

Speeches of the Unheard By Som Supaparinya

The podcast series of »[beuys 2021](#). 100 years of joseph beuys.

Duration 19.45 minute.

Reference of speeches:

ชะการีย์ยา อมตยา Zakariya Amataya (a poet), ณัฐวุฒิ ใสยเกื้อ Nattawut Saikua (a politician), ไม่นิ่ง ก.กุนที Maineung Kor Kunthee (a poet and political activist), อานนท์ นำภา Arnon Nampa (a lawyer and human right activist)

* All speeches spoke by the authors except the poem by Maineung Kor Kunthee read by สัม ศุภปริญญา Som Supaparinya.

Credits:

Sound editing, programming and mastering: ddmy studio

Sound recording: Mike Nelson, Greg Irving, Marc Anderson, Peter Ericsson, Thijs Fijen, Somkiat Pakapinyo(Chai), Bernard BOUSQUET, Ding Li Yong, Albert Noorlander, and Aladdin.

(the sound of bird calls random 1543 files of 30 provinces in Thailand [central, north, south, east, west and northeastern part of Thailand])

The common name of bird which the program makes a random selection in the final work are as follows:

Arctic Warbler, Asian Barred Owlet, Asian Koel, Black-crested Bulbul, Black-winged Stilt, Blue-eared Barbet, Blue-winged Pitta, Brown Hawk-Owl, Brown Prinia, Collared Falconet, Common Myna, Common Redshank, Dark-necked Tailorbird, Dusky Warbler, Eurasian, Hoopoe, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Great Barbet, Greater Coucal, Greater Flameback, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Green-legged Partridge, Green-tailed Sunbird, Large Scimitar Babbler, Large-billed Crow, Lesser Yellownape, Malaysian Pied Fantail, Mangrove Pitta, Moustached Barbet, Paddyfield Pipit, Puff-throated Babbler, Red-breasted Parakeet, Red-wattled Lapwing, Richard's Pipit, Ruby-cheeked, Sunbird, Rufous-backed Sibia, Sarus Crane, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Silver-eared Laughingthrush, Sooty-headed Bulbul, Spot-breasted Parrotbill, Spotted Dove, Spotted Owlet, Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo, Striated Grassbird, Stripe-throated Bulbul, White-gorgeted Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Prinia, Yellow-browed Warbler, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Zebra Dove

Description:

The title "Speeches of the Unheard" revised from the sentence "But in the final analysis, a riot is the language of the unheard. What is it that American has failed to hear?" Martin Luther King Jr, 1967 "The Other America" speech at Stanford University.

My idea is to give podcast speeches of the struggle commoners who participated/led the protests that seeking democracy and justice in Thailand since 1954 until now. Their messages won't be heard, but instead the sound of local birds in Thailand will be heard. The work resonant as my appreciation to Beuys's practice that interested in animal and human's politic. My expression of this work then focuses on this relationship with background context of what's happen in Thailand. The juxtaposition of this relationship is come from a Thai idiom "The voice of birds and crows" that mean the meaningless voice or the voice that one should not pay attention to. I come to across this idiom because what the commoners fight and calls for democracy and justice for many generations, even though, it is a well thought and ready to open up to discussions in order to find a peaceful solution in the society. However, it doesn't seem to be listened carefully and open-minded by the authority. The people's voice is like the sound of birds and crows which has no meaning for them, instead it is just the noise which they tend to force silence.

The process to do it is to use a computer with sound card and DMX controller to randomly replace the speech of human sound to the bird sound in real time during recording the podcast. The bird sound will be recorded in advance to use in this process. The bird sound sources are from 10 recorders who capture 1,543 sound of birds in 30 provinces in Thailand - cover every part of country from central, north, south, east, west and northeastern.

The computer will randomly select the sound archives that fit for the length and character of each word or sentence that of the speech and during the pause between the word or sentence, the sound of the bird will stop too. It is like a spontaneous interpretation from the human speech to bird. However, the human speech will be silence.

After process the program to make it selected randomly of the sound, in the final work, uses these following bird's sound.

The common name of birds:

Arctic Warbler, Asian Barred Owlet, Asian Koel, Black-crested Bulbul, Black-winged Stilt, Blue-eared Barbet, Blue-winged Pitta, Brown Hawk-Owl, Brown Prinia, Collared

Falconet, Common Myna, Common Redshank, Dark-necked Tailorbird, Dusky Warbler, Eurasian, Hoopoe, Fire-breasted Flowerