

Sovereignty of the nation is necessary for Thailand to develop her own version of Democracy

Anawat Bunnag

Abstract- I shall argue here that the sovereignty of the nation is necessary for Thailand to develop her own version of Democracy based on three assumptions. The first one is based on the premise that full implementation of Western democracy would entail a set of economic values which are contradictory to some Eastern values, and would finally result in the identical chaotic society full of drug abusers and materialistic individuals as has already occurred in the western society. The second assumption is based on the claim that demands for democratization in Eastern countries are in fact veiled threats of capitalism. The third assumption contends that the Western democratic model will lessen the morality of the citizen.

Keywords—Democracy, Democracy in Thailand, Sovereignty, Thailand

I. INTRODUCTION

The first argument against Western democracy is based on the premise that Western and Eastern culture differs in too many aspects. Although cultures are not fixed or concretely established, and often adaptable, cultural entities that are too distinct from one another must go through a length of time and effort in order for them to synchronize well with each other. Although a culture may change considerably over time, the changing paths also vary according to climates, localities, population, technological advances, religions, traditions and so on.

The second argument against Western democratic model is that the call for greater democratization in Southeast Asian countries is in fact veil of capitalist economy. The frightening reality is that these political uprising do not come from outside. The movement is supported by business groups, politicians and activists who would gain if the free-markets economy is well-established.

Finally, it is possible that Western democratic model will lessen the morality of Thai citizen. With its free-trade policy, running a country structurally resembles running a business corporation. Business enterprise always aims at maximum benefits and increasing wealth. It follows that morality, decency, kindness and goodness become more and more irrelevant to the competing business arena.

By refuting capitalist economy, it does not require that Thailand be ruled by a non-democratic, authoritarian regime. Thailand could eventually develop her own version of democracy without full adoption of capitalist economy, if her sovereignty is well protected from Western intervention and well-preserved internally by the unity of Thai population.

Anawat Bunnag is a Phd. Graduate from the Graduate School of Philosophy and Religion, Assumption University, Bangkok, Thailand. phone: 6681 6427111; e-mail: anawatbunnag@hotmail.com

II. WESTERN AND EASTERN CULTURE DIFFERS IN TOO MANY ASPECTS

Although some may argue that cultures are not fixed or concretely established, and often adaptable, cultural entities that are too distinct from one another must go through a length of time and effort in order for them to synchronize well with each other. Even though it is also true that culture may change considerably over time, the changing paths also vary according to climates, localities, population, technological advances, religions, traditions and so on.

For example, although the description of 'the Thai culture' or 'Thainess' may vary according to many factors, one of which is the locality of the people. When the phrase 'Thainess' is used, Thais often proudly present our cultural and traditional practices of the royal court, consisting of sophisticated dances such as the royal mask play or Khon, literature written beautifully in poetry, and the most remarkable craftsmanship of many royal temples and palaces. Folk dances performed by peasants in different regions of the Northeastern, or the South for instance, are also examples of Thai culture which are indeed very diverse.

Although some may argue that it is always difficult to mark precisely where one culture ends and another begins, most people would agree that it is not very difficult to recognize 'Thainess' from Western culture. For instance, being humble to parents and older persons is typical and easy for a Thai person to practice, but almost unknown and difficult to comply with for an American. Furthermore, being kind to strangers is also typical of most Thai people. There are traditional proverbs about how you should help strangers such as 'Whoever comes to your house must be properly welcomed'. The Thai traditional greeting phrase is not 'How are you?' as in the Western tradition, which is very superficial and insincere, since nobody really wants to know how you really are or really feel at the moment. Thais often greet each other with 'Have you eaten rice?' and really care for it. If you have not had your meal, you will certainly be invited to join that meal or have a company for the meal while if you are in the U.S., nobody would be in the least interested or sincerely care.

Hence, the assumption that the Western democratic model is not necessarily the best for Thailand seems to be well-grounded.

Even though some may argue that assumptions and beliefs constitutive of a culture do not stay the same over time. Contemporary Thai culture is different from the culture that existed fifty or a hundred years ago. The adoption of a foreign idea like Western democracy could result in a loss of our decent cultural identity. If we fully adopted the Western democratic model, we would definitely lose a large part of who we are because of the harm that its capitalist economy could bring. This argument here indeed

moves from the conclusion that Western and Thai culture differ quite significantly and followed from that premise. It is minimally doubtful if we consider the following examples.

Countries of South America, for instance, differ considerably to North American and European countries in their histories, temperaments, preferences in food and drink, and so on. Although some of these differences continue, some countries such as Argentina having been colonized and later turned into a liberal democracy and adopting a free-trade capitalist economy more than a century ago, still struggle under economic difficulties. In a liberal democratic culture, the economic system would eventually enter into the realm of practices constitutive of cultural identities. The political domain could as well be defined, according to Carl Schmitt, as “a sphere of honest rivalry”, while the economic domain could be viewed “as a world of deception” [1]. The liberal democratic culture integrates the domain of the political, economic and that of private lives. Economic enemy could become political and the political may be reached from the economic domain. It follows that destiny today is no longer politics but economics which has become the political [2].

“The negation of the political, which is inherent in every consistent individualism, leads necessarily to a political practice of distrust toward all conceivable political forces and forms of state and government, but never produces on its own a positive theory of state, government and politics” [3].

Cultural or traditional values, nonetheless, are threatened by the Western democratic model, as the above example illustrates. Traditional Values such as, obedience to the elders, submission of individuality for the sake of the group and striving toward unity of the whole are being shaken by the values of individualistic consumerism in the free market economy. The value that strongly promotes your individuality and personal identity is justified on the basis that you have the right and freedom to be whatever you want to be, buy whatever you want to buy—not what is actually essential. With consumerism having taken over the society, the political and cultural context of the country would differ entirely from what it was in the past.

The political in which rulers should possess superior moral virtues and knowledge are undermined and ignored. Public media and communication agents such as TV, radio stations and News agencies not only connect with the people but they also educate and transform the society, with their strong influence over the entire population. Information is no longer limited only to the elites or to those in the population with high education. Hence knowledge is universal and accessible everywhere.

The traditional system which sustained moral values and virtuous practice in the past is now falling apart under the influence of capitalist values. Constituted partly of communications among people that transcend national and cultural boundaries, this virtual communication leads people to think that moral values and virtuous practices are only beliefs and that violating them sometimes means no physical or legal consequences. With modern consumerist life constantly forcing changes and revisions of beliefs, the belief in the legitimacy of the rulers by virtue of their moral and epistemic superiority comes to be regarded as unnecessary, as irrelevant and possible obstructing the maximization of wealth and pleasure-seeking of individual persons or groups. And since the belief in wealth becomes the basic and universal rationalization, the legitimacy of any oligarchic elites, who could claim superior knowledge and more efficiency in maximizing wealth, to govern the country without obeying, respecting or conforming to the rule of law is also plausible and could be widely practiced.

III. DEMOCRACY EQUALS TO CAPITALIST ECONOMY

The second argument against the Western democratic model is that the call for greater democratization in Southeast Asian countries is in fact a veil for the creation of a capitalist economy. The frightening reality is that these political uprisings do not come from outside. The movement is supported by business groups, politicians and activists, who would gain if the free-markets economy is well-established. The free-trade economy could give them maximum benefits and enormous wealth. Though the threats of real foreign intervention are less probable, it is still possible if the US and its allies happened to recognize their benefits from the intervention as when they invaded Iraq during 2003-2010 and Afghanistan from 2001 to the present time.

Therefore, it follows that threats of capitalism incurred by implementation of the Western democratic model are more than real. Democracy is a form of diversion, to blur the sight of the people so that they fall into the capitalist trap. But if Thai people realize that democracy can emerge internally from among ourselves and does not have to be imported from western countries, then they will know that democracy without a capitalist economy could be a totally different matter.

IV. WESTERN DEMOCRATIC MODEL WILL LESSEN THE MORALITY OF THE PEOPLE

Finally, it is possible that the Western democratic model will lessen the morality of Thai citizens. In the Western democratic model there are too many voices, too many opinions, and too many directions to which policy makers are being pulled. With its free-trade policy, running a country structurally resembles running a business corporation. Business enterprise always aims at maximum benefits and increasing wealth. It follows that morality, decency, kindness and goodness become more and more irrelevant in the competing business arena.

However, a country is far too varied and pluralistic to be managed as a corporation, and visions of the good among citizens of a country might conflict with that of the CEO prime minister of the country, who wants to take the country along the path of a successful business enterprise. Recently the world capitalist economies have been hit by a global financial crisis stemming from countries such as Italy and Greece. The crisis has the potential to become pandemic, expanding into many other countries. Climate changes and global warming are also issues that shift the directions of the development paradigm from economic growth to human well-being and environmental preservation.

The tradeoff between the vision of the good life of the people and what is considered successful in the international economy, such as high GDP growth, may be too much for the people. It follows that they have rights to find the most suitable way to achieve their collective goal of human well-being such as discard the GDP (Gross Domestic Product) and concentrate on GNH (Gross National Happiness) instead [4].

V. CULTURAL AND TRADITION IS IMPORTANT FOR THE DEVELOPMENT OF DEMOCRACY

Democracy is not necessarily a foreign wisdom from the greater civilizations of the West imposed on the uncivilized countries of the East. It is not only the Western democratic model alone that is capable of producing real democratic regime. To establish the democratic tradition in Thailand requires, first, a clear understanding by the people about what democracy really means, and second, a clear understanding by the people that their democratic rights, their

freedom and equality always come together with the duties and responsibilities of the democratic citizen.

The call for democracy has to take into consideration several assumptions constituting a cultural tradition where the democracy is to be founded. Democracy ought to be founded and maintained within each particular country's tradition and culture, because it could offer the best alternative for the people from within their own culture itself.

“When ancient opinions and rules of life are taken away, the loss cannot possibly be estimated. From that moment we have no compass to govern us; nor can we know distinctly to what port we steer. Europe, undoubtedly, taken in a mass, was in a flourishing condition the day on which your revolution was completed. How much of that prosperous state was owing to the spirit of our old manners and opinions is not easy to say; but as such causes cannot be indifferent in their operation, we must presume, that, on the whole, their operation was beneficial [5].

Since Thailand has an established culture, customs and traditions that can be physically observed in the reflection of its Arts, literature and craftsmanship, the argument that nationhood is only an imagined community can be viewed as invalid for Thailand [6].

VI. CONCLUSION

Thai people are actively creating democracy for ourselves, and the process is still an ongoing event in which everybody should partake. Awareness of other cultures make comparison with our own traditions possible, but the most important point is that knowledge and morality are two essential conditions that Thai people need to utilize and reorient ourselves to. This reorientation in the fundamental conception of how society is to be constituted is essential, because although democracy seems to be the only possible choice of government at the moment the capitalist economy is clearly not. It does not preclude that a capitalist economy may be suitable in some other countries. For example in US society, where the mass is literate and materialistic, and thus, is in constant pursuit of wealth, material gains and individual pleasure, each individual person is in lifelong competition with every other person in every aspect of life. Jealousy, envy and selfishness are very common. This kind of competitive and selfish society, however, had never been openly practiced or accepted as the social standard of behavior in Thailand before the invasion of capitalism under its democratic cover.

I shall conclude here that democracy is not essentially tied to a particular economic system, such as the capitalist economic system, if it could evolve from within the traditions of a cultural entity itself. It follows that Thailand could develop her own version of democracy with her own economic system that results from the accumulation and adaptation of Thai traditions and culture, as for example in the sufficiency economy (for more information about the Sufficiency Economy see [7] [8] [9] [10]).

REFERENCES

- [1] Carl Schmitt, *The Concept of the Political*, London: University of Chicago Press, 1996, pp. 77.
- [2] For more information, see *ibid*, pp. 78.
- [3] *Ibid*, pp. 70.
- [4] For more information, see Boonlert Supadhiloke, *Synergy of 'Gross National Happiness' and 'Sufficiency Economy' as an Imperative Paradigm for Communication and Sustainable Social Change*, Paper accepted for presentation at International Conference Future Imperatives of Communication and Information for Development and Social Change, Bangkok, December 20-22, 2010. Available

<http://203.131.210.100/conference/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/01-05-Supadhiloke-Synergy-of-Gross-National-Happiness-and-Sufficiency-Economy.pdf>

- [5] Edmund Burke, *Reflections on the French Revolution*, England: J.M. Dent & Sons Ltd., 1955, pp.134
- [6] For more information, see Benedict Anderson (1996), *Imagined communities*, London: Verso, 1996.
- [7] National Economic and Social Advisory Council (NESAC), *Formulation and Evaluation of Sufficiency Economy Indicators and the Economic and Social Report on the National Performance in the Direction of Sufficiency Economy*, Bangkok: Ubun Rajthanee University, 2007.
- [8] A. Puntasen., S. Premchuen & P. Keitdejpunya, *Application of the royal thought about the Sufficiency Economy in SMEs*. Bangkok: Thailand Research Fund, 2003.
- [9] UNDP United Nations Development Programme, *Thailand Human Development Report 2007: Sufficiency Economy and Human Development*, Bangkok: UNDP, 2007.
- [10] Prasopchoke Mongsawad, *The Philosophy of the Sufficiency Economy: a Contribution to the Theory of Development*, Asia-Pacific Development Journal, Vol.17, No.1, June 2010, p.123-143

Anawat Bunnag was born in Bangkok, Thailand, in 1964, graduated with a BA degree in Archaeology from Silpakorn University, Bangkok, Thailand in 1985, received a MA in Liberal Studies from New York University (NYU), New York, USA in 1990, received an IEMBA from University of Victoria (UVIC), Canada in 1999 and is graduating with a Phd. in Philosophy in December 2012.

Anawat's works include an article titled "Henry Bergson's Duration: A Refutation from Buddhist Perspective" (2007) presented in the Annual seminar of Philosophy and Religion in collaboration with Rangsit University booklet, during October 15th-16th, 2007; "The Philosophical Dimension of Sufficiency Economy" (2007) presented in the seminal booklet of The 3rd Philosophy and Religion Relation Camp at Burapa University; is currently interested in the field of philosophy of time and political philosophy.

A Psychoanalytic Attitude to The Great Gatsby

First A. Mojtaba Gholipour, Second B. Mina Sanahmadi

Abstract— Considering to some eminent literary works, declare a severe relevance between psychoanalysis and writer's method. The Great Gatsby, F. Scott Fitzgerald classic twentieth century story of Jay Gatsby's quest for Daisy Buchanan is different from other American Writer's which also describe the corruption along with failure of the American Dream. Psychology is an academic and applied discipline that involves the scientific study of mental functions and behaviors. Psychologists attempt to understand the role of mental functions in individual and social behavior. This study is mainly concerned with the psychological method of writing in the Great Gatsby. Attempt to understand the role of Gatsby's mental functions in individual and social behavior. Practically it is an analysis of wealth, power and lust in some segments of the story. Notifying how much wealth can help to obtain the power and how much the power can help to obtain the lust. The root of someone's motivations to create an evolution in spite of having an appropriate life situation. And associate the story with psychological points by some psychologist's theories.

Index Terms— F. Scott Fitzgerald, Sigmund Freud, Alfred W. Adler, Feelings of Inferiority, Unconscious Mind, Sexual Sublimation (psychology)

I. INTRODUCTION

Since Sigmund Freud, Francis Scott Key Fitzgerald have approximately lived in a same era, Hence the Freud's attitude could explicitly impressed the Fitzgerald's literary work. In many ways in his stories he expressed the frustration of the young generation with the American dream along with some disillusionment. On the other hand how disillusionments can be effective in someone's attitude.

Kaharuddin (2000) discussed "James Gatz defense Mechanism in Fitzgerald the Great Gatsby" using psychoanalytic Approach. In his problem he focused on Gatsby's defense mechanism in relation with his problem. In this opportunity the researcher decides to conduct a research on the major character's way on struggle for getting his ex-girlfriend's love, and the influence that he gets because of it. Here the researcher uses an individual psychological approach.

This paper mentioned that a dichotomy exists in the form of The Great Gatsby and engages in a psychoanalytic approach to the story with the application of Freudian theory to support the interpretations. Without psychoanalytical criticism, we could not understand how the repression of Gatsby's unhappy moments of life actually drives his character. And talked about a movement which called Modernism; rebellion against religion. This paper addressed

and explained one of the main factors of the movement: Psychology. Mentioned that the psychological ideas were new and embraced by especially the youth, and adults too, all sick of the strict norms and rules in the 1920. The Great Gatsby define a dream of having a perfect and most affluent life in which seeking prosperity, gratification and sexuality is in the first priority by eradicating human evolution and corrupt the social morals. The role of Gatsby's past in his dreams of the future can change the definition of prosperity in human conception. What happened in The Great Gatsby has a psychological reason. This is the main purpose which has been mentioned in the paper.

II. DISCUSSION

The Great Gatsby is an example of the American Dream in which people begin to seek out pleasure and power instead of individualism. Wealth is easy to come and it is used as a tool to obtain other desire.

According to the father of psychology Sigmund Freud, the unconscious mind (or the unconscious) consists of the processes in the mind that occurs automatically and is not available to introspection, and include thought processes, memory, affect, and motivation. Gatsby's unconscious mind led him towards something he could never have, but wanted so badly.

Alfred Adler talk about the term "feeling(s) of inferiority" which refers to a group of representations and affects that reflect an individual's self-devaluation in relation to others that it can have a positive or negative impact on self-esteem. This feeling stimulates Gatsby's motivation to create a situation to obtain wealth and use it as a power to reach Daisy as she was his first and only love. Since Gatsby was off at war, Tom Buchanan who was a rich and influential man used his power and social standing to convince Daisy into marries him. Later on Gatsby tries to do the same. Gatsby does everything in hid power to get Daisy back and amasses a fortune to be used as a tool for Daisy's love. Catching Daisy's attention and proving his social status was the cause of all Gatsby did. As Gatsby tries to reach her, the current is drawing him back into the past. This is repression, the fact that Gatsby cannot move forward without his past guiding him.

From a psychological perspective, Gatsby's invented past is more than just a strategy to pass himself off as a member of an upper class; it's also a form of denial, a psychological defense to help him repress the memory of his real past. And his claim that his desire to psychologically kill the parents whose wounding influence still inhabits his own psyche and receive from those parents the psychological sustenance.

Sexual sublimation, also known as sexual transmutation, is the attempt, especially among some religious traditions, to transform sexual impulses or sexual energy into creative energy. In The Great Gatsby, sublimation is the transference

F. A. Mojtaba Gholipour, Post Graduate Student, Osmania University College of Arts, Hyderabad, India (e-mail: ariasee1986@yahoo.com).

S. B. Mina Sanahmadi, Post Graduate Student, Pune University, Fergusson College, Pune, India (e-mail: mina163_san@yahoo.com).