



## SOCIAL MOVEMENT AGAINST GOLD MINING

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### Abstract

The research has adopted the collective action framing tasks proposed by Snow and Benford to study the framing process. These include diagnostic framing, prognostic framing and motivational framing. Regarding diagnostic framing, “*injustice frames*” was identified which confirmed previous studies. In addition, this research was able to identify two other important diagnostic framing shared by the two cases under study, one being the state’s development policy biased towards industrial development and against agricultural development and rural people’s way of life and the other, the alliance between the state and the private sector. Based on these three diagnostic frames, two levels of corresponding prognostic framing were made. The movement demanded that the state make structural reform through the amendment of the mining law and change unfair mining concession terms. At the local level, movement representatives stood for local government elections with the aims to make local structural reforms, tackle monopoly problems and change local development policies. As for motivational framing, the vocabularies used to mobilize movement participation were “*disastrous mining*” and “*dangerous impact*” to warn against the severity and urgency of the problems, while putting forward the “*community culture*” discourse as a mobilizing tool.

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### Introduction


This article would like to explain about process of social movement against gold mining conceptual framework construction regarding. In additionally, data have been collection based on year 2001-2011. It also has been analyzed and studied from *Social Movement Against Mining in Northeastern Thailand* (Supee Samorna, 2007) in 2010-2012. Moreover, collective action framing also has been conducted throughout diagnostic, prognostic, and motivational framing which is conceptual framework process theory of Snow and Benford (Snow & Benford, 1992).



Generally, classic and popular questions amongst social movement analysis and activists is that what kinds of scrutinizing process and how to access the truth of social movement. Although many mechanisms to analyze its process in past decade years have tried, it still disable to achieve new social movement's truth. Last few decades, there are many thematic studies about social movement process. Normally, those studies have been questioning about what are the key factors of original social movement processing. A trouble, affliction, and exploitation of people are significant keys findings which seen in common reasons of Collective Behaviour Theory. Additionally, since last ten years, there are some studies regarding to explanation of strategic planning movements. The success of collective resources which is directly related to Resource Mobilization Theory is core findings regularly. These two theories' point of views have no differentiated from New Social Movement Theory. It implies to capable accessibility of trouble people in explanation which is focusing on areas of lives and new meaning for such movements (Chairat Charoensin imposing, 1997). However, New Social Movement Theory is the same Collective Behaviour Theory and Resources Mobilization Theory in structural analyzing. Significantly, there is neglected to key player of social movement as individual. This phenomenon is backward to new social movement processing justification. Furthermore, it is unable to get individual analysis, including its thoughts, belief, attitude, and constructing of struggle meaning which is means micro level analysis as well as social movement areas of practices.

Eventually, disable to access basis social movement is problem of analysis. In the midst of complicated struggle movement adjustment, somehow, step over the old fashion has been found two shortcomings since last decade. Firstly, individual thoughts, belief, and attitudes have been neglected from its explanation. Secondly, later on situations or processes upcoming have not been derived from resources mobilization theory only, it also deduced from new meaning construction for challenges, claim, and event communication of movement as named "*meaning of struggle*". Therefore, the old relevant theories of social movement explanation particularly focus on structural analysis and neglected on individual analysis which is inadequate to social movement understanding neither. The situations have arrived later such as Assembly of the Poor, Local Fisherman movement, indigenous movement, students' movement, the People's Alliance for Democracy, Paak Mun Dam Against movement, Disability People Movement, Environmental Movement, Movement of Santi Asoka Group etc. (Phasuk Phongpaichit, 2000) and (Maniemai Thongyoy, 2009) Social Movement Against Mining (Supee Samorna, 2012). All of these are mostly different from social movement in the past. For instance, there are complicating developed issues, struggle movement modules relations to social interactive regularly. Importantly, new meaning construction of challenges has been generating. Therefore, comprehending of conscious, and idealistic players at individual level as "*collective thoughts process*" as the social movement practitioners defined is not simply.

However, the understanding of social movement in terms of collective struggle thoughts since the past scholars have paid less attention to, event there are many post-social movements taken places. In fact, there is only the study of mind framing process of the People's Alliance for Democracy (U-Chain Chiangsaen, 2008). It also explains about mobilizing people to political movement. Nevertheless, most scholars have tried to conclude such framework that can be fitted to social movement concept, particular in basis movement derived from communities and their natural resources usage conflict.



Based on situations, and circumstances above, these are regards to uncertainty and doubt which must have not been default in any terms. The author as the result has started studying on “*Social Movement Against Mining in Northeastern Thailand*” (Supee Samorna, 2012). Moreover, the author has paid attention to collective action frame of Social Movement against Gold Mining. It means to clearly answers according to collective movement processed throughout individual level in order to get intensive and long paths and ways struggle. Significantly, Mind Framing Process Theory of Snow and Benford would have been applied for being use as analysis guidance which explains to basis social movement. Unfortunately, in Thai academic era, it seen unsuccessfully in terms of mid framing process practices.

## **Methodology**


Based on Snow & Benford, Mind Framing Process Theory has been referred to explain social situations on above. The author has selected areas of study in particular, and usage qualitative research methods to access the truth of circumstance, data have been collected throughout in-depth interview and both non-participatory and participatory observation. All data proceeding would have been analyzed and concluded in terms of theory.

Regarding area of study, village name (unreal named) Baan Naa Charoen, Wangsaphung district, Loei province. This village and its surrounding are targeted and projected from government such as mining industrial policy and government also gave concession to private company for gold mining since 2000. Its severance tax as income generating from gold mining will contribute to national economy. As the results, the village community as fertilized land and gain of mining resources has been targeted for company concession as well as locality has been taken advantages. There are some traditional ways of living with confronting to external modernization. Obviously, local people standing up for governmental policy challenges and form up their group named “*Local Conservation Group*” which has been set up for facing government projects. Moreover, the study area as projected area of mining industry policy from government along with local people rising for natural resources conservation struggle intensively and complicatedly causes the author to select this village in terms of study area.

## **Social Movement against Gold Mining**

Social movement against gold mining is a movement derived from national policies impacts which is government shifting agricultural towards industrial country. The mining resources will have been foundation to make economic growth eventually.

As long as mining development mandated by government, heavy investments of mining industry have been occurring. A cross country are targeted to strategic planning areas and Baan Naa Charoen is a part of that. Since 2005, then the private company got concession from government, dead forests, dusts amidst the village, fish died, people got rash, environmental degradation rapidly. Local people get trouble of living and eventually people themselves grouping and setting up name “*Local Conservation Group*” in order to resist gold mining project in surrounding villages since 2005 - 2012. Based on experiences of people movement, there can be categorized into two periods. Firstly, collective thoughts stage



(2005-2007), local people themselves engaged and collected thoughts from internal, raising problems, issues related, and its impacts on their livelihoods, health, and environment. Secondly, learning by fighting stage (2008-2011), people get external people involved, seeking for alliance, and networking of people for empowering movement.

The movement has been practicing through environmental platforms for public communication to identify problems and issues relate. Additionally, public sphere means to reflect the local people' values of wisdom which is main factors for people livelihood and eventually existing of autonomous of self-government. Consequently, resisting injustice regulation, refusing livelihood and environment separation based concession, and claiming government responsibilities based mining project are issues which the group have addressing and raising since then. Obviously, three of keys issues addressed implies to policy structure in problems as well as imbalance and injustice natural resources management from government sector. Hence, Social Movement against Gold Mining has been occurring from governmental control over local natural resources conditionally as well as its conflict amongst government, capitalist, and people who are benefited from natural resources utilization inequality.

### **Mind Framing Process of Social Movement against Gold Mining**


Since 2001-2011, the author have studied and analyzed data from research conducting *named "Social Movement Against Mining in Northeastern Thailand"* (Supee Samorn, 2012). It illustrate that in the midst of take over and control over access of natural resources by government, local people have stood up for resisting such project through three collective action frame such as diagnostic framing, prognostic framing, and motivational framing (Snow & Benford, 1992) more details in ordinary.

#### **Diagnostic Framing**

Diagnostic framing have been created for clearly figuring people problems taken places in areas, especially in the original keys factors affecting community and people livelihoods. Based on the author, under crisis facing, diagnostic methods found that "*injustice*" (Benford & Snow, 2000) which deduces from government and capitalist performing. Consequently, proceeding of discussion, brain storming, and community consensus are the process of diagnostic farming process practiced (Benford & Snow, 2000) as explains below.

#### **1. Problem of Injustice in Natural Resources Management by Government**

Regarding injustice in natural resources management by government, movement processing has been signifying throughout mining regulation and its concessional agreements. First of all, based on *Social Movement Against Mining in Northeastern Thailand* (Supee Samorna,2012), the study found that mining regulation is a key root of people troubles, local people seen in injustice natural resources management causing by central law enforcement to control over local natural resources. The government itself has completely occupied mineral as "*Mine belongs to Government*" and it can be transferring to somebody else such as concession to groups of investors. In fact, gold mining projected is also the best example of



taking advantages over local people by external firms whose rights ensuring from power of government and capital instead. Therefore, while locals have been deprived of their rights to access natural resources by laws. This inequity issue is raised by the locals to protest against the project.

Similarly, the concession contract is judged by the locals as “*a special concession contract*” issued by the government to concessionaire groups. In other words, the concessionaires are privileged with exclusive monopoly on the long term using mineral resources. This results in the locals losing of their rights on accessing natural resources in this area. In fact, the special concession contract is as an investment incentive used by government. It attracts investors with a long term exploitation and monopoly on mineral resources. So, it can widely increase investment in mining industry. However, based on this study it was revealed that to manage the mineral resources in this way deprives of locals’ rights over local’s resources, while the privilege to exploit the resources is confined exclusively to concessionaire groups. This contributes to inequity in mineral resource management.

This study also reflects benefits from the use of mineral resources in economic development in an inequitable way. That is to say, mining companies and government earn huge amount of profit from exploiting tremendous mineral resources, while locals not only gain just a few benefit from royalty but also suffer with the impact of environmental deterioration on health, way of life and community culture.

## **2. The impractical development policy enforcement against locals’ way of life and communities issue**

Gold Mining Project, a development policy applied to Baan Naa Charoen causes locals trouble, since it is unmatched with social context. It is one of national development that government try to shift Thailand from agricultural nation to industrial country. Large-scale mining project investment in all regions has been aggressively encouraged and mineral resource is regarded as a fundamental of economic growth. Based on locals’ perspectives, the policy of replacement agricultural convention by industrialization will harm rather than benefit their way of life. It is because this policy stresses on industrial development which responds to capitalists’ demand, while overlooks agriculture regarded as community foundation. As a result of mining investment encouragement policy, local’s resources will be intensively used more in industrial and economic activities. It will also destroy way of life and community. In the case of Baan Naa Charoen, mining activity results in many of community’s members losing of their traditional way of life, water pollution, damaged paddy field and locals’ unhealthy.

A big gold mine project at Ban Na Charoen, for the villagers it is a strange thing that having nothing harmonize with their way of life and community. It is because 90 percent of community’s members still mainly depend on agricultural production for their subsistence. Many households are still engaged in rice and crop farming as well as raising livestock. Moreover, most of them still rely on natural resources in the mine’s area such as forest, herbs and other products, which some of them have been already removed for construction. Thus, becoming industrial country policy and determining/using local natural resources as an economic development strategic area are a foreign matter and problem for Baan Naa Charoen.



### 3. The collusion and collaboration between government and capitalist issue

The collusion and collaboration between government and concessionaires issue is found since Ban Na Charoen is determined as a target area for national large-scale gold mine operation. That is to say, government who is in charge of supporting and facilitating mining industry collaborates with concessionaires who focus on gaining a maximum profit from mineral resources to possess and exploit resources together by doing that, they refer to the legitimacy of “*investment fostering*”. Moreover, they depend on institutional structure from the top, policy level, to the bottom, local level, to support them in achieving all procedures and regulations such as concession license, survey, and mining operation and so on.


Locals demonstrate the relationship of government and capitalists, which is indicated that the government greatly contributes to concessionaires’ benefits. Government who is responsible for natural resource conservation not only disregard to preserve the resources but also intrigue and collaborate with concessionaires to take advantage of them, for example, designing policies to support concessionaire groups, offering concessionaires being part of committee members working with government officials, offering concessionaire representatives being mining industry consultants working for government, authorizing concessionaires a monopoly on mine survey and operating with the long term (a special concession), tax relaxing and exemption, research and experiment relevant mineral industry invested by government for an investment incentive. For concessionaire groups, their close relationship with the government and their financial power greatly contribute to their business running smoothly.

The locals consider and believe that their grievance is arisen from benefit on local resources issue. In the other words, common interest between the government and concessionaire groups is the main cause of their difficulty. This study also mentions that the investment promoting measure to attract concessionaire groups deprive the locals of their rights to access and preserve natural resources due to the monopoly in resource management by the government. So, this movement exclusively promotes concessionaire groups’ business to be expanded and growth.

#### Prognostic Frame

Referring to the movement of scrutinizing causes of problem, the movement conducts a brainstorming session to seek for problem solving which harmonize with problem analysis and prognostic frames (Benford & Snow, 2000).

The movement presents prognostic for the purpose of making any change and meeting with locals’ requirement focusing on solving an inequity in mineral resource management, wrong development policy and the collusion and collaboration between government and concessionaires. For prognostic approaches, the movement mentions about structural reform both national and local structures. National structure can be reformed by amending mining acts to be more equitable to the locals. That is to say, mineral resources should belong to public property. In addition, the concession contract should also be revised to limit or reduce the scale of monopoly power. In terms of local structure, *representatives should be authorized to work in local government agencies to address the collusion and collaboration*



between government and concessionaires. Also, policy adjustment is mentioned. Policy maker should take into account community rights on mineral resource management, traditional way of life as well as self-sufficiency.

### **Motivation Frame**

After the movement analyzes the problem and presents practical solutions for bringing in wide movement on this issue and the success. The movement persuades locals by bringing up two issues relevant mining industry namely “*Catastrophe of Mine*” and “*The Violent Effect*”. These issues have been linked to locals’ way of life such as rice, fish, water, forest, belief and spirit in order to demonstrate what the effect of the mine project on their way of life are, and illustrate how the impact of the mine project does seriously on their daily life, community way of life, health and the environment.

In addition, “*Way of Community Culture*” is also raised. It is a cultural power existing in community, which is used for gathering locals against with capitalism that is full of power, technology and capital to exploit natural resources. Public mobilizations by applying community culture concept can be worked through community traditions and rites that take place throughout the year, such as ordaining trees, prolong the mountain life and so forth.

### **Conclusion**

This article builds the reader understanding in three main points. First, the status of social movement knowledge focuses on framing dimension. Specifically, whole time changeable movement rises from individual conscious, belief, value and ideology which are the complex field work of social movement. This is regarded as a stepping stone on the previous analyzing frame to the new one. The old analyzing frame defined public participation in the process through materials (resource mobilization theory). Or it might be because of the condition of without thinking (a theory of group behaviour). Second, the study on the movement of making a concept idea of social movement against the gold mine project is explained by the theory of framing processes by Snow & Benford. It demonstrates public aggregation through building performance framework together such as locals build a fighting framework against the government by identifying their problems also solutions; and call public into action by provoking. To build this framework, “*inequity*” it also mentions as a core cause of the problem. The harmonious solution derived from problem analyzing and solution frames is presented. Lastly, this study reflects the fact that government’s old development paradigm, which believes that many villagers should sacrifice resources to the government for national economic and industrial development as well as civilization is no longer true. In other words, when villagers suffer with troubles, they can build a fighting frame to disprove government’s belief and any conditions assigned. The process can develop its strength and make any change inside the movement to always respond to government’s activities.



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