which they could launch themselves on a new career. It was cultural space built around the potential of ordinary people rather than the establish success or position of actors, actresses, celebrities, and officials. Secondly, and relatedly, it held out the possibility that change was generating new routes to mobility and new opportunities to re-make oneself.

Participating and Speaking

As the focus group discussions made clear, young people's engagement with At Ten was largely based on the segments which gave ordinary people a stage and featured the rags to riches stories of celebrities. By opening a space for voices and experiences 'from below' it offered a counter to the 'top down' forms of address that dominated news programming. It was populist but it was also commercial, strongly locked into the ideology of consumerism. Its heroes were all heroes of consumption. When participants spoke they talked of their ambition to enter the world of showbusiness and the business of show. There was no space for discussion of the negative impacts generated by the hard edges of change.

In contrast, the programmes hosted by Sorayuth were widely admired across the focus groups for their engagement with the everyday problems of change and for providing a platform for vernacular views and voices, either directly, as in the discussion programme, or indirectly, as in Sorayuth's daily commentary on breaking news.

As we have seen however, it was not only the content of the programmes that villagers related to it was also their style, mixing humour and colloquial speech in ways that reproduced the flow of ordinary conversation and argument. They felt the Sorayuth spoke not only for them, articulating their concerns, but like them. At the same time, as part of the schedule of a major commercial channel with strong links to political elites, there were limits to the challenge they could offer to the underlying ideology of globalism.

As we have seen, mounting this challenge, through the counter ideology of localism, was the main aim of the newsletter *Power of Community*, produced by activists working in the village and it is to the ways villagers responded to this initiative that we now turn.

Chapter 12

Talking Back: Responding to Activist Media

The newsletter *Power of Community* (see chapter 10) was shown to all participants at the start of the focus group sessions. Everyone was asked to look at the front pages of all three issues and to read the lead article in the first issue, 'Power of Community...Power of Rivival'. The 'activist media users' had already seen this material when the newsletter was first distributed in the village, but the 'Mainstream media users' groups had not. The discussion of this material was organised around two main questions; (1) did participants agree with the ideas expressed in the newsletter? and (2) did they feel that it acted as an effective channel for their own views?

12.1 Audience Analysis of The Activist Newsletter, *Power of Community*

Mainstream Media Users' Perspectives

Working age and older Newcomers (Group two-WN and ON)

As the following conversation extract shows, participants in this group generally accepted sympathy for the ideology of globalism and saw the pursuit of modernised-western high technology and industry as the only viable path for Thailand's future development. Consequently, although they had some sympathy for the concept of localism, they saw it as impractical as a source of regeneration and growth.

> The male shopkeeper: if you ask me if I agree (with traditional ways of life), I do agree. But is it possible to do? No it's not
>
> The middle class hospital staff: I agree with the concept but in the last paragraph (of the article of Power of Revival), it states that using local wisdom and knowledge to develop (the community or country). I think we can't compete other countries.
>
> The male shopkeeper: it's not true to state that local knowledge will lessen capitalism (as the article states). ...it is a problem of economy and surviving. Globalisation makes everything to be money. We (general people) respect rich

people although they cheated or did something immoral. We don't care how
they get rich (Mainstream media users –Group WN and ON).

They saw no possibility of the mat weaving project being economically viable and argued
that this made it unattractive to young people.

The shopkeeper: Things won't return. They will progress day by day. Young
generation is not interested in mat weaving because they can earn more money
by working in factories. Nowadays, we don't have time, even private time.

The hospital staff: what for do we have to weaving a mat? I don't do it but if do
it and get money or can export it, I will do.

The shopkeeper: It's actually the problem of surviving (Mainstream media users
–Group WN and ON).

Participants, particularly the older ones, saw young people's disinterest in reviving
traditional ways being continually reinforced by the mainstream media's promotion of
modernity, citing the attention paid to sexual relations and the provocative dress of
actresses particularly corrosive of established mores.

This group also criticised the newsletter for both its inaccessibility, pointing out that
although some of them had wanted to read it they could not find copies, and its unattractive
presentation.

Indigenous Villagers (Group one-WI and OI)

In common with the newcomer group, the indigenous group praised the concept of
localism in the newsletter but agreed that it was impossible to practice in the community
because the village was already too modernised having already made the transition from an
agricultural to an urban and industrial society. The female primary school teacher
articulated the group's sense of irreversible change when she argued that 'the village was
no longer an agricultural society where we worked at home. Everything changed as the
time passed. The youth were no longer interested in traditional ways of life'. At this point,
the village head supported her by recounting his experience of trying to organise traditional
games for the Thai new year event and finding that none of the village youth were
interested in participating.

> The village head: I think partly is good but when practising, it is not possible. When people talk, it sounds good. But in practice, it is not possible to do because it (the village) is too modern (charoen).
>
> Udom: the income (from mat weaving) is not enough for a family.
>
> The village head: they don't have time.
>
> Udom: (we) have time but it's not worth to do it.
>
> Boonruen: nobody looks after my grandchildren (Mainstream media users – Group WI and OI).

Tik, an indigenous working age man, agreed with the village head. He identified the future with globalisation but objected to industrialisation.

> The age has been changed. This age is the skate shoes age. People don't walk on coconut skin anymore. People walk on Score (the shoes brand name)...sometimes it is good to follow the stream of globalisation because there is something good and bad to your life. The tradition, yes...it's good as well. But if let me choose, I will choose globalisation because I'm young generation. Although I'm thirties but globalisation gives more benefit (money and growth). ...But we don't want factories!! (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

Participants also saw the newsletter's arguments weakened by its double inaccessibility. Firstly, like the newcomers, they claimed that they had never seen it before the focus group meeting and that it was not known in the village. Secondly, when asked to read extracts they argued that the way it was written presented problems for them, that they did not understand the language, and that the items were too short and had too few details.

The village head's presence in the group also drew attention to the power clash between 'insiders' and 'outsiders'. He argued that because the newsletter's producers had never checked the accuracy of their information with him or sought his approval what they wrote could not be trusted.

> Even the village head, I didn't not receive the newsletter. All villages don't know about it (activist media). Where are they? We don't them at all. Their working way should approach the village head and sub-district head (Phuyaiban and Kunnam). But the villagers don't know it ...just few people do. They (the activist media producers) never come and see me. Normally they have to come

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and see the village head and Kumnan and the information should come from us (Mainstream media users –Group WI and OI).

In support, he claimed that mat weaving, which the activists promoted as a key instrument of regeneration, had never been a traditional occupation in the community.

In addition, when the group was asked to comment on the news item on 'Reforestation in the village', based on material provided by the leaders of 'the Revival of Traditional Ways of Life Project', participants objected to the text arguing that it was not possible to restore the mangrove forest since it was already too contaminated by chemical discharges from the factory.

However, while all the participants in this group shared a general sense of realism and pessimism about the practicality of the newsletter's proposals, four members were generally supportive of the philosophy of localism being advanced and the stress on preserving traditional ways of life. They were: the peasant, two members with backgrounds in traditional careers such as fishing and *Putsa* planting, and one person who had a close relationship with the team producing *Power of Community* and the Revival of Traditional Ways of Life Project.

Young People (Group three-YI and YN)

The responses of this group were also divided but not along indigenous /newcomer lines.

Two newcomer girls, Pla and Rut, and an indigenous boy, Nu, agreed with the localism concept and argument advanced in the first editorial in Power of Community. Nu, the son of fisherman's family who still occasionally went fishing with his family, believed that the concept was useful and practical arguing that fishing created jobs for people. Pla strongly believed that traditional ways would help teenagers to survive in a globalised world and saw the concept as practicable. Rut agreed but wanted to revive traditional ways in her home town in North Eastern Thailand, rather than in the village.

> Pla (newcomer girl): it seems to be possible (localism).
>
> Facilitator: are you convinced?
>
> Pla: yes because providing knowledge about local wisdom to teenagers should
> be a good way to kill the time that they will do bad things.

Rut (newcomer girl): I agree (Mainstream media users –Group YI and YN).

In contrast, the two indigenous girls and a newcomer boy saw localism as an unviable option in the face of the current dynamics of change. They regarded it as impractical given that the village was already modernised and that teenagers were attracted by the multiple opportunities for factory work and the wages it paid

> Ang (indigenous girl): I agree (with localism) but it is not possible to do because the world outside goes too far. Most people choose to go that way.

> Meaw (indigenous girl): because there are something arriving here.. entertainment and modernisation (*Sang-see-sieng*). Most of us are going to that way, not developing local wisdom (Mainstream media users –Group YI and YN).

Once again, the discussion in this group points to the complex role of remembered tradition in shaping responses. It was generally not the young people who had grown up in the village, where traditional ways had been rapidly eroded, who supported the position advanced by the newsletter but the young people who had migrated from North Eastern Thailand, where tradition had remained more resilient, giving the dream of revival more credibility.

Activist Media Users' Perspectives

Newcomers (Group five-WN and ON)

Not surprisingly, this group, who had migrated from a strongly traditional area to take advantage of the opportunities opened up by the modernisation and industrialisation of Rayong, saw no possibility of countering the dynamics of globalisation by reviving tradition. The group agreed that the activist VCD was not attractive and that people wanted entertainment (from films and music videos) rather lectures and that print media may on balance be more effective since people could read it in spare moments rather than setting aside a slice of time. Nevertheless, they put forward a number of reasons why the arguments advanced in the newsletter would not gain ground.

First, they saw the shifting economic basis of village life coupled with the spread of mass media constructing a new, and pervasive, way of living and thinking. As one older

newcomer said, 'modern life comes with the mass media. Even little kids, they knew a lot (about modern life) because they watch the media'.

Secondly, in this changed environment, where the cash nexus had replaced traditional forms of mutual aid and reciprocity, they saw money as essential to sustaining a decent standard of living and weaving mats could not produce sufficient income.

Thirdly, the activists' vision of the future was not only unable to compete effectively with the consumerist vision offered by the mass media, the newsletter also failed to give people the practical information they needed to get by on a daily basis. As the following extract shows, while participants accepted that people might read the newsletter if they had spare time it offered little competition to a Tesco pamphlet detailing special offers.

> Chalerm: the newsletter is more effective because they (the villagers) will pick up and read in free time. But CD is not. Some families don't have CD players. They won't play this kind of CD (activist-community CD). They will play film CD
>
> Jaew: they don't have time.
>
> Paiwan: no, I think it it because the newsletter is about community.
>
> Onsri: look..if leave it (the newsletter) beside Tesco and BigC pamphlets, people will see Tesco and BigC pamphlets.
>
> Chalerm: it's true
>
> Facilitator: despite being stories of our village.
>
> Chalerm: ..don't pick up. Even me, I have to pick up Tesco and BigC pamphlets.
>
> Jaew: which products are cheap, we need to check first.
>
> Chalerm: (we) pick up Tesco and BigC pamphlets and see first to check today if there are any discount products. This one (the newsletter), I will read it in free days.
>
> Facilitator: why?
>
> Jaew: The economic situation is (bad) like this. We need to check cheap products first (Activist media users –Group WN and ON).

Although participants argued that items on localism and reforestation were good stories they saw their ability to attract and keep an audience comprehensively trumped by the power of money. Only Onsri, a sixty-year-old woman and one of the leaders of the mat weaving group expressed her continuing hope for a revival of traditional ways of life although she was not a Rayong local.

Fourthly, the group saw clearly that whatever the villagers' wishes, the activists' proposals were very unlikely to get off the ground because they ran counter to the interests of the prevailing patronage system including covert or 'dark' influence (*Itthiphon*).

> Suriyaporn: I want to preserve it (the mangrove forest) but I feel...are beaten by money.
>
> The group: [laughing]
>
> Suriyaporn: (We) are beaten by rich people. It comes with globalisation , comes with industry.
>
> Chalerm: Seafood is also not eatable. The other days, I bought two kilo of crab, it was not eatable...had to throw them away.
>
> Facilitator: Everyone seems to agree with the concept but has no hope.
>
> Chalerm: No, because (we) can't compete with their money
>
> Paiwan: The hope is so little.
>
> Suriyaporn: The canal and mangrove forest are so dry. They dug it there. Nobody can punish them.
>
> Chalerm: Yes...nobody can do anything.
>
> Suriyaporn: We can't do anything. Someone complained at Municipal Office but (they) can't do anything. The villagers don't have money.
>
> Chalerm: hopeless...meaningless
>
> Suriyaporn: Talking (about factories) too much is not good. (about our security)
> (Activist media users –Group WN and ON).

Fifthly, the activist media were seen to be insufficiently attractive to engage the interest of young people, without whom any plan for future development would be unviable.

Nor were the indigenous villagers seen as particularly interested in lending their support. Onsri, a fifty year old female from North Eastern Thailand and one of the leaders of the weaving mat project argued that she could not understand why indigenous people had failed their own culture. She said once the NGO (RCDO) had pioneered the project the indigenous people should have it carried on. She was a newcomer but she still helped to preserve it.

Overall, the newcomer activist media users, like the newcomer and indigenous mainstream media users discussed above, shared a general view of the activist media as being worthy in principle but weak in practice and unable to effectively counter either the seductions of modernity or the power of money. Interestingly though, unlike the indigenous mainstream media users, this group did not highlight the power conflict between the local privileged elites and the activist producers.

Indigenous Villagers (Group four-WI and OI)

As mentioned in the analysis of responses to the Mae Moh issue, Wiboon, an uninvited working age newcomer, tried to dominate discussion in this group. This was a particular source of tension in relation to the present topic since he opposed the activist newsletter and the concept of reviving traditional ways of life, whereas most indigenous participants supported it.

The attraction of traditional ways of life was not simply nostalgic. It was rooted in necessity. As the farmer noted, 'we still planted it (*Putsa*) because we had no choice and no money to move to anywhere else'. For these peasant villagers, preserving *putsa* planting was a way to survive by increasing household incomes. Niran, a fifties- indigenous woman and a leader of the weaving mat project, saw' activism on behalf of tradition playing a key role in preserving knowledge on how to plant and harvest *putsa* for the next generation. She was also hopeful that 'the mangrove reforestation' project reported in the newsletter would be successful, and contribute to villagers' livelihoods, though other participants were more sceptical arguing that waste water from the factory had flowed into the forest for a long time. At a daily level however, practical pressures led in a different direction.

Although most of the group considered the newsletter and the activist media interesting, everyone admitted that they would pick up supermarkets pamphlets rather than *Power of Community*.

> Niran: people don't pick up *Power of Community* ...yes
>
> Ratree: if asking me, I will choose kind of...food, any cheap stuff. If they are cheap, I will go and buy them straight away because it (Power of Community) is not planted and not eatable. This is true....We need to look at ....this one has discount. Then we need to hurry to buy them. We can't buy from somewhere else because it is expensive. We have a little wage. If we just buy expensive things, then what our kids will eat? Then we have to buy them first.
>
> Facilitator: why don't you pick up Power of Community?
>
> Ratree: it is not eatable...get knowledge but not eatable and impractical (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

The newcomer in the group raised the question of media power, arguing that although the newsletter was called *Power of Community* it did not have the power to fight effectively for the villagers' interests in relation to key problems such as the pollution produced by the factory. This issue was then taken up by other participants, especially the peasant, who had experience of fighting with the factory. He wanted a media that he could complain to and had which had the power to help him with his problems.

> Viboon (a newcomer worker): it (Power of Community) is useful really. But if we just receive it without doing anything. It's not useful if receiving it but can't do anything, then, it's not useful, for example sand was sucked a lots.
>
> ....
>
> The village head assistant: In bad things, we can't protest it like unpleasant smell. How to protest it?
>
> (The whole group discussed about unpleasant smell loudly).
>
> ....
>
> Thanom: are we going to protest it? even a dog, it can't get in (to the factory). like waste water problem, where can we complain to? Supposed any district officer and deputy or even any mayor deputy, if anyone gets on well with the villagers, they can't live here anymore.

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Ratree: District Officer ---(the name) did protested (pollution) a lot, so he get removed.

Thanom: Anyone who gets on well with the villagers can't live here. Why? (Activist media users –Group WI and OI).

In contrast, Niran argued that *Power of Community* offered a channel that could help in building a network to negotiate with the factory. As she noted *'will the factory be scared of us if we can gather a group of thousands?'* Other participants saw *Power of Community* as useful as a point of access to unique and local information about the village.

The issue of media power returned in a subsequent discussion when Niran raised the issue of 'who controls the community media?' pointing out that apart from the activist print media, 'the community broadcasting voice' was useful for the village but that the broadcasting equipment was broken and never got repaired. It belonged to the Cheongnoen Local Administration who had allocated a budget to it but failed to keep it in working order. As one female member put it, if the activist media are in the hands of middle class activists and the formal community media are in hands of politicians and the state officers, what control can the villagers exercise over the media in this village?'

Young People (Group six-YI and YN)

This group considered that it was highly unrealistic to think that one could use local wisdom or traditional ways of life to resist globalisation. They supported this conclusion with three arguments

Firstly, Pui, an indigenous young man, argued that flow of globalisation was so extreme that small traditional groups could not resist.

Secondly, Waraporn, a newcomer girl pointed out that young people were unlikely to read the activist newsletter or be interested in community stories since they preferred cultural forms grounded in contemporary and cosmopolitan experience, music, sport and items on foreign celebrities. For her, 'foreign actors are handsome. I like them all', while Pui confessed her love of pop-rock bands like Scorpion and Bon Jovi. Oat, an indigenous boy voiced his admiration for Vin Deasel, a Hollywood action star, and Adisorn, a newcomer factory worker, admitted to particularly liking Jacky Shan and Stephen Chow Sing Chi, Hong Kong comedy actors. The group agreed that if the activist media set out to be more entertaining and presented more global music, sport, and film stories, it might be more successful in attracting youthful readers. But they failed to note that by making this concession to the cultural impact of globalisation, activist media would reproduce the very imaginative annexation it sought to oppose.

At the same time, as this anecdote in which Oat tells of a street fight with a gang in the village the night before reveals, they were well aware of the gap between the glamourised landscape of global images and the mundane reality of village life

> Facilitator: would you like to comment about teenagers in this village?
>
> Oat: their habit is not good, mam. I'm also with them.
>
> Facilitator: the fight happens often?
>
> Oat: it is in here exactly, mam. People in this area are so fed up with it. Sometimes midnight, we still ride motorcycles...sometimes I did it, I admit. Sometimes the senior have troubles. So they get me with them. ...(The senior) have strong emotion...like last night.
>
> Facilitator: what happened last night?

Oat: In front of the patrol station....we threw 'bottles' to them (the other gang).

Facilitator: Vin Diesel?

Oat: No...only bottles, just wanted to threaten them.

Facilitator: it sounds like Hollywood films.

Oat: ...to make them scared....last night we had over ten people.

Facilitator: Do you imitate Vin Diesel?

Oat: No mam, only throwing bottles, mam (Activist media users –Group YI and YN).

Overall although the group, including the indigenous members, saw globalisation as a positive force they were actively interested in translating it into practical gains on the ground. The two indigenous young men argued that at present it was hard to catch fish but that it might be easier if they had access to the most modern global technology. When discussing the news item on 'mangrove reforestation' in the newsletter, the group argued that the project would be feasible if there was collaboration between the villagers and the factory and the factory could be persuaded to stop releasing waste water into the forest.

12.2 Common Threads

In this chapter and the previous one we have explored how villagers of different ages and in varying situations have responded to selected representations of globalisation offered by the mainstream media and the activist media. The focus group sessions have revealed that the specific accounts and anecdotes offered by participants are informed and underpinned by a series of more general recurring themes- tradition, power, and representation. Drawing on both the focus group sessions and the wider ethnography of village culture, I want in the next chapter to explore how these common threads structure villagers' relations to the process of change and its management by the media.

Chapter 13

Living with Globalisation: Ideology and Activity

In his last major published work, Culture Inc (1989), Herbert Schiller, one of the leading proponents of the cultural imperialism perspective, answers criticisms from advocates of active audience theories that his position on ideological domination presupposes a passive audience. He argues that the fact that audiences are continually active in interpreting particular media products does not preclude the possibility that overall their world view is structured in fundamental ways by the continual, daily reinforcement of particular ideologies within the overall flow of media . As he notes;

> Audiences do, in fact, interpret messages variously. They may also transform
> them to correspond with their individual experiences and tastes. But when they
> are confronted with a message incessantly repeated in all cultural conduits,
> issuing from the commanders of the social order, their capacities are
> overwhelmed (Schiller 1989:156).

The results of the focus group sessions, presented in the last two chapters, together with the more general evidence collected during my fieldwork in the village, suggests that Schiller's distinction between everyday activity and critique and underlying ideological co-option offers a very useful starting point for understanding the patterns of response revealed in my research.

13.1 Speaking From Experience

Models of the active audience place particular emphasis on the ways that people draw on their own grounded experiences in interpreting and challenging media accounts. The participants in this study were no exception, as reactions to the news coverage of the Mae Moh power plant's efforts to re-brand itself as an environmental asset demonstrate particularly clearly.

Participants' own daily experience of continuing pollution and environmental degradation in the village provided a solid basis for widespread distrust of the media's account of good management at Mae Moh producing a newly clean environment. For them, all factories

were the same. None honoured their responsibilities towards the local community and all were backed by powerful business interests that ensured that the company's views were given maximum publicity.

This perception led in turn to widespread questioning of the credibility and trustworthiness of media accounts. In the view of indigenous villagers, whose traditional livelihoods had been destroyed by the TPI plant, the media acted as propaganda agents for powerful business interests. They saw this as part of a more broadly based public relations effort that filtered down to the local level through initiatives like the free health checks and hair cuts offered by the local factory. In their view, the media colluded in this positive promotion by excluding the voices of local people and failing to launch their own, independent, investigations into conditions on the ground.

The media's failure to take account of local experience was also a strong theme in discussion of the government's handling of the water shortage and the accusations that scarce resources were being allocated unfairly to benefit business and to the detriment of local people.

13.2 The Uses of Tradition

For participants over the age of thirty, memories of the village before the arrival of the factory and the rapid expansion of commercial media provided another resource for evaluation and critique. As we have seen, many older and working age residents regretted the demise of traditional customs and values. This was true of both indigenous villagers, who had seen traditional rituals and ways of life discontinued or marginalised, and newcomers, many of whom came from areas with a particularly strong sense of tradition. They saw the culture of their childhood, rooted in reciprocity, mutuality and propriety, being increasingly displaced by an individualistic, hedonistic, consumer oriented and media saturated culture. For many, the values that had been lost were thrown into stark relief by the coverage of the press conference announcing the media star, Kathleeya's pregnancy before marriage. Her appearance before the cameras, seemed to them, to crystallise the new irresponsibility. They saw her as a national role model who had betrayed the trust placed in her. As one female newcomer noted in her focus group:

She is a superstar and a celebrity of Thailand. She was pregnant before marriage but can still smile in front of the camera and the public. I really don't understand (Chalerm Maksuk, focus group, 2005).

This specific criticism was rooted in a more general condemnation of the stream of media material, much of it originating from overseas, that celebrated celebrity life styles, fashions and conduct which they saw as encouraging young people to wear provocative clothes and adopt attitudes towards sex and personal relations and undermining traditional values. Many held the newly globalised media primarily responsible for the rise in teenage pregnancies and drug use in the village.

13.3 Looking Elsewhere

In contrast, the young people in the study were more likely to see the landscape mapped out by globalised media as a sphere of personal freedom and opportunity. The focus group sessions confirmed the popularity of international sportsmen among young men and international actors among young women. Nor were these simply distant objects of admiration or desire. Versions of the fashions shown were readily available in the new shopping malls, allowing young people to translate resonant images and styles into their own everyday lives. These purchases were simultaneously a way of publicly asserting a modern identity and a way of looking beyond the confines of the village, of being cosmopolitan rather than local.

Further, as we saw in the focus group responses to the talent contest segment of the variety show, At Ten, (the most popular television show among young villagers) a number of young people saw the new entertainment industry as a route out of the village, an opening to a new career and to upward mobility. The increasing prominence of hybrid popular cultural forms in these performances, combining imported and Thai elements, grounded these aspirations in a sense of the possible. The imagined journeys towards more desirable life styles were not to New York or Tokyo, but to Bangkok with the talent contest staged in the local shopping mall acting as a possible staging post.

As the ethnographic research revealed, adult respondents too harboured dreams of moving up socially and possibly away geographically, as differential reactions to the routine late

morning presentation of stock market closing prices on the major television channels demonstrated. While the educated middle class might participate in the globalised financial system by investing in shares, some indigenous and newcomers on low incomes picked up the televised moving price index in order to gamble in the illegal community lottery, the '*huay hun*', which ran daily from Monday to Friday and was based on the national and international stock markets.

13.4 Recognising Necessity

As we have noted, villager's attitudes toward globalisation were strongly structured by whether overall they had gained or lost from the changes that had transformed the village. Most young people and most adult newcomers who had found work in the new industries saw change as positive, improving material conditions and life styles and opening up opportunities. In contrast, most indigenous villagers, who has seen their traditional occupations rendered unviable by building work and pollution, tended to see change as generating problems and deficits. But all groups subscribed to the core ideological tenet of globalism, that the present direction of change was inevitable and irreversible. The winners embraced this with enthusiasm. The losers accepted it. This resignation was not due simply to the continual reinforcement of this message in the mainstream media, the key point stressed by Schiller. What his argument misses, and the reason why detailed ethnographic work is so vital to understanding popular responses to change, is that they are unable to identify any agency capable of pressing for alternatives effectively.

The indigenous villagers had seen the early protests against the factory fail to secure a long term solution to the problems of pollution, environmental degradation, and the destruction of traditional livelihoods. They had also seen the factory successfully take control of the local political process, through the replacement of the former representatives with incumbents sympathetic to business interests, and also build support in the community through their investments in local activities and their provision of free health checks and other services.

As the ethnography revealed, they saw these arrangements and collusions as instances of a generalised network of power that operated both openly, through the power of money and

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through patron-client relations, and covertly through the exercise of 'dark influence' (*Ittiphon*). This network linked the local to the national, industry to politics, and politics to the mainstream media. They saw no way that ordinary people, without money or connections, could successfully counter these modalities of power.

Despite its intellectual influence on social movements, Buddhism had failed to offer effective critical leadership at a local level. Popular observance at the village temples had dropped away as villagers embraced the new time regimes organised around industrial production and came to prefer spending holidays in the mall or at home, watching DVDs, rather than observing traditional rituals. The temple had also aroused local suspicions by accepting the factory's gift of a new clean water supply. As a consequence the local monk's efforts to restore the local mangrove forest met with almost no practical popular support.

The NGO's more ambitious attempt the revive the local community by revivifying local traditions and re-launching the local craft of mat weaving had also failed to command popular support from villagers who saw the proposals as unrealistic and unable to provide secure incomes at a level they found acceptable. As we have seen, this initiative's problems were compounded by the failure of the main means of promoting the ideas underpinning the scheme, the local newsletter, *Power of Community*, and its inability to attract either attention or support across the village. For many villagers it appeared as another instance of communication from 'on high', devised elsewhere, produced in alienating language and presented to them as a 'done deal' with little or no effort to consult or involve them. Nor, unlike the lists of special offers put out by the local supermarkets, to which a number of respondents compared it, did it offer practical information that they could act on to make the best of immediate situations.

The newsletter's failure to engage even those who read it regularly, is further evidenced by the absence of consistent differences in response between the mainstream and activist media focus groups. As the results of that exercise show, the differences that counted were social and economic – between indigenous villagers and newcomers, between young people and their elders, and, on some issues, between genders- since it was these that structured access to both experience and interpretive resources.

13.5 Demanding Representation

Although many participants in this study could see no viable alternative to the current pattern of globalisation, in focus group sessions and fieldwork interviews they frequently returned to the question of representation and to the demand that 'the powers that be' listen to their voices and views and take account of their needs. As the content analysis and critical discourse case studies demonstrate very clearly, local voices and experiences were almost totally excluded from a mainstream television news system oriented almost entirely to official sources. This general pattern of exclusion was reproduced in the local activist media, though not in such a thoroughgoing form.

Some community leaders were shown the first edit of the VCD and asked to suggest improvements and some villagers were invited to be guests on interview programmes on the community radio station but very few acted as news sources or wrote articles for the newsletter. As a consequence, as we have argued, these interventions are more accurately described as 'activist' media or to use Traber's 1985 term 'advocacy media' rather than grass roots media. They challenged the ideology of globalism intellectually and proposed an alternative to the current dynamics of globalisation, but they were designed and produced by educated middle class activists who were visitors to the community rather than by residents committed to publicising a particular position. As a consequence, there was a lack of fit between the proposals advanced in the newsletter and the villager's priorities, as they perceived them.

It was this double exclusion, form both the mainstream news media and the local activist media, that underpinned the widespread approval and support among my participants for Sorayuth's programme on Channel 3. They saw in his Morning News Talk show a space in which official pronouncements and decisions could be subject to sceptical scrutiny in a language that was immediately accessible and from a position that ventroliquised the voice of the 'ordinary' person. The programme operated within a clear framework of commercial populism, designed to maximise audiences by cutting across social divisions and appealing to a unitary conception of the 'people', but its closeness to everyday conversation struck an immediate chord of recognition. It could be argued that the programme's total dependence on the agenda constructed by press reporting pulled it firmly back towards the solid ground of official opinion, but it was precisely the way Sorayuth negotiated and argued with these

sources, registering his distance from them through the use of humour and irony, that appealed to many respondents. They also applauded his invitation to two local people to appear on his other programme to discuss the water shortage. They saw in these instances a rare glimpse of themselves as participants in debates on the issues and processes that were daily transforming their lives.

Since this present study was completed, Thailand has established a new public service broadcasting system. How it responds to popular demands for more access, greater voice, and enhanced representation will be one of its major tests.

