

**The Monarchy, the Mass,  
and the Marginalized  
: Lèse Majesté Prosecutions and People at the Periphery**

Puangchon Unchanam

Department of Political Science, Naresuan University

Khorapin Phuaphansawat

Faculty of Political Science, Chulalongkorn University

# Who is the person we interviewed?

- Jatuporn Sae-ung
- LGBTQ activist from the northeastern
- Dress a traditional costume at a protest site in 2020
- 3-year sentences for “mocking” the Queen
- Granted bail before Supreme Court’s verdict



# Why is the person relevant to our research?

- How commoners with socio-economic disadvantages decided to join the monarchy reform movement
- How they have been prosecuted and endured prosecutions
- How their multiple identities shaped their motivations and goals of activism



# What did we expect from interviewing the person?

- Fearless protester with a radical stance on the monarchy
- Well-planned performance to protest the crown
- Alienated from the protest's leaders
- Her gender identities are crucial
- Never accept court verdicts



# What did we actually learn from the person?

- Impromptu performance
- Not about gender, but political demands
- Pro-democratic, not anti-monarchist
- In solidarity with the protest's leaders
- Exhausted from legal cases
- Wish for the sentences and begin a “normal life” soon



# Our insights now about life writing after doing this project

- Reflections
  - Rank-and-file protesters = most vulnerable during the periods of protest fatigue and state retaliation
  - They struggle to make a living while facing court proceedings, often unable to afford to flee abroad or seek asylum
- Challenges
  - Unpredictability of lèse majesté cases
  - To say what are “unsayable”
  - Political and emotional bonding