Chapter 14

Conclusion

The research reported here has explored the relationships between globalisation, media and community, employing a multi-method approach that has combined ethnography, content analysis, critical discourse analysis, and audience analysis.

Ethnography was conducted in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked, a formerly agricultural village in Rayong province, Eastern Thailand, which has been transformed over the last two decades by its incorporation into a capitalist modernity characterised by industrialisation, urbanisation and the arrival of globalised consumerism. The research has aimed to place individual and group responses to change in the context of wider processes of transformation while, at the same time, anchoring accounts of general shifts in detailed instances of grounded experience.

14.1 Review and Reflection

The findings of the research can be summarised under three main headings: power relations and ideology; media representations; and audience analysis.

(1) Power Relations and Ideologies

The fieldwork conducted in Ban Noen Putsa Pluak Ked revealed that the villagers' perspectives were complex, dynamic and paradoxical. Globalisation was identified with modernity and modernisation since the changes set in motion by these distinct but related processes coincided in time and attempts to negotiate their impacts tended to take individual rather than collective forms. As originally hypothesised, length of residence and age were important factors in structuring responses and perspectives but were not the only ones. As the fieldwork progressed however it became evident that people's relation to the core nexus of power, the 'patron client relationship' was also crucial. Since this factor was not seen as central when the research strategy was originally devised, it was not possible to integrate it into the fieldwork as fully as it merited. Future research needs to rectify this.

The local power nexus was built around the patron client relations developed by local elites made up of industry leaders, local business men, state officials, bureaucrats, community leaders, and politicians. The findings suggest that how the villagers responded to globalisation depended to a significant degree on whether they benefited or were excluded from the favours flowing from these relations.

The empirical evidence I have collected, although incomplete, has led me to conclude that patron client relationships were more influential than the two original variables, age and length of residence. First, the privileged group and the newcomers who had seen their standards of living improve as a result of moving to the new industrial zone perceived globalisation as the primary engine of 'growth' and were generally welcoming of the changes it had brought. Second, poorer indigenous villagers, especially peasants and fishermen, perceived themselves as net 'losers' from change because they lacked both power and money although some indigenous residents accepted globalisation but opposed industry. Third, some former local leaders and indigenous residents who had seen their traditional status and power eroded contested the new elites and tried to recover tradition.

The survey and ethnographic findings presented in chapter 7 suggests that industrialisation, coupled with the extension of a wage economy and the expansion of consumerism has played a key role in transforming traditional ways of life and installing a more money-oriented mode of action. After the battle between the factory and the villages in 1995, collective action in the village became much more centered around activities relating to money, personal interest or economic benefit. The only traditional form of collective action that continued was '*Tid rang-Shai rang*' or mutual assistance but this only operated occasionally and was confined to older indigenous people. Resistance to industrialisation and globalisation still existed in the community, but migrated from collective actions to individual responses such as a nostalgia for community tradition and adherence to superstition (*Kon song chao*).

The popular spiritual practices such as fortune-telling using cards and spirit mediums *(Kon song chao)*, point to an interesting aspect of the relationship between globalisation, power relations and the re-invention of identity among those who had lost from the process of change. The ethnographic findings presented in chapter 7 suggest that becoming a spirit

medium brought new power and respect to powerless and poor peasants who had lost out in the globalisation process and allowed farmers to restore a degree of control over their lives by re-inventing themselves as forceful and respected agents. In the process, the patron-client relations between state officers and powerful capitalists and poor farmers were re-arranged. This complex interplay between grounded experience and cultural resources and its entanglement with the core nexus of power relations is absent from both the globalisation perspectives offered by Giddens, Robertson and Albrow and localization studies. Yet as this study shows, it a vital dimension of analysis.

Importantly, investigating the operation of the core nexus more thoroughly in the case study would have thrown new light on the process of cultural globalisation in general and Gidden's notion of disembedding (Giddens, 1990) and Tomlinson's idea of deterritorialization (Tomlinson, 1999). While Tomlinson's work on deterritorialization offers a useful framework for examining the impacts of media representations, it neglects the role of grounded experiences. As the survey findings reported in chapter 7 suggest, teenagers' life styles and perceptions were in the process of being detached from the traditions of the community. Doing business and working in factory were seen as the best options for future self development.

The model of patron-client relationships presented in chapter 7 could help to explain the process of lifting out of local contexts more clearly. As my observations and ethnographic findings suggest, teenagers in the community have grown up with industry, shopping malls and advanced communications and have no direct experience of village life before the arrival of the factory. Local capitalists see them as a primary target group for cooption to their own business interests. As the interview with TPI management in chapter 7 suggested, local capitalists developed a strategy of employing indigenous people's descendants to work for the factory as a way of establishing a patronage system and reducing resistance and cemented these ties by patronizing local educational organisations and sport activities, including establishing a technology college in the village to produce human resources for their business. Collaboration between local capitalists, state officials and community leaders also drove the development of consumerism with the opening on new shopping malls. As a consequence, for teenagers, whether indigenous or newcomers, rich or poor, business and enterprise became associated with gaining power and money.

(2) Media Representations

The content analysis of television news programmes on channels 3 and 7 revealed a persistent pattern of attention that tended to sustain prevailing power relations. Economic and political coverage was heavily weighted towards pro-globalisation themes such as economic growth, GDP growth, the benefits of tourism and exports, while coverage of the cultural arena was dominated by celebrations of international sports especially football, golf and tennis and foreign cultures (life styles, music and films); and by celebrity life styles that served to dramatise the possibilities of the new consumerism. Conversely, the negative consequences of globalisation such as environmental degradation, poverty, and cultural dislocation received very little coverage. Access to voice was similarly skewed with international news agencies, cabinet/state employees, and private business organisations dominating news sources and NGOs, independent experts, and local people being quoted only very infrequently.

The detailed case studies of selected stories carried out using critical discourse analysis confirmed that the mainstream television news reproduced an ideology of globalism grounded in a neo-liberalism which promoted the benefits of increasing industrialisation and portrayed alternatives as unrealistic and unviable. This was particularly evident in the coverage of the water shortage, where the frames employed strongly supported government and state agencies and denied the legitimacy of local protests presented against the disproportionate allocation of water to industry portraying participants as dupes manipulated by 'outside' political groups. Arguably, the general metropolitan Bangkok bias of Thialand's prevailing news culture, coupled with its heavy reliance on official sources, consistently served to reinforce central government and marginalise local challenges.

The dominant frames were constructed not only around promotional discourses and advertorials that integrated corporate publicity into the bulletins, but also around the articulation of 'common sense'. Arguably, the more populist style of presentation on Channel 3, which mobilised a carefully constructed version of 'common sense' was more effective in promoting the discourse of globalism than the more formal presentational style on Channel 7. At the same time, as we saw with the comment shows on Channel 3, in the

hands of a celebrity presenter, populist presentational style could also act as a vehicle for skeptical views.

Turning to representations in the activist media, the analysis of the front pages and editorial pages of the newsletter *'Power of Community'* revealed a strong emphasis on localism and the promotion of 'the Revival of Community Ways of Life Project' based on 'the community culture' concept. *Power of Community* advanced this position by employing a binary opposition that pitted the advantages of localism (traditional ways of life, a variety of cultural heritages, natural resources and religions), against the negative consequences of globalisation. The activists involved saw the newsletter as 'a tool' with which to negotiate and overcome these consequences but failed to involve local people in either its production or in formulating the political position and practical strategies it promoted. Consequently, it remained a 'top-down' rather than a 'bottom-up' intervention.

At first sight, the idea of 'localism' developed by the activists studies in the fieldwork appears similar to Hines's (2000) concept of localization discussed in chapter one. Both argue that in globalisation process, powerful supranational organisations such as IMF, the World Bank and TNCs subjugate poor countries and poor people, especially small farmers. The evidence presented in chapters 7 and 13 however, suggests that Hines's concept is more practical of the two since it places more emphasis on economic innovation as the key factor through which a localized economy can generate 'community cohesion, a reduction in poverty and inequality and an improvement in livelihoods, social infrastructure and environmental protection' (Hines, 2000:5). In contrast, the activist's strategy for localism was based on the concept of 'community culture' and placed most emphasis on local wisdom, religions, natural resources and social capital (Thongdeelert, 2004).

As we have discussed above, the villagers saw this construction of localism as unrealistic and impractical. The findings in chapter 7 and 12 however, strongly suggest that they would be more sympathetic to localism strategies that addressed their real economic conditions and offered practical support for making a living. Even so, like the activists, Hines fails to take account of the central role played by the core nexus of power relations which as chapters 7, 11 and 12 have shown is one of the most significant factors shaping the local implementation of both globalisation and localization processes.

(3) Audience Reception.

The responses of local audiences to both mainstream and activists media were explored using a multi-method combination of ethnography, a questionnaire survey and focus groups.

Participants in the six focus groups were asked to watch and respond to video clips of the news coverage of the water shortage and the Mae Moh power plant and to comment on the two other case study issues, the scandal surrounding the pre-martial pregnancy of a celebrity and the At Ten variety show. They were also asked to read and comment on the activist newsletter 'Power of Community'.

On the two political-economic issues, Mae Moh and the water shortage, length of residence emerged as a key dimension organising perceptions while on the two cultural issues, age was a more important variable. These findings confirmed our original conjecture that attitudes to economic issues were likely to be influenced by perceived material gains and losses from change, whereas attitudes to moral issues and to the ethos of individualism, expressed most forcefully in consumerism, were more likely to divide along generational lines.

The focus group research did not tell the whole story. The informal conversations that occurred during the fieldwork pointed to the importance of other factors in structuring responses to the mainstream media, most notably the role of patron client relationship and villagers' perceptions of dark or concealed influences (*Ittiphon*) working out of public view. The fact that these elements were rarely mentioned in the relatively structured exchanges of the focus group sessions highlights the dangers of relying solely on this single method and the importance of conducting intensive fieldwork that places participants in their multiple social contexts.

The importance of ethnography was confirmed by the findings showing that while the villagers were generally sympathetic to the concept of localism and preserving traditional ways of life, they rejected the proposals advanced in the activist media text as impractical and unrealistic given the concrete circumstances of their day to day lives. Here again however, power relations played an important role in structuring responses with different

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groups responding differently depending on the extent to which the activist media assisted in maintaining or challenging their own power and interests. For example, the local government officers opposed the activist media because its discourse undermined their power base in the area. In contrast, the poorer villagers opposed it because they believed that the activist media did not have the power to negotiate successfully with privileged groups.

Overall, the findings of this research strongly suggest that it is not possible to study media reception in transitional situations without placing participants' responses in a range of relevant contexts that provide resources for interpretation. These include; kinship networks, religious institutions, supernatural beliefs (*Kon Song Choa*), family and peer group relations, informal meetings and conversations across a range of everyday locales, education, and relations with powerful people in the locality.

14.2 The Main Arguments Revisited

Returning to the three main propositions with which we began this study, we can now ask how the results of our research contribute to a better understanding of the issues they raise.

Argument 1 Globalisation is an ideological as well as an economic, political and cultural process

The institutional approach to globalisation, typified by Giddens' work (1990) presents it primarily as a process of structural transformation in the economic, political and military spheres and has little to say about how popular consent to these shifts is constructed or secured. Following John Thompson's 1990 definition of ideology as discourse that serves to support existing relations of power in this thesis, I have identified two core strands in the ideology that legitimates the current wave of globalisation; globalism and consumerism.

The ideology of globalism presents current shifts as inevitable and unstoppable on the grounds that governments have no choice but to respond to global forces and try to position the nation to best advantage in the new global marketplace. Since there is 'no alternative' to current strategies any attempt to oppose or reverse the commitment to rapid industrialisation is cast as unrealistic or obstructive. Against this, the benefits of current policies are cemented by the celebration of consumerism with its promise of both

improved material conditions of life and increased freedom of personal choice and expression. However, since ideology is an exercise in power its organisation is inevitably caught up in the crossfire between power blocs.

The fieldwork for this study was conducted under the Thaksin administration. Soon afterwards the government was deposed in a military coup, an event that dramatised the tensions within the Thai elite. The ideological systems of globalism and consumerism operate in Thailand on terrain already occupied by a long standing ideological formation. At the heart of this system is the figure of the monarch representing the essence of the nation with the army cast as guardians . The traditional hierarchy and order that this system celebrates is in tension with the new power formations of globalisation. Continuity is pitched against the creative destruction of commerce, money as the global measure of all things against the spirit of the nation. These oppositions are mapped onto the tensions between the traditional national elites and the Thai members of the emerging transnational capitalist class of corporate leaders and merchants and globalising state bureaucrats and politicians (Sklair, 2002:99).

As noted earlier, Thailand is unusual among Asian nations in never having been colonised by either the western powers or a modernising Japan. This has had two consequences: continuities are perhaps more persistent than elsewhere, and capitalist modernity had only been fully introduced as a result of the current wave of globalisation. Despite these peculiarities however, the tension between traditional and emerging elites is characteristic of a number of emerging economies and merits more sustained attention in future research.

As we have also seen, differential relations to the new core nexus, and the patronage system coalescing around it, are also crucial in explaining popular attitudes to change and responses to media representations.

Argument 2 The mainstream television news serves to confirm prevailing power relations and to exclude the voices of local people and those marginalized or disposed by globalisation.

The textual analysis of media respresentations of globalisation reported here has focused primarily on the television news bulletins produced by Channels 3 and 7, which villagers nominated as among the programmes they watched most often. Overall the findings lent strong support to Argument 2.

They revealed an overwhelming reliance on official sources (drawn from national political, administrative and economic elites) and on international news agencies and a corresponding neglect of voices articulating grounded experience or dissenting views. This biased sourcing of stories and access to voice produced an account of change that persistently reproduced both the ideology of globalism and the celebration of consumerism. Although, as we have seen, Thai terrestrial television remains firmly in national hands, the strong reliance on international news agency copy and the agenda it represents supports Herman and McChesney's argument that western based communications conglomerates are playing a major role in cementing the idea that only the market system can deliver 'economic growth assessed by gross domestic product (GDP) or per capita income' (Herman and McChesney, 1997:189).

While this general argument from critical political economy is supported by the evidence reported here. the overall pattern of support for market driven growth conceals interesting variations of representations between the two channels we analysed, differences that map onto the elite tensions mentioned above. Channel 7, a state-owned television station (with its ties to the army) presented itself as the voice of order, an impression embedded in the formality of the studio set up and the presentational style.

As we have seen in the critical discourse analysis of the water shortage issue in chapter 9, the Channel 7 evening news programme tended to give more coverage to government and Army attempts to relieve the drought in Rayong. With a presentational strategy organized around formality and mainly relying on official sources, such as the prime minister, the cabinet and state officers, Channel 7's promotional re-branding of the Mae Moh power

plant as environmentally friendly and an asset to the community (rather than a source of continuing pollution) acted as an advertorial for government.

In contrast to this paternalistic approach, Channel 3, another state-owned station, but operated by a tycoon family, Maleenon and BEC World, mobilised a more populist style mirroring the populist political platform of the Thaksin government with which it had strong ties. As we have seen however, this populist use of colloquial speech and a more informal, conversational, presentational style, had contradictory effects. On the one hand, by embedding the ideology of globalism in common sense and taken-for-grantedness it rendered it more effective.

As we have seen the analysis of channel 3 news programmes presented in chapter 9, the cases study of water shortage and Mae Moh power plant strongly support this argument. The newsreaders on channel 3 did not simply read news. They told stories interspersed with informal conversation and comment. By employing the language of family and peer conversation and creating a more relaxed atmosphere this informality had the effect of anchoring the 'normality' of the dominant discourse of globalism more securely in everyday experience and thinking. This strategy offers a useful empirical example of Gramsci's argument that the ideological mobilization of 'common sense' aims to generalize 'the uncritical and largely unconscious way of perceiving and understanding the world that has become 'common' in any given epoch' (Gramsci, 1971:322).

On the other hand, in the comment programmes hosted by the country's best know presenter, the introduction of vernacular voices and the use of humour and irony, opened up spaces (albeit strongly circumscribed) for registering distance and even dissent from prevailing policies.

Nonetheless, despite the different discursive strategies employed by channel 7 and channel 3 news, both offered constructions of events that supported the ideology of globalism, in particular Steger's second proposition (see chapter one) that 'globalisation is inevitable and irreversible' and his fourth proposition that 'globalisation benefits everyone' (Steger, 2002). As our findings also show, both channels bolstered these core propositions by marginalizing or excluding both the critical questioning that might have been generated by

investigative reporting and the competing constructions generated by local popular movements.

The content analysis presented in chapter 8 confirmed that news representations were based overwhelmingly on official sources, namely international news agencies, the cabinet and celebrities, while local people, independent experts and marginalized groups were neglected. Furthermore, the positive outcomes of globalisation - industry, GDP growth, tourism and celebrity life styles - tended to occupy more space than negative themes. This pattern supports the arguments put forward by Ross and Trachte (1990), Sklair (2002), Herman and McChesney (1997), and Eoseewong (2001) which see leading local capitalists and TNCs gaining more opportunities to sustain their interests through the mainstream media representations.

With the rapid commercialisation of television services around the world, and the growing reliance on strategies that anchor programming in everyday experience and expression, the impacts and contradictions of commercial populism in emerging economies is another area that merits further research.

In short, I argue that globalisation in fact has been distributed in the sense of the ideology of globalism which has been embedded in the society through the mainstream television news, especially channel 3 and 7, as Steger (2002) proposes in his five claims of globalism (see chapter 1).

Argument 3 The voices of marginalized groups and local people are also absent from activist media proposing alternatives to dominant accounts of globalisation leaving them doubly excluded.

A number of commentators (see for example, Downing, 2001; Atton, 2002; Couldry and Curran, 2003) have argued that non-mainstream media offer a communicative space in which alternative positions can be articulated and developed. On the basis of my fieldwork I have argued that the case under investigation failed to fulfill this promise and is more usefully described as an exercise in 'activist' rather that alternative media. There is a tendency to assume that the literature produced by globalisation resistance movements

articulates the experiences and aspiration of indigenous peoples and grassroots groups who have been negatively effected by globalisation.

In his Globalisation and Discourse (2006) for example, Fairclough presents, without comment, a Greenpeace flyer, as an expression of 'discourse from below'. The research reported here however, raises two key questions about the dynamics of representation. Firstly, who takes the major role in generating the ideologies and producing the media distributed by alternative movements? Second, what aspects of grounded experiences and demands are given prominence? My research suggests that the newsletter produced for circulation in the village was very much the product of activist ideologies circulating among intellectual elites rather than an expression of local people's daily experiences and problems. As a consequence it met with widespread indifference and resistance, though the basis of rejection varied between different groups.

The initiative was launched in a community that had been comprehensively transformed by two decades of industrialisation, urbanisation, and consumerism. The activists' advocacy of localism and the revival of traditional crafts was widely seen as unrealistic and out of touch with village realities (see Chapter 10). Newcomers who had benefited from change raised questions about the practicalities asking how initiatives would be funded and whether the economic returns to workers and their families would match those delivered by industrialisation. Indigenous villagers who had been demoralised by change and felt that the world they had known had been irrevocably transformed, no longer had a clear conception of what constituted authentic 'tradition' or 'community', and saw their past reduced to fragments that could not now be reassembled. Local politicians, administrators, and power brokers who had collaborated in mainstream development were opposed because they saw the activists as a potential rival power base.

The sense of popular disengagement from the position advanced by the newsletter was further reinforced by its failure to address the social issues that villagers placed at the top of their agenda for practical action: adverse environmental impacts, rising levels of drug dependence, and problems of teenage misbehaviour. The newsletter spoke eloquently in general terms about the need to address the general ills of globalisation but was silent on

the problems that local people attributed the change to and which directly affected their personal security and quality of life.

Only when the newsletter was about to be discontinued did activists make a concerted attempt to canvass local opinion or to involve local people in the production process. By then it was too late. The funding difficulties, lack of proper equipment and appropriate production skills, and inadequate distribution, that had plagued the venture from the outset, coupled with the ever present competition for time and attention from commercial media and the opposition of local power groups, finally sunk it. Lacking a secure basis of popular support it had nothing to fall back on.

This instance of an activist initiative managed by intellectuals on behalf of the downtrodden and beset with tensions between romantic ideals and practical realities, is by no means unique in the annals of critical social intervention, but the evidence collected here reinforces the need for future work on alternative media in emerging economies to go beyond the text and to place relations of production and reception fully in their social context.

14.3 Limitations and Directions for Future Research

The study reported here has addressed a process of change that has provoked divisions and conflicts within the community and caused widespread dislocation, anxiety and dispossession as well as advances in material well being. This history, together with the immediate social contexts in which the research was conducted, rendered the standard research methods less effective than in most Western settings. Due to problems of literacy and interpretation the questionnaire was administered orally as a de facto structured interview. It was sometimes difficult to talk to respondents alone and they were hesitant to express candid opinions on sensitive issues when their comments could be overheard.

The focus groups were also problematic. In Thai society, particularly in rural or semi rural areas like Ban Noen Putsa Plank Ked, people are not used to expressing personal opinions in public. Added to which, local officials and power holders would turn up to sessions uninvited, with the result that participants were less willing to be candid because they

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feared that the expression of dissenting opinions might be held against them and they would fall foul of the hidden workings of power (*Ittiphon*).

This is not to say that these exercises were redundant. The questionnaire generated essential base line data on basic patterns of activity, including media consumption, and the focus group sessions did generate illuminating discussion. But the experience reported here confirms that these methods, employed either singly or in combination, are insufficient in research settings in transitional societies and that sustained ethnographic work is essential to unraveling sensitive issues in a complex and conflicted community.

The ethnographic work I conducted, with its mix of participant observation, in-depth interviews, and photo collection, was effective in two main ways. Firstly, it provided a check on the validity of the data collected from the survey and the focus groups. Secondly, and arguably, more importantly, it revealed important aspects of the situation that had not emerged so clearly from the other methods, most notably the importance of the local power nexus and the patron client relations it supported. Unfortunately, the salience of this key dimension of the situation only became clear after the fieldwork strategy had been finalised and implemented.

Nevertheless, employing ethnographic methods, with their more extensive demands on respondent's time and participation, I pose ethical issues particularly as regards the relationship between the researcher and the participants, and the advantage participants might gain from the research. As an indigenous male reported in chapter 7 noted, initially the villagers saw researchers as one of the key actors in the cycle of power relations arriving in the community from outside, collecting data for their own professional promotion or interests, and leaving without ever having contributed anything practical to sorting out the villagers' difficulties. Against this background of local experience and attitudes, it was initially difficult to build up good relations and trust with the villagers, particularly in relation to sensitive issues and conflicts of power.

However, after a couple of months in the village, most residents came to understand what I was trying to do and accepted that I was not working for either the factory or state agencies. Although the villagers were willing to support me and provide information, even

on sensitive issues, I realized that the question of what they gained from the research after I finished and left the fieldwork was vital, in terms of both research conduct and ethics, and should not be ignored.

I addressed this issue by giving prominence to grounded experienced, particularly the experiences of those who had lost out from change. In a situation where these experiences were excluded from both the mainstream and activist media, my work offered a space where they could be recorded and the causes of their present conditions examined. My work on the exclusionary nature of mainstream media representations also prompted me to explore possible alternatives, and led me to examine the performance of the recently constituted Thai Public Broadcasting Services (TPBS) system. I conducted an initial pilot study by collecting samples of the TPBS news programme and compared them with the patterns revealed in the present research. This study was presented in IAMCR conference in Stockholm, Sweden in July 2008.

As with all ethnographic work based on a single site visit, this study is constrained by time limitations. Although I spent a total of eight months in the village, this was too short a time to fully unravel the complexities of the changes then in process. As mentioned earlier, the fieldwork was already well advanced before I fully grasped how central the core nexus of power relations was in organizing both experiences of change and responses to them. A single visit also precludes engagement with subsequent developments. After I left the fieldwork site, a number of activities organized by activists took place as part of 'the Revival of Community Ways of Life Project'. Had I had time to re-visit the village, it would have been important to examine the career of these initiatives.

Future studies however, need to include local economic and political power holders as ethnographic participants alongside groups on the receiving end of decisions. My extended interviews with villagers also pointed to the value of developing work around life histories, encouraging subjects to recount their personal and professional careers as a way of linking biographies to histories and generated ideal typical case studies of the differential experiences and consequences of change. Similarly, my experiment with photo collection confirmed the value of using a wider range of techniques developed within visual

anthropology, including video diaries and accompanied by videotaped walks with participants through familiar social settings, such as the local shopping mall.

The range of media dealt with also needs to be widened. My research focused on television news and comment programmes for two reasons. Firstly, they operate as major conduits of the prevailing ideologies of globalism and consumerism. Secondly, villagers nominated them as among the programmes they watched most often. However, both the questionnaire survey and the ethnographic work revealed the importance of entertainment media particularly among young people. Almost every household watched the popular dramas broadcast after the evening news bulletins and frequently watched feature films on VCD. The most popular magazines were saturated with stories about the new celebrities.

These media engage with themes that are central to the experience globalization: the disruptions of change and their impact on families, the tangled relations between the national and the global, and the dynamics of consumption and the lure of the new worlds of goods. Future research needs, as a matter of urgency, to investigate how these media operate ideologically, how far they provide space for alternative perspectives, and how they are interpreted by audiences. This task is made more urgent by a major innovation in the Thai broadcasting system.

In January 2008 the country's first public broadcasting service, the Thai Public Broadcasting Television Services (TPBS), was launched into an environment previously dominated by commercial channels. The results of this study confirm the pressing need for a service that is more hospitable to grassroots experience and more open to debate and dissent on the gains and losses of change.

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Puth Sornnok, staff of Rayong Community Development Organisation (RCDO), June-September
    2005

Sukit Chinniyompanich, a local politicians and business man in Ban Neon Putsa Pluak Ked, April-
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List of six survey respondent groups

Group young indigenous villagers (YI), 15-30 years old

Group young newcomers (YN), 15-30 years old

Group working age indigenous villagers (WI), 31-50 years old

Group working age newcomers (WN), 31-50 years old

Group older indigenous villagers (OI), over 50 years old

Group older newcomers (ON), over 50 years old

List of Focus groups

Mainstream media users

Group WI and OI, Indigenous villagers of working aged 31-50 years old and over 50 years old.

Group WN and ON, Newcomers of working aged 31-50 years and over 50 years old.

Group YI and YN, Young People aged 15-30 years descendents of both indigenous villagers and newcomers.

Activist media users

Group WI and OI, Indigenous villagers of working aged 31-50 years old and over 50 years old.

Group WN and ON, Newcomers of working aged 31-50 years and over 50years old .

Group YI and YN, Young people aged 15-30 years both indigenous and newcomers.

Source in focus group discussion (chapter 13)

Chalerm Maksuk (2005), an older newcomer woman, in Focus group discussion, September 2005

Appendix A

Questionnaire of the Survey

<div align="center">

Questionnaire: TEENAGERS

(If you are over 30 years old, please fill in the questionnaire for adult group)

</div>

CODE ....
GROUP ....

<div align="center">

Part 1 General data

</div>

(1) Have you lived in Moo 5 Tumbon Cheng Neon before the arrival of the factories?

    ⌐ Yes   I have lived there since year ....

    ⌐ No   I went there in year ....

(2) Gender: ⌐ Male   ⌐ Female

(3) Age: ....

(4) Occupation: ....

(5) What is your income per month?

    ⌐ Less than 3,000 baht

    ⌐ 3,001 - 8,000 baht

    ⌐ 8,001 - 20,000 baht

    ⌐ More than 20,001 baht

(6) Are you or your family member working or used to work in factories?

    ⌐ No

    ⌐ Yes

    Please state the name of the factory and address: ....

                               ....

<div align="center">

Part 2 Media reception

</div>

(7) Do you have television in your household?   ⌐ Yes   ⌐ No
    If no, please go to Question (10).

(8) How many hours do you watch television in a day?

    ⌐ Less than 1 hour

    ⌐ 1 to 2 hours

    ⌐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours

    ⌐ More than 20,001 baht

(9) What TV programmes do you often watch? *You can choose more than one.*

⌐ Soap opera	Please specify:	Channel: ....
⌐ News	Channel:	Broadcast time: ....
⌐ Games shows	Please specify:	Channel: ....
⌐ Sports	Please specify:	Channel: ....

☐ Games shows   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

    ☐ Variety shows   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

    ☐ Documentary   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

    ☐ News talk   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

    ☐ Others   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

(10) Do you listen to radio?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
    If no, please go to Question (15)

(11) If yes, how many hours do you listen to the radio?
    ☐ Less than 1 hour
    ☐ 1 to 2 hours
    ☐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours
    ☐ More than 20,001 baht

(12) Which radio station do you listen most often? ....

(13) Please specify the radio programmes do you listen most often? ....

(14) What time do you listen to radio? State multiple times if necessary.
    ....
    ....

(15) Do you read newspaper?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
    If no, please go to Question (19)

(16) If yes, which newspaper do you read most often? *You can choose more than one.*
    ☐ Thai rath   ☐ Daily news   ☐ Matichon   ☐ Kao sod
    ☐ Others   Please specify: ....

(17) How often do you read newspaper?
    ☐ Everyday
    ☐ 2 to 3 times a week
    ☐ Once a week
    ☐ Once in a while

(18) Which pages or columns in the newspaper do you read mostly?
    ☐ Headlines (Page 1)   ☐ Entertainment page
    ☐ Sports   ☐ Crime
    ☐ Politics   ☐ Economy
    ☐ Fiction (please specify) .... ☐ Others (please specify) ....

(19) Do you read a magazine?　　☐ Yes　　　☐ No
If no, please go to Question (22).

(20) Which magazine do you read most often? *Please choose only one.*
☐ Koolasatree　　　　　　　☐ Kaihuaroa
☐ Kwanruan　　　　　　　　☐ Koosang koosom
☐ Chiwitjing　　　　　　　　☐ Bangkok
☐ TV pool　　　　　　　　　☐ Murder
☐ Inside Bantoeng　　　　　☐ Fiction/soap opera
☐ Others (please specify)　..................

(21) How often do you read the magazine in Question (20)?
☐ Regularly　　　　　　　☐ Once in a while

(22) Do you watch a movie from CDs?　　☐ Yes ☐ No (Please go to Question 25)

(23) If yes, how often do you watch the CDs?
☐ Everyday　　☐ 2 to 3 times a week　　☐ Once a week　　☐ Once in a while

(24) What movie from the CDs that you really like and influence you most?
You can give more than one. ....
....

(25) Do you go to cinema in the last one year?
☐ Yes　　　　　　　　　　☐ No　　(Please go to Question 28)

(26) If yes, how often do you go?
☐ More than once a week　　☐ Once a week　　☐ Once in a while

(27) What movie(s) in cinema do you like and influence you the most?
You can give more than one. ....

Part 3 Alternative media

(28) Do you read the newletters *"Friends of the East"*?　　☐ Yes　　　☐ No
If no, please go to Question (32).

(29) Which columns or pages in the *"Friends of the East"* do you often read? ....

(30) Where do you obtain the newsletter?
☐ By post
☐ Read at the grocery shop
☐ Read at a temple

⌐ Read at a radio station

    ⌐ Obtain from neighbours and friends (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from relatives (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from Rayong Community Development Organisation
      Please specify the name of distributor(s) ....

    ⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(31) Do you know anyone else who read the *"Friends of the East"*?
    ⌐ No   ⌐ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(32) Do you read the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ Yes   ⌐ No because...
    If no, please go to Question (36).

(33) How do you get the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ By post
    ⌐ Read at the grocery shop
    ⌐ Read at a temple
    ⌐ Read at a radio station
    ⌐ Obtain from neighbours and friends (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from relatives (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from Rayong Community Development Organisation
    Please specify the name of distributor(s) ....
    ⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(34) Which pages or columns in the *"Power of community"* do you often read?

(35) Do you know anyone else who read the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ No   ⌐ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(36) Do you listen to community radio, the Rayong Community Development Organisation, FM 106?
    ⌐ Yes the programme you listen to the most is ....
    ⌐ No because............................. .... Please go to Question (39).

(37) How many hours do you listen to FM 106 per day?
    ⌐ Less than 1 hour
    ⌐ 1 to 2 hours
    ⌐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours
    ⌐ More than 4 hours

(38) Do you know anyone else who listen to the community radio, FM106?

Γ No Γ Yes (Please provide names)   ....

(39) Have you ever watched CDs on "the revival of traditional ways of community" or CDs are related to the village?

Γ No

Γ Yes   I have received the CDs but never seen them. Please go to Question 43.

Γ No   Please go to Question 43.

(40) How many times did you watch the CDs?

Γ Once Γ 2 to 3 times Γ 4 to 6 times Γ More than 6 times

41) How did you get the CDs?

       1. From staff of the Rayong Community Development Organisation. Please name them..............

          2. From neighbours or friends. Please name them..............

          3. From relatives. Please name them.............

          4. From the leaders. Please name them.............

          5. From seminars or conferences

          6. Others, please specify...

(41) How did you get the CDs?

Γ Staff of the Rayong Community Development Organisaiton. Please specify ....

Γ From neighbours and friends (Please specify their name)   ....

Γ From relatives (Please specify their name)   ....

Γ From the leaders (Please specify their name)   ....

Γ From seminars and conferences

Γ Others (Please specify)   ....

(42) Do you know anyone else who have watched the CDs?

Γ No Γ Yes (Please provide names)   ....

(43) Do you consume any other alternative media such as folk media or print media, which are non-profit?

Γ No Γ No   Please go to Question (45).

(44) If yes, describe what is the type of media and give some details of its content.
....

Part 4 Globalisation

(45) How often do you spend your time with these activities?

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1.1   Hang around by a motorcycle
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.2   Hang around shopping malls
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never
      Please specify the shopping malls that you most often visit.
      ....

1.3   Go to friends or boy/girl friends'places
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.4   Helping parents to work
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.5   Doing a part time job
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.6   Study in tutor schools
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.7   Reading
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.8   Going to the cinema
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.9   Listening to music
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.10   Study principles of religions
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.11   Joining public activities
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.12   Playing sports
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

1.13   Others. Please specify ....

(46)   Do you join traditional events in the community and religious events in a temple?
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

(47)   Do you go fishing at the mangrove forest and sea?
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

(48)   Do you go for karaoke?
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely,   ☐ Never

(49)   Do you play snooker?
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

(50)   Do your parents spend time with you?
      ☐ Often   ☐ Sometimes   ☐ Rarely   ☐ Never

(51)   Do you spend money for fashionable clothes?
      ☐ Much   ☐ Medium   ☐ Little   ☐ None

(52)   Do you spend money for mobile phone?
      ☐ Much   ☐ Medium   ☐ Little   ☐ None

(53)   Do you spend money for computer games

Ⲅ Much   Ⲅ Medium   Ⲅ Little   Ⲅ None

(54) Do you spend money for music cds?

Ⲅ Much   Ⲅ Medium   Ⲅ Little   Ⲅ None

(55) Do you spend money going to the cinema or movie cds?

Ⲅ Much   Ⲅ Medium   Ⲅ Little   Ⲅ None

(56) Your family has had tension.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ CheckBox6

(57) Your family members have moved to work in other places.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(58) You or your family members have had a debt.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(59) You or your family members have been alcoholic or used drugs or gambled.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(60) You have spent more time with watching TV than socialising with neighbours or joining community activities in the village.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(61) There have been conflicts between indigenous and newcomers (who came after the arrival of the factory).

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(62) There have been much mutual assistance in the village.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(63) You have got advantages from natural resources i.e. mangrove forest, rain water, ground water, forest, canal.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(64) You can exist in the current environment well.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(65) You have had chronic illness such as allergy, asthma, coughing, itchy skin or skin allergy.

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(66) Did you know this village had rich mangrove forest before?

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(67) Do you know there was fishing and agriculture in this village before?

Ⲅ Yes   Ⲅ No

(68) You have little faith in monks and religion.

Ⲅ Better   Ⲅ Same   Ⲅ Worse

(69) The religion or temples have changed for the worse.

Ⲅ Agree   Ⲅ On both side   Ⲅ Disagree

(70) The community has had much mutual assistance.

⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(71) There are still identity and traditional cultures in the village that should be preserved.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(72) There has been much negative impact on environment in the community such as, soil salinity, acidic rain, air pollution and loss of sea animal and mangrove forest.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(73) The factories bring positive consequences to the community.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(74) The factories bring negative consequences to the community.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(75) The number of vehicle accidents in the village has increased.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(76) You want mangrove forest like in the past.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(77) If you answer 'Disagree', please state your reason(s).
⌐ I do not see advantages of mangrove forest
⌐ It is a waste of time and money to do reforestation
⌐ I am not indigenous. I do not feel like joining the activities in the community
⌐ Reforestation will not be successful due to many reasons i.e. lack of participation from the giant factory
⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(78) You have anxiety about environment in the village.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(79) You think that seafood from the local mangrove forest and sea are clean and edible.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(80) You have confidence that current environment is better than in the past.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(81) You think that good environment i.e. clean air, edible seafood, good soil is important for your community.
⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(82) Industry and globalisation have brought negative impact on environment, culture and religion.

Γ Agree Γ On both side Γ Disagree

(83) You do not see necessity of globalization such as factories, huge supermarkets or shopping malls.
Γ Agree Γ On both side Γ Disagree

(84) You think that traditional cultures, religions and local identity of our community are necessary to you and your community.
Γ Agree Γ On both side Γ Disagree

(85) How often do you have faced air pollution, bad smell or bad-quality water?
Γ Every week Γ 2 to 3 times in a month Γ Once in a while Γ Never

(86) How often do you read or listen to principles of your religion and go to the temple?
Γ Regularly and still ongoing

Γ Used to do it regularly but rarely nowadays because I do not have the time

Γ I am not indigenous. I do not feel like joining the activities in the community

Γ Once in a while or never

(87) In your opinion, which problem is the most serious in your community? (Please select **THREE** answers only and in order of priority, 1 for the most serious problem and 3 for the least severity.)

____ Drugs

____ Loss of culture, identity and traditional life of the community

____ Negative environmental impact e.g. polluted air, waste water and contaminated food.

____ Slow economy

____ Politicians and government employees neglecting the community

____ There is no mutual assistance and cooperation anymore

____ Teenage problems i.e. sexual relationship and gangsters

____ Others, please specify...

(88) What do you want for your life in the future?
Γ Want to further study and working for a factory

Γ Want out descendants to work for a factory

Γ Want to go to Bangkok

Γ Want to start a business and get rich

Γ Want to do agriculture

Γ Want to work for the community: Culture and environment preservation

Γ Others (Please specify) ....

(89) Who is your model(s)?

    ☐ My parents

    ☐ My teachers

    ☐ My boss

    ☐ Superstars, singers and sportmans. (Please provide their names)

....

    ☐ Others (Please specify)   ....

****

Questionnaire: ADULT AND SENIOR PEOPLE
(If you are under 30 years old, please fill in the questionnaire for teenager group)

Part 1 General Data

(1) Have you lived in Moo 5 Tumbon Cheng Neon before the arrival of the factories?

⌐ Yes   I have lived there since year ....

⌐ No   I went there in year ....

(2) Gender: ⌐ Male   ⌐ Female

(3) Age: ....

(4) Occupation: ....

(5) What is your income per month?

⌐ Less than 3,000 baht

⌐ 3,001 - 8,000 baht

⌐ 8,001 - 20,000 baht

⌐ More than 20,001 baht

(6) Are you or your family member working or used to work in factories?

⌐ No

⌐ Yes

Please state the name of the factory and address: ....
....

Part 2 Media reception

(7) Do you have television in your household?   ⌐ Yes   ⌐ No
If no, please go to Question (10).

(8) How many hours do you watch television in a day?

⌐ Less than 1 hour

⌐ 1 to 2 hours

⌐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours

⌐ More than 20,001 baht

(9) What TV programmes do you often watch? *You can choose more than one.*

⌐ Soap opera   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

⌐ News   Channel: ....   Broadcast time: ....

☐ Games shows   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ Sports   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ Games shows   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ Variety shows   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ Documentary   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ News talk   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

☐ Others   Please specify: ....   Channel: ....

(10) Do you listen to radio?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If no, please go to Question (15)

(11) If yes, how many hours do you listen to the radio?
☐ Less than 1 hour
☐ 1 to 2 hours
☐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours
☐ More than 20,001 baht

(12) Which radio station do you listen most often? ....

(13) Please specify the radio programmes do you listen most often? ....

(14) What time do you listen to radio? State multiple times if necessary.
....
....

(15) Do you read newspaper?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If no, please go to Question (19)

(16) If yes, which newspaper do you read most often? *You can choose more than one.*
☐ Thai rath   ☐ Daily news   ☐ Matichon   ☐ Kao sod
☐ Others   Please specify: ....

(17) How often do you read newspaper?
☐ Everyday
☐ 2 to 3 times a week
☐ Once a week
☐ Once in a while

(18) Which pages or columns in the newspaper do you read mostly?
☐ Headlines (Page 1)   ☐ Entertainment page
☐ Sports   ☐ Crime
☐ Politics   ☐ Economy

☐ Fiction (please specify) .... ☐ Others (please specify) ....

(19) Do you read a magazine?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If no, please go to Question (22).

(20) Which magazine do you read most often? *Please choose only one.*
   ☐ Koolasatree   ☐ Kaihuaroa
   ☐ Kwanruan   ☐ Koosang koosom
   ☐ Chiwitjing   ☐ Bangkok
   ☐ TV pool   ☐ Murder
   ☐ Inside Bantoeng   ☐ Fiction/soap opera
   ☐ Others (please specify) ....

(21) How often do you read the magazine in Question (20)?
   ☐ Regularly   ☐ Once in a while

(22) Do you watch a movie from CDs?   ☐ Yes ☐ No (Please go to Question 25)

(23) If yes, how often do you watch the CDs?
   ☐ Everyday   ☐ 2 to 3 times a week   ☐ Once a week   ☐ Once in a while

(24) What movie from the CDs that you really like and influence you most?
You can give more than one. ....
....

(25) Do you go to cinema in the last one year?
   ☐ Yes   ☐ No   (Please go to Question 28)

(26) If yes, how often do you go?
   ☐ More than once a week   ☐ Once a week   ☐ Once in a while

(27) What movie(s) in cinema do you like and influence you the most?
You can give more than one. ....

Part 3 Alternative media

(28) Do you read the newletters "*Friends of the East*"?   ☐ Yes   ☐ No
If no, please go to Question (32).

(29) Which columns or pages in the "*Friends of the East*" do you often read? ....

(30) Where do you obtain the newsletter?
   ☐ By post

⌐ Read at the grocery shop

    ⌐ Read at a temple

    ⌐ Read at a radio station

    ⌐ Obtain from neighbours and friends (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from relatives (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from Rayong Community Development Organisation
       Please specify the name of distributor(s) ....

    ⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(31) Do you know anyone else who read the *"Friends of the East"*?
    ⌐ No   ⌐ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(32) Do you read the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ Yes   ⌐ No because...
    If no, please go to Question (36).

(33) How do you get the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ By post

    ⌐ Read at the grocery shop

    ⌐ Read at a temple

    ⌐ Read at a radio station

    ⌐ Obtain from neighbours and friends (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from relatives (Please specify their name) ....

    ⌐ Obtain from Rayong Community Development Organisation
    Please specify the name of distributor(s) ....

    ⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(34) Which pages or columns in the *"Power of community"* do you often read?

(35) Do you know anyone else who read the *"Power of community"*?
    ⌐ No   ⌐ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(36) Do you listen to community radio, the Rayong Community Development
Organisation, FM 106?
    ⌐ Yes the programme you listen to the most is ....

    ⌐ No because........................ .... Please go to Question (39).

(37) How many hours do you listen to FM 106 per day?
    ⌐ Less than 1 hour

    ⌐ 1 to 2 hours

    ⌐ More than 2 hours but less than 4 hours

Γ More than 4 hours

(38) Do you know anyone else who listen to the community radio, FM106?
Γ No Γ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(39) Have you ever watched CDs on "the revival of traditional ways of community" or CDs are related to the village?
Γ No

Γ Yes   I have received the CDs but never seen them. Please go to Question 43.

Γ No   Please go to Question 43.

(40) How many times did you watch the CDs?
Γ Once Γ 2 to 3 times Γ 4 to 6 times Γ More than 6 times

(41) How did you get the CDs?
Γ Staff of the Rayong Community Development Organisaiton.
Please specify ....
Γ From neighbours and friends (Please specify their name) ....
Γ From relatives (Please specify their name) ....
Γ From the leaders (Please specify their name) ....
Γ From seminars and conferences
Γ Others (Please specify) ....

(42) Do you know anyone else who have watched the CDs?
Γ No Γ Yes (Please provide names) ....

(43) Do you consume any other alternative media such as folk media or print media, which are non-profit?
Γ No Γ No   Please go to Question (45).

(44) If yes, describe what is the type of media and give some details of its content.
....

Part 4 Globalisation

Behavioural: Comparison between before and after the arrival of the factory
Chapter 1   **If you came to the village before the arrival of the factory (indigenous), please answer questions 45-57 and 67-82.**
Chapter 2   **If you came after the arrival of the factory (newcomers), please answer questions 58-82 only.**

(45) After the arrival of the factory, how often have you visited a temple or joined religious events?
Γ 2 to 3 times Γ Same Γ More than 6 times

(46) After the arrival of the factory, how often have you joined the traditional events in your community

☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less

(47) If you have answered 'Less' in Question (46), please provide reasons. (You can select more than one answer).

☐ There are very few traditional events or none nowadays

☐ I do not like traditional events, but prefer going out to town/shopping malls

☐ I prefer going to pubs, night clubs or karaoke

☐ I have conflict with someone so I do not want to join the events

☐ I do not have the time because I have to work in a fix time, e.g. in a factory

☐ Others (Please specify) ....

(48) If compared to before the arrival of the factory, nowadays you have had income

☐ More ☐ Same ☐ Less

(49) What was your life like before the arrival of the factory? You can choose more than one.

☐ Used to go fishing at mangrove forest and seashore

☐ Used to do agriculture

☐ Regularly joined traditional events of the community

☐ Regularly joined religious events

☐ There was less need to buy much food

☐ Had a debt

☐ My family and I were alcoholic or used drugs or gambled

☐ I prefer going to pubs, night clubs or karaoke

☐ I have conflict with someone so I do not want to join the events

☐ I do not have the time because I have to work in a fix time, e.g. in a factory

☐ I have tension with my family

☐ I have high expenditure for buying food

☐ I could get advantages from natural resources i.e. mangrove forest, rain water, ground water, forest, canal.

☐ My children or family members have chronic illness such as allergy, asthma, coughing, itchy skin or skin allergy.

☐ I have modern lifestyles such as wearing fashionable clothes, living in modern houses, eating out or takeaways.

☐ I have difficulties in finding food sources e.g. no food in mangrove forest, bad-quality soil and waste water.

☐ I have no time to socialize with neighbours.

☐ My family members have moved to other places to work

⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

(50) At present, what are the changes to your life when compared to 20 years ago or before the arrival of the factory? You can choose more than one.

⌐ I have had modern lifestyles such as wearing fashionable clothes, living in modern houses, eating out or takeaways.

⌐ I have had difficulties in finding food sources such as no food in mangrove forest, reduction of the number of seafood, bad-quality soil and waste water.

⌐ I do not go for fishing at mangrove forest and seashore anymore.

⌐ I have not done agriculture anymore.

     ⌐ Bad quality of soil

     ⌐ I do not have the land anymore because I sold it for the factory

     ⌐ Others (Please specify) ....

⌐ I still go fishing   ⌐ Everyday   ⌐ Once a week   ⌐ More than 6 times

⌐ I have had more expenditure for buying food

⌐ I have spent a lot of money for luxury goods such as clothes, mobile phone, computer games, CDs, electric appliances

⌐ I have done shopping in big shopping malls such as Tesco, Big C and Macro

     ⌐ Regularly   ⌐ 2 to 3 times in a month   ⌐ Once in a while

⌐ I have had chronic illness e.g. allergy, asthma, coughing, itchy skin or skin allergy

⌐ I have not had the time to socialize with neighbours because of long and fix working hours

⌐ I have had less time for my family.

⌐ I have conflict with someone so I do not want to join the events

⌐ I do not have the time because I have to work in a fix time, e.g. in a factory

⌐ I have had tension with my family

⌐ My family members have moved to other places to work.

⌐ I have had less income or got a worse job or had more tension in my job.

⌐ Have had a debt

⌐ I have had a job all year round and had more income

⌐ My family members and I have been alcoholic or used drugs or gambled.

⌐ I have spent more time watching TV than socialising with neighbours or participating in the village activities.

⌐ There have been conflicts between indigenous and newcomers (who came after the arrival of the factory)

⌐ There have been much mutual assistance in the village

⌐ I have had more conveniences in daily life i.e. having better infrastructure

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┌ I received advantages from natural resources i.e. mangrove forest, rain water,
└ groundwater, forest, canal

 ⌐ My family members and I have been alcoholic or used drugs or gambled.

 ⌐ I can exist in the current environment well

  ⌐ Every week ⌐ 2 to 3 times in a month   ⌐ Once in a while

 ⌐ There is no public space in the village

 ⌐ My children and family members have had chronic illness such as allergy,
   asthma, coughing, itchy skin and skin allergy

 ⌐ Others (Please specify)   ....

(51) Do you have better or worse health before the arrival of the factories?
      ⌐ Better   ⌐ Same   ⌐ Once in a while

Attitude to Globalization: For INDIGENOUS ONLY
Please select the only ONE answer

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(52) You have less faith in monks and religion
      ⌐ Better   ⌐ Same   ⌐ Worse

(53) Religion or temples have changed for the worse
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(54) The community has had less mutual assistance
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(55) Social values have changed e.g. the new generation does not like hard work
      and prefer to imitate superstars or dream to be singers or superstars?
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(56) Villagers have been more materialistic.
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

(57) The number of vehicle accidents in the village has increased.
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side   ⌐ Disagree

Questions 58 - 66 for NEWCOMERS ONLY

---

(58) Do you know this village had rich mangrove forest before?
      ⌐ Agree   ⌐ On both side

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(59) Do you know there was fishing and agriculture in this village before?
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side

(60) Did you come to the village to work for the factory?
　　 ⌐ Yes　　　　　　　 ⌐ No

(61) Do you join traditional events in a temple and in the village?
　　 ⌐ Better　　　　　 ⌐ Sometimes　　　　　 ⌐ Once in a while

(62) Do you like to socialise with your neighbours?
　　 ⌐ Often　　　　　 ⌐ Sometimes　　　　　 ⌐ Once in a while

(63) You go to shopping at big shopping malls
　　 ⌐ Often　　　　　 ⌐ Sometimes　　　　　 ⌐ Once in a while
　　 Please specify ....

(64) How often do you have to face the air pollution, bad smell or bad-quality water?
　　 ⌐ Every week　　　 ⌐ 2 to 3 times in a month　 ⌐ Once in a while

(65) There are still identity and traditional cultures in the village that should be preserved.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

(66) The community has had much mutual assistance.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

Please answer Questions 67 – 82: For both INDIGENOUS and NEWCOMERS

(67) Infrastructure i.e. roads, electricity have positive impact on the village.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

(68) There has been much negative impact on environment in the community such as, salinity of soil, acid rain, air pollution and loss of sea animal and mangrove forest.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

(69) The factories bring positive consequences to the community.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

(70) The factories bring negative consequences to the community.
　　 ⌐ Agree　　　　　　 ⌐ On both side　　　　 ⌐ Disagree

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(71) You want mangrove forest like in the past.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(72) If you answer 'Disagree', please state your reason(s).
  ⊏ I do not see advantages of mangrove forest

  ⊏ It is a waste of time and money to do reforestation

  ⊏ I am not indigenous. I do not feel like joining the activities in the community

  ⊏ Reforestation will not be successful due to many reasons i.e. lack of participation from the giant factory

  ⊏ Others (Please specify) ....

(73) You have anxiety about the environment in the village.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(74) The seafood from the local mangrove forest and sea are clean and edible.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(75) You are confidence that current environment is better than in the past.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(76) Good environment i.e. clean air, edible seafood, good soil is important for your community.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(77) Industry and globalisation have brought negative impact on environment, culture and religion.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(78) You do not see necessity of globalization such as factories, huge supermarkets or shopping malls.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(79) You think that traditional cultures, religions and local identity of our community are necessary to you and your community.
  ⊏ Agree   ⊏ On both side   ⊏ Disagree

(80) How often do you read or listen to principles of your religion and go to the temple?
  ⊏ Regularly and still ongoing

  ⊏ Used to do it regularly but rarely nowadays because I do not have the time

  ⊏ Used to do it regularly but nowadays I do not have faith anymore

  ⊏ Once in a while or never

(81) In your opinion, which problem is the most serious in your community? (Please select **THREE** answers only and in order of priority, 1 for the most serious problem and 3 for the least severity.)

[ ] Drugs

[ ] Loss of culture, identity and traditional life of the community

[ ] Negative environmental impact e.g. polluted air, waste water and contaminated food.

[ ] Slow economy

[ ] Politicians and government employees neglecting the community

[ ] There is no mutual assistance and cooperation anymore

[ ] Teenage problems i.e. sexual relationship and gangsters

[ ] Others, please specify...

(82) What do you want for your life in the future?

[ ] Want to further study and working for a factory

[ ] Want out descendants to work for a factory

[ ] Want to go to Bangkok

[ ] Want to start a business and get rich

[ ] Want to do agriculture

[ ] Want to work for the community: Culture and environment preservation

[ ] Others (Please specify) ....

****

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Appendix B

Coding sheet of content analysis

Case number........

1. Name of story/headline..

2. Date...............................

3. Programme.......................

4. Channel...........................

5. Arenas of globalisation

5.1 Politics

5.2 Economy

5.3 Industry

5.4 Environment

5.5 Culture/life styles/social values

5.6 Religion

5.7 Sports

5.8 Health

5.9 Media and communication

5.10 Entertainment

5.11 Sciences and technology

5.12 Others

5.13 Combination of

5.14 Migration of labour

5.15 Fashion/beauty

5.16 Football gambling

5.17 Privatisation

5.18 Tourism and crime

6. Themes of text according to the sources or newsreaders.

6.1 Benefit for Industry	6.24 Celebrity's life style
6.2 Benefit for tourism	6.25 Social problem

7. Who are the sources or whose indirect speech are reported?

7.1	Prime minister	7.7 Academics/experts
7.2	Cabinets and state employee	7.8 TV Reporters
7.3	Army	7.9 International news agency/media
7.4	Business people	7.10 Private/business organisation
7.5	The locals and ordinary people	7.11 Actors/sportsman/celebrities
7.6	NGOs	7.12 Others……………..

7.13 Monarchy

7.14 Beauty contestants/winners

7.15 Newspaper's reporters

7.16 Newspapers

7.17 MP committee

7.18 International organisation (ADB…)

7.19 EGAT

8.Where do direct quotations come from?

8.1 Prime minister	8.7 NGOs
8.2 Cabinets and state employee	8.8 Academics/experts
8.3 Army	8.9 TV reporters/newsreaders
8.4 Business people	8.10 Private/Business organisation
8.5 Opposition parties	8.11 Actors/sportsmen/celebrities
8.6 The locals and ordinary people	8.12 Others

8.13 Beauty contestants/winners

Appendix C

Code Book

5 Arenas of globalisation

5.1 Politics

5.2 Economy

5.3 Industry

5.4 Environment

5.5 Culture/life styles/social values

5.6 Fashion/beauty

5.7 Religion

5.8 Health

5.9 Media and communication

5.10 Entertainment

5.11 Sciences and technology

5.12 Others

5.13 Combination of arenas

5.14 Migration of labour

5.15 Sports

5.16 Football gambling

5.17 Tourism and crime

5.18 Privatisation

6 Themes of text according to the sources or newsreaders.

6.1 Benefit for industry

This theme refers to the advantage of industry and industrialisation. The theme also covers export affairs and creating jobs for any community. For example, the new sources expressed that the industry was important and needed support from the government

6.2 Benefit for tourism

This theme refers to any text which tends to be concerned with tourism and relevant business, for example tourism and the national income. This includes requests from the tourism industry to the government or people to help them when they have difficulties.

Also it includes any circumstances that may affect tourism income and business, for example water shortage.

6.3 Benefit for the nation

This theme implies activities, events, ideas or policies that involve 'nation benefit'. New sources and newsreaders may claim that any activities, ideas or policies contribute to the nation. For example, copying technology from First World countries benefits the nation.

6.4 Benefit for people

Similarly, this theme implies or mentions activities, ideas or policies that involve 'people benefit'. New sources and newsreaders may claim that any activities, ideas or policies create people benefit.

6.5 Create more income/wealth and GDP

The theme implies that any activities, ideas or policies assist to create more income and wealth. This includes any report in relation to the growth of GDP and promotions of the government in boosting the country GDP.

6.6 Well-being/healthiness

The theme is relevant to any text, ideas, activities and policies which express that they create well-being and healthiness for people, the nation, communities or individuals.

6.7 GDP/economic growth rate impact

This is in contrast to 6.5. The theme refers to any text which presents the impact or negative consequences of neo-liberalism, including use of 'GDP' as a crucial criterion in measuring the economic growth rate and being a developed society.

6.8 Environmental degradation

Any texts, activities or projects presents environmental impact, pollution, global warming, forest fire and other impact of massive-scale projects on people are categorised in this theme. For example, constructing a number of factories cause drought in Eastern Thailand.

6.9 Cultural impact

Any text, activities or projects are mentioned if they affect Thai culture or traditional ways of life are included in this theme. The text indicates that they may bring up new cultures, new cultural ideas or new identities. They also may create negative consequences to Thai society, for example the new pattern of pregnancy before marriage in young generations causes baby murders and an increasing rate of HIV.

6.10 Impact of religion

The text aims to express that any activities, technology, policies or events resulted from globalisation affect religious belief in Thai society. This includes the text presenting the weakness of Buddhism in dealing with social problems in the globalisation era.

6.11 Community and agricultural impact

The text indicates negative consequences in communities, especially in the agricultural sector and villagers' livelihood.

6.12 Anti-consumerism

The text indicates, comments or questions that globalisation, policies, activities, or events create consumerism, extravagance or debt to the society which may become a social problem or a social-economic crisis.

6.13 Poverty

This means people's difficulties resulting from any projects, policies or activities, for example an increase of patrol price. Also it includes the theme of lack of standard welfare and quality of life, for example insufficient medical care in rural areas, having much debt, and lack of opportunity in education and careers.

6.14 Health impact

The text points to any policies, events, ideas or activities which bring about an impact on the physical and mental health of people.

6.15 Influence of foreign countries

Newsreaders or new sources state clearly that any projects, events or activities are influenced by foreign counties. For example, the prime minister stated after visiting Japanese Technology Fair that the Thai government would build up a kind of technology which is similar to the Japanese model.

6.16 Sports

This theme involves only competition of all sports, results of sport competitions and techniques of sports. Fame, income, life styles and talents of individual sportsmen and sportswomen are not include.

6.17 Other themes

6.18 Combination of pro-globalisation

The theme defines any texts which combine several pro-globalisation themes. For example, the prime minister stated in the water shortage news that the government needed

to help industrial and tourism sectors for public interest. This news mixes the theme of industry benefit, tourism benefit and nation benefit.

6.19 Pro-consumerism

This refers to any texts which focus on promoting luxurious life styles, brand name products, shopping malls and consumer products for example cars, computers, accessories, fashion clothes, shoes, cosmetics and food. These promotions do not involve commercial affairs, but may bring about the desire of possession of these unnecessary products or the changing of people's life styles.

6.20 Labour abuse and exploitation

Any texts present unfair wages, lack of proper welfares, long-hours working, lack of health care in industry or work place or a domestic employment For example, the news that Thai workers protested in Taiwan due to unfair wages, and lack of proper accommodation and food.

6.21 Sports and celebrities/hero

This refers to the news which reports talents, gifts and success of sportsmen and celebrities. This includes any texts which show that these celebrities gain wealth, fame, success, popularity and applause. Also any texts which comment that those celebrities possess incredible gifts and have influence to people.

6.22 Sports/celebrities and income/business

The theme expresses sports which are relevant to celebrities' income. For example, how much David Beckham earn in each match. This includes the businesses which celebrities own or are involved in for example, being presenters of brand name products or moving to new teams (footballers).

6.23 Impact of football gambling

This theme focuses on football gambling impact on society. For example, it creates crime and huge debts.

6.24 Celebrity life style

The text presents what products celebrities eat, wear, watch, listen and use. Where do they choose for their holidays, pubs or houses? This theme also refers to their behaviour, manners and attitudes.

6.25 Social problems

Any problems resulting from activities, policies, events, values, technology or culture not categorised under environmental impact, cultural impact, poverty, and health impact

should be categorised in this theme. For example, a boom of tourism in Thailand also brings about the problem of child prostitution.

6.26 Presenting foreign cultures/life styles/music/films

Any texts show foreign performances, films, life styles, music, arts and other cultural performances. This does not include commercial promotion. For example, royal family members go to see the ballet, orchestras, and concerts.

6.27 Promoting foreign cultures/ life styles/music/films

This theme is different from 6.26. This refers to any text which is presented to promote or show foreign cultures, performances and arts products in order to deliberately promote business and commercials in cultures, performances and arts products. For example, '*See San Dara*', channel 3 showed the interview of the main actor who played in a new Hollywood film.

6.28 Presenting Thai or local cultures/identities /alternatives localism

The television text presents any ideas, activities, policies, festivals, events and practices which offer alternative ideas or local identities or traditional cultures in politics, economies, cultures, environmental conservation, spiritual practices, health and people's livelihood.

6.29 Pro-consumerism and commercials

The text promotes spending on luxurious products, for example expensive cars, watches and fashions. The text may show the luxurious life styles of celebrities or places. Also it aims to gain commercial benefit. For example, the International Watches Festival, aimed to promote new brand watches and selling products at the event.

6.30 Beauty contestant life's styles/happiness/well-being/fame/luxury/social work

This theme presents beauty contestants' life styles during and after their beauty contests. The text presents their happy and cheerful feelings which come from fame, luxury, well-being as well as social activities for example helping others disadvantaged such as older people or orphans.

6.31 Solving labour exploitation/helping labourers

This is different from 6.20. This theme focuses on the attempts of the government or relevant agencies or countries in solving labour exploitation. This tends to be a pro-globalisation theme, especially if any text emphasises the efficiency of a globalised economy in providing fair and equal labour wages.

6.32 Pushing energy saving measures due to high petrol prices

The text focuses on energy saving measures, policies, activities due to high petrol prices. For example, the government policies of the closure of patrol stations after 10 0'clock at night.

6.33 Foreign sciences and technology advances

The text shows advances of foreign sciences and technology.

6.34 FTA and Thai benefit

The text focuses on the negotiation of free trade area meetings and promotes that Thailand gain benefit from signing FTA agreement with other countries.

6.35 Terrorism threat

The text claims that terrorist practices and threats are happening and cause dangers and insecurity in society.

6.36 Child abuse

All forms of using children for commercial work, prostitution, and industrial labours. This includes family violence, uneducated children, young generation's new values (access of pornography websites on the Internet, and taking provocative video clips (VHS)), children trafficking for prostitution and as beggars.

6.37 Questioning/criticise/ satirizing industry/elites/ UN

Newsreaders comment, question, or satirise the elite groups of society for example, industry, politicians, ministers, international organisations.

6.38 Battles between the locals and industry

The text aims to present conflict and battles between the locals or communities and industry due to environmental damage, loss of natural resources and impact on livelihood.

6.39 Fuel price rise

Reports of fuel pricing.

6.40 Blaming / questioning industry/ environmental impact /health impact

Newsreaders strongly blame industry concerning the environmental impact and the impact on health resulting from industry.

6.41 Environmental / community / health/ agricultural impact

The text contains a combination of several kinds of impact namely, environment, health, and agriculture on community's ways of life.

6.42 Hybridity of Thai and foreign cultures/ life styles

The text presents the combination of Thai and foreign cultures and life styles.

6.43 Pro consumerism + presenting foreign cultures/ tourism

The text shows foreign culture and tourism in foreign countries which promotes luxurious life styles, foreign products and activities.

6.44 Religion/cultural impact + influence of foreign countries + promoting

The text clearly states that influence of foreign countries affects religion and culture in Thailand. This includes the text which newsreaders or news sources clearly state that promoting foreign cultures brings change to Thai society, such as consumerism.

6.45 Combination of negative consequences of globalisation

This theme contains several negative consequences in one item of news. For example, environmental, poverty and health impact resulting from the establishment of many factories in Rayong.

6.46 Balance between pro-globalisation and negative consequences

New sources or newsreaders try to share the balance between pro-globalisation and the negative consequences of globalisation. For example, in the news about the water shortage, a ministererial discourse implied that the government would not allow more factory construction in Rayong due to drought. But he also said that helping industry and tourism was still the first priority in the government plan.

7 Who are the sources or whose indirect speech are reported?

7.1   Prime minister

7.2   Cabinets and state employee

7.3   Army

7.4   Business people

7.5   The locals and ordinary people

7.6 NGOs

7.7 Academics/experts

7.8 TV Reporters

7.9 International news agency/media

7.10 Private/business organisation

7.11 Actors/sportsman/celebrities

7.12 Other sources

7.13 Monarchy

7.14 Beauty contestants/winners

7.15 Newspaper's reporters

7.16 Newspapers

7.17 MP committee (members of parliament committee)

7.18 International organisation (such as United Nations, UNESCO, the World Bank, The Bank of Central of America)

7.19 EGAT (The Electric Generating Authority of Thailand)

8.Where do direct quotations come from?

8.1 Prime minister

8.2 Cabinets and state employee

This includes all ministers, deputy ministers, civil servants, bureaucrats, the government politicians and the government parties' staff.

8.3 Army

8.4 Business people

8.5 Opposition parties

8.6 The locals and ordinary people

8.7 NGOs

8.8 Academics/experts

8.9 TV reporters/newsreaders

8.10 Private/Business organisation

8.11 Actors/sportsmen/celebrities

8.12 Others

8.13 Beauty contestants/winners

Appendix D

Power of Community- Editorial pages and the opening article.

พลังชุมชน... คนตะวันออก **2**

หยด
น้ำ หมึก

โดย กองบรรณาธิการ

จากการพัฒนาชุมชนที่ผ่านมา การที่จะให้เกิดชุมชนเข้มแข็ง ได้นั้นต้องพยายามที่ให้คนในชุมชนนั้นเองรับรู้สิทธิชุมชนตามกฎหมายรัฐธรรมนูญมากขึ้น และพยายามให้คนในชุมชนเข้ามามีบทบาทต่อ การพัฒนาชุมชนของเขาเองมากขึ้นด้วย โดยใช้ทุนเดิมในสังคมเป็นเครื่องมือในการพัฒนาจึงจะสามารถนำให้ประชาชนเข้ามามีบทบาทมากขึ้น

จากการที่รัฐบาลไม่ได้มีนโยบายที่ชัดเจนต่อการหนุนเสริมประชาชนให้เกิดการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนอย่างชัดเจน ทำให้คนในชุมชนไม่ให้เกิดการมีส่วนร่วมต่อการพัฒนาชุมชนของเขาเอง เพราะสิทธิและเสรีภาพของชุมชนโดนระบบการปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่นปิดกั้นการรับรู้ข่าวสารที่สำคัญของชุมชน และรัฐบาลเองก็ไม่สามารถเข้าไปจัดการได้จึงทำให้เกิดการคอรัปชั่นขึ้นในท้องถิ่นมากมายและเกือบทุกที่

การใช้ทุนเดิมที่มีอยู่ในสังคมเป็นเครื่องมือในการพัฒนา จะทำให้เกิดการมีส่วนร่วมมากขึ้นเพราะสังคมชุมชนเดิมยังมีความรัก ความหวงแหนในทุนเดิมของเขาเอง รัฐและองค์กรชุมชน(ภาคประชาชน) เองนำไปมีส่วนผลักดันต่อยอด สนับสนุนงบประมาณและนำแนวคิด แนวทางทิศทางของการพัฒนาแบบมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชน เข้าไปกำหนดแผนการพัฒนาชุมชนในท้องถิ่นของเขาเอง

จนเกิดเป็นวัฒนธรรมทั้งในร่างกาย ในความคิด (สติปัญญา)ในความรู้สึก(จิตใจ)และในจิตวิญญาณที่จะเป็นพลังเอื้อประโยชน์ต่อสังคมชุมชนร่วมกัน

หลายคนพูดว่า *"ไม่ได้รับความเป็นธรรม!" "ท้องถิ่นไม่เหลียวแล!" "อำนาจกองงาน" "การเงินไม่คล่องตัว" "ไหนจะค่าหนังสือ ค่าเสื้อผ้า ค่าเล่าเรียนลูก" "มีการคอรัปชั่น" ค่าน้ำ ค่าไฟแพง!"* และอะไรต่อมิอะไรอีกมากมายที่ได้พูดกัน

แต่เชื่อไหมครับว่ามีคนในชุมชนเพียงน้อยนิดที่มาร่วมกันเป็นพลังต่อการสร้างพลังชุมชน คนในชุมชนส่วนมากยังคงปล่อยให้มีปัญหากันอยู่ในสังคม ชุมชนนั้นเอง แล้วจะไปโทษใคร? นักการเมืองท้องถิ่นร่ำรวยขา ร่ำรวยเอาทุกปี สิทธิชุมชนก็มีแต่ไม่รู้จักใช้ ม้วนต่อยกับสังคมจะดีได้อย่างไร? มีเงินในท้องถิ่นที่เป็นของประชาชนแท้ แต่ไม่เข้ามามีส่วนร่วมในการกำหนดทิศทางและกำหนดเป้าหมายเพื่อชุมชน

จะนั้นอย่าหวังว่าจะลืมตาอ้าปากกันเลย.......ทางท้องถิ่นมีงบประมาณหลายสิบล้านบาทยังปล่อยให้คนไม่กี่คนแสวงหาผลประโยชน์ ที่จง "โง่ จน เจ็บ" กันต่อไป

รัฐบาลจะไปช่วยเหลืออะไรได้เต็มที่ เพราะกฎหมายรัฐธรรมนูญกระจายอำนาจการปกครองส่วนท้องถิ่น ให้ท้องถิ่นบริหารงบประมาณเอง แต่ประชาชนในท้องถิ่นก็มัวแต่หวังพึ่งรัฐบาลให้ช่วยเหลือ เงิน อยู่ใกล้ตัวไม่รู้จักใช้ มีแต่จะคอยเงินใกลตัว

"คุณยังทำไม่มากพอและคุณก็ไม่มีวันที่จะทำได้มากพอตราบใดที่คุณยังไม่นำคุณค่าในตัวคุณมาช่วยเหลือเกื้อกูลโลก"

ด้วยความคารพรัก
สุภรัฐ ขวัญเมือง

The editorial page, the first issue, May 2005 .

หยด น้ำหมึก

โดย กองบรรณาธิการ

สังคมวันนี้ ฝากชีวิตไว้กับหน่วยงานของรัฐท้องถิ่น และหน่วยงานของรัฐบาลกลาง ทำให้การรวมตัวของผู้คนถูก ละเลยและถูกทอดทิ้งไม่ให้ความสำคัญ เพราะจะรออุปถัมภ์ คิดพึ่งตนเองไม่เป็น

สมัยก่อน การรวมตัวกันเพื่อปกป้องผืนแผ่นดินไทย เกิดจากการที่เราทั้งหลายรวมพลังกันที่จะรักษาผืนแผ่นดินไทย ไว้ให้กับลูกหลานไทยทุกคน

ปัจจุบันนี้ เราจะเห็นค่านิยมแบบ ผิดผิด ที่ต่างก็ หลงไปตามกระแสนิยม หลงวัตถุ จนลืมตน โดยคิดเสียว่า ทุนนิยมตะวันตก คือหนทางรอดที่แท้จริงของคนไทยเราทุกคน ทำให้ต่างคนต่างช่วงชิงไขว่คว้าอำนาจและเงินตรามากขึ้น

พลังชุมชน ก็เป็นอีกหนทางหนึ่งที่จะทำให้เราทุกคน รอดพ้นจากปัญหาต่าง ๆ ได้เป็นอย่างดี ซึ่งความเป็นน้ำหนึ่ง ใจเดียวกันในสังคม การร่วมมือร่วมใจกันปกป้องสิทธิชุมชน ของตนอย่างมั่นคง จะนำพาให้พวกเราพ้นภัยจากปัญหา และวิกฤติต่าง ๆ

วันนี้เอง สถาบันพัฒนาองค์กรชุมชน (พอช.) กระทรวงการพัฒนาสังคมและความมั่นคงของมนุษย์ ได้ให้การ ส่งเสริมและสนับสนุน การพลิกฟื้นวิถีชีวิตชุมชนหลายพื้นที่ ในภาคตะวันออก ถ้าเราคิดว่าคือผู้ที่อยู่หนึ่งที่สนใจการร่วมแรง ร่วมใจกันพัฒนาสังคมชุมชน ก็สามารถเข้ามาร่วมแลกเปลี่ยน เรียนรู้ได้ ซึ่งทาง สถาบันฯ หรือ พอช. จะเป็นฐานข้อมูลกลาง ที่จะเชื่อมโยงในการแลกเปลี่ยนเรียนรู้อันจะเป็นประโยชน์ต่อ การพัฒนาสังคมชุมชนต่อไป

องค์กรเพื่อการพัฒนาชุมชนระยอง (พชร.) คือหน่วยงานองค์กรเอกชน ที่ทำงานด้านการพัฒนาชุมชน ส่งเสริมสิทธิชุมชนตามกฎหมายรัฐธรรมนูญ สนับสนุนกระบวน การมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชนต่อการพัฒนาท้องถิ่น และเป็น สื่อกลางในการแก้ไขปัญหาสังคม ชุมชน เราคือผู้สนใจ ทำงานเพื่อบ้านเมืองของเราและ **ท่านทำเพื่อ บ้านเพื่อเมืองอะไรได้บ้าง?**

"ประเทศไทยรวมเลือดเนื้อชาติเชื้อไทย เป็นประชารัฐ ไผทของไทยทุกส่วน อยู่ดำรงคงไว้ได้ทั้งมวล ด้วยไทยล้วนหมาย รักสามัคคี ไทยนี้รักสงบ แต่ถึงรบไม่ขลาด เอกราช จะไม่ให้ ใครข่มขี่ สละเลือดทุกหยาดเพื่อชาติพลี เถลิงประเทศชาติไทย ทวีมีชัย ไชโย..."

จะเห็นว่า ความหมายของเพลงชาติไทยนั้น มีความหมาย อย่างมาก บรรพบุรุษไทยได้สร้างชาติไทย เพื่อความเป็น อิสระไท แต่เดี๋ยวนี้ใครไม่รู้ มาทำลายและกรอบโกง มาปล้น ทำลายประเทศไทย ทรัพยากรธรรมชาติโดนบุกรุกและทำลาย ข้ามมาอ้างอีกว่า เป็นคนไทยรักแผ่นดินไทย

ตื่นเถิดชาวไทยอย่ามัวหลับใหลลุ่มหลง ชาติจะเรืองดำรงก็เพราะเราทั้งหลาย...

ท่านมองสังคมรอบ ๆ ตัวท่านว่า มันเป็นอย่างไร...? ปัญหาสังคมทุกวันนี้ หน่วยงานรัฐหมดประสิทธิภาพ เพราะรัฐ กระจายสู่ท้องถิ่นโดยไม่มีระบบที่ดี ข้าราชการสูญเสียขวัญ และกำลังใจ ประชาชนขาดการหนุนเสริม เพราะท้องถิ่น ไม่เหลียวแล ทำแต่ถนนหนทางขอแลกกับส่วนแบ่งเปอร์เซ็นต์ เท่านั้น เอื้อประโยชน์ให้ทุนนิยมข้ามชาติ และทุนไทยที่ขายชาติ ขายทรัพยากรในแผ่นดินไทย สร้างระบบคุ้มภัยให้ทุนนิยม เพียงไม่กี่คน แต่ทำลายกระบวนการมีส่วนร่วมของประชาชน ภายในชาติ ถ้าไม่ลุกขึ้นมาปกป้อง พวกเราจะเหลืออะไร? ไว้ให้ลูกหลานไทย ลุกขึ้นมาเรียกร้อง สิทธิชุมชนตาม กฎหมายรัฐธรรมนูญที่เรามีอยู่ ให้เกิดความเข้มแข็ง เพื่อไทย เพื่ออิสระไท และเพื่อลูกหลานไทยทุกคน... อย่าปล่อยไว้เป็นเช่นทุกวันนี้เลย... ถ้าท่านปล่อยตามยถา กรรม อีกไม่นาน เราและบ้านเมืองเราจะไปไม่รอด....

รักจากใจ... สุกรัฐ ขวัญเมือง

พลิกฟื้นวิถีชีวิตชุมชนท้องถิ่น

The editorial page, the second issue, June 2005.

หยด
น้ำหมึก
โดย กองบรรณาธิการ

วันนี้ อบต.เชิงเนิน กำลังทำงานเชิงรุกในการพัฒนาคน พัฒนากลุ่มองค์กรต่างๆในพื้นที่ ตอบสนองนโยบายรัฐบาล ให้เกิดประโยชน์ต่อประชาชนในท้องถิ่น ประชาชนทุกภาคส่วนสามารถเข้าไปตรวจสอบได้นะครับ การพิจารณางบประมาณในปีนี้ ได้ข่าวว่าจะมีการบรรจุงบประมาณเพื่อประชาชนมากขึ้นอีกด้วย จริงเท็จอย่างไร? ประชาชนในท้องถิ่นลองถามท่านนายกองค์การบริหารส่วนตำบลเชิงเนินเองนะครับ ท่านนายก ใจกว้าง เป็นกันเอง ยิ้มแย้มแจ่มใสกับทุกคน

สวัสดีครับ ใกล้เข้ามาแล้วนะครับที่จะมีการพิจารณางบประมาณของท้องถิ่น ไม่ว่าจะเป็น อบต. และเทศบาลต่างๆ ของประเทศ ประชาชนที่อยู่ในพื้นที่ท้องถิ่นนั้นๆ สมควรจะติดตามข้อมูล ข่าวสาร ว่าในสภาท้องถิ่น มีข้อมูลการจัดการงบประมาณอะไรบ้าง บรรจุเข้าสู่สภาของท้องถิ่นนั้นๆ อะไรบ้างที่เอื้อให้กับประชาชนในท้องถิ่นนั้นๆ หรือเอางบประมาณไปทำอะไรบ้าง

วันนี้ ถ้าท้องถิ่นไหน มีการใช้งบพัฒนาคน พัฒนากลุ่มองค์กรต่างๆ ในพื้นที่มากเท่าไร ก็ยิ่งทำให้ท้องถิ่นนั้นๆ เกิดการพัฒนาศักยภาพของผู้คนในท้องถิ่นมากขึ้นเท่านั้น เกิดการเรียนรู้ ประชาชนในท้องถิ่นได้รับการแก้ไขปัญหาต่างๆ มากขึ้น ไม่ว่าจะเป็นการกินดีอยู่ดี มีสุขภาพดี การมีอาชีพที่ดีขึ้น มีเศรษฐกิจดี มีความปลอดภัยมากขึ้น เป็นต้น

อบต. และเทศบาลไหน มีการจัดสรรงบประมาณในการสร้าง สร้าง สร้าง หรือคิดทำแบบเดิมๆ ประชาชนเองก็สมควรพิจารณาผู้แทนท้องถิ่นให้ดีกว่านี้ ในวันเลือกตั้งคราวหน้าก็แล้วกันนะครับ

วันนี้ถ้าไม่มีการพัฒนาคนในท้องถิ่นให้สามารถมีการเรียนรู้และการรับรู้สิทธิประชาชนตามกฎหมายรัฐธรรมนูญมากขึ้น ประชาชนในท้องถิ่นนั้นๆ ก็จะเหมือนคนที่ไม่รู้อะไรได้มากเลย ผู้รู้ดีคือคนที่ไม่ต้องการให้ประชาชนรู้รู้มากกว่าเขาเท่านั้นเอง

งบประมาณท้องถิ่นมีอยู่มากมายมหาศาล ใครคือคนจัดการ...?

ณ วันนี้ 4 ปี เข้ามาทำงานเพื่อท้องถิ่น ตั้งสัตย์ปฏิญาณว่ามีความซื่อสัตย์สุจริต เงินเดือนที่ได้รับ อาจจะน้อยนิด แต่ 4 ปี เข้าไปแล้ว นับวันยิ่ง.....

ประชาชนเขาเห็นเขารู้นะ ว่าใครดี ใครไม่ดี ใครทำเพื่อประโยชน์ เพื่อบ้าน เพื่อเมือง ของเขานะครับ

พลิกฟื้นวิถีชีวิตชุมชนท้องถิ่น

The editorial page, the third issue, August-September 2005.

ตำบลเชิงเนิน เป็นอีกตำบลหนึ่งที่มีความหลาก หลายในเรื่องของวิถีชีวิตความเป็นอยู่ที่อุดมไปด้วยศิลป วัฒนธรรม พืชพันธุ์ธัญญาหาร อยู่กันแบบเสมือนพี่น้อง รักความสามัคคี แต่ทุกวันนี้วิถีชีวิตของคนในตำบลเชิง เนินได้เปลี่ยนแปลงไป เนื่องจากหลายปัจจัยด้วยกัน ที่ เห็นได้ชัดเจนที่สุดคงจะหลีกเลี่ยงไม่ได้กับระบบทุนนิยมที่ เข้ามามีบทบาทและแทรกแซงความเป็นอยู่ของผู้คนในชุม ชน ทำให้ความเป็นอยู่ของคนที่ดีงามค่อย ๆ มลายและ หายไป

    โครงการพลิกฟื้นวิถีชุมชนตำบลเชิงเนิน เพื่อ การแก้ไขปัญหาความยากจนและการฟื้นฟูชุมชนท้องถิ่น ก็เป็นกิจกรรมหนึ่ง ที่จะสะท้อนชีวิตกิง ผู้คนที่ดำรงอยู่ใน ชุมชนที่มีความ หลากหลายใน สังคม การเปลี่ยน แปลงตามกระแส โลกาภิวัฒน์ที่มี ระบบทุนคอยจ้อง ให้ผู้คนนิยมใน ความทันสมัยอย่างไม่รู้เท่าทัน ใช้จ่ายอย่างฟุ่มเฟือย ทำ ให้ชีวิตขาดความสมดุล และรัฐบาลเองก็พยายามที่จะ สร้างความสมดุลทางเศรษฐกิจนิยมจนเกิดทิศทางของ การดำรงอยู่ในเศรษฐกิจพอเพียงอย่างรู้เท่าทัน ดังที่ อาจารย์สุวัฒน์ ดงแป้น ผู้จัดการฝ่ายประชาสัมพันธ์ พอช. ได้พูดถึงกระแสแห่งโลกาภิวัฒน์ที่ปัจจุบันแม้ว่า กระแสทุนนิยมจะหลั่งไหลอย่างเชี่ยวกรากและรุนแรงไป ทั่วทุกภูมิภาคของโลก แต่กระแสการพัฒนาที่ชุมชนเป็น แกนหลัก โดยใช้ภูมิปัญญาความรู้ของคนในท้องถิ่น บูรณาการสู่การพัฒนา ก็สามารถทำให้กระแสทุนนิยม ลดความรุนแรงลงได้ ถึงแม้ว่าจะไม่สามารถหยุดยั้งไว้ได้ ก็ตาม

    ในทัศนคติของผู้นำศาสนาอิสลาม **โต๊ะอิหม่าม สะอาด โซ๊ะสลาม** ได้ให้ข้อคิดว่า "จะทำอย่างไรให้คน เห็นความสำคัญที่ว่าพลิกฟื้นของเก่า ๆ ประเพณีเก่า ๆ กิจกรรมอะไรต่าง ๆ ที่คนเก่าก่อนเขาทำกันมา มันมี ประโยชน์อย่างไร? มีคุณค่าอย่างไร? ทุกอย่างมันมี ประโยชน์และมีคุณค่า จนกระทั่งเราเอาคุณค่าของคน ของเก่า ๆ หายไปหมด เอาของใหม่ ๆ ขึ้นมา มันก็เดือด ร้อนกันขนาดไหน"

> "ปัจจุบัน แม้ว่ากระแสทุนนิยมจะหลั่งไหลอย่าง เชี่ยวกรากและรุนแรงไปทั่วทุกภูมิภาคของโลก แต่ กระแสการพัฒนาที่ชุมชนเป็นแกนหลัก โดยใช้ภูมิ ปัญญาความรู้ของคนในท้องถิ่นบูรณาการสู่การ พัฒนา ก็สามารถทำให้กระแสทุนนิยมลดความรุน แรงลงได้ ถึงแม้ว่าจะไม่สามารถหยุดยั้งไว้ได้ก็ตาม"

    โต๊ะครูนิคม หิศา ให้แง่คิดที่ว่า "พลิกฟื้นวิถีชุม ชน เป็นงานที่ดีมาก ถ้าเราจะเจาะลึกลงไป เราจะได้ ประโยชน์หลาย ๆ ด้าน โดยเฉพาะอย่างยิ่งในยุคที่ เศรษฐกิจมันแย่ ถ้าเราหันมาพลิกฟื้นไม่ว่าจะเป็นเยาวชน ชาวบ้าน และหันมาดู มาศึกษา ผมคิดว่าจะทำให้ครอบ ครัวเรามีความสุขได้ มีการประหยัด ใช้จ่ายอย่างมีแบบ แผน มีบัญชีชีวิต เมื่อครอบครัวมันดี สังคมก็จะดีไปด้วย

The opening article 'Power of Community…Power of Revival' in the first issue.

5. Activist media: 9 participants วิกเล็ก, วิเชยร, ฮิด้า, ดูสังกัส, ดูแสวง, ดูณค, นก, การมณ, ฮิ่งปู

Group / Issues	Water shortage	Mah moh power plant	Kathleeya	Football	AT ten	Alternative media	
						newcomer.	No power
WI+OI cut off ฮิ่งปู	The village head assistant told his story about insulting from a state employee when they argued about water shortage. The group criticised the state employee and preferred the media which opened for the locals to speak out such as Sorayuth's programme.	The group opposed the text of the story as it was different from lived experience. The media never gathered the facts from the village so they did not know the truth. TPI never opened the factory for investigating as the media reported. The media presented only positive views of the factory but we were curious whether there was any danger inside TPI. ✱ criticised media never report the truth	Everyone admitted that there are many cases of pregnancy before marriage in the village. Two guys said it was normal while women said it was unacceptable, in particular mothers felt agony if they found that daughters were pregnant in their young age. Niran, a former leader said it was a serious problem in the village when teenage parents abandoned toddlers. A guy said it destroyed Thai traditional custom. The media presented the media, especially TV melodramas which presented provocative dresses so teenagers imitated the actors/actresses. In Kathleeya's case, teenagers would follow the superstar's behaviour because the superstar (a decent woman) could do this, why they couldn't?	NO DATA	NO DATA	A working-age guy said the alternative media, *Power of Community* didn't have power to fight in serious problems i.e. pollution from TPI. He didn't see the advantage of the alternative media. In contrast, Niran, a former leader and a weaving mat project leader saw *Power of Community* was a channel to build a network to negotiate with TPI. "Will TPI be scared of us if we can gather a group of thousands?" The rest see *Power of Community* is useful in that they can access some unique information of the village. However, most of them saw that the concept in the newsletter was good but impractical because people had to earn and didn't have time to revive local wisdom. It might be possible if the government funded the people who ran the project. Niran argued that it was possible by setting a group now to preserve local wisdom i.e. Putsa (local fruit) plantation. She also convinced that mangrove reforestation was possible while others argued that it is hard to plant as the waste water from TPI has flowed into the forest for long time. Two of them had hope that if the forest grew, it is advantage for the villagers' livelihood. A farmer said he wanted the media which he could complained about the factory and had power to help him. This group was an argument between the former leader (Niran) and a guy. While Niran believed in alternative media and self-reliance, the guy asked for "interest" if he would follow the concepts in the newsletter and depended help from the outsiders. Putsa plantation was a traditional way of life of the village. The farmers said they still planted it because they had no alternative and no money to move. Niran said apart from alternative print media, "the village broadcasting" was useful for the village but it was broken. It belonged to the Local Administrations. The Administrations invested in it but it did not work (the group criticised this issue). Everyone admitted that they would pick up pamphlets of supermarkets rather than *Power of Community*. Although, it provided knowledge but cannot eat (knowledge) and impractical while the supermarkets presented essential information (cheap stuff). Text in supermarkets pamphlets were suitable for lower class people who had little income.	Argument have power ₹ useful impractical local wisdom argument ↓ reforest farmer wanted power media Putsa— no choice reforest No money cannot eat.

✱ blame media

✱ Men > normal

✱ like newcomers, provocative dress

— have hope   — impractical

— peasants no choice   5

✱ — want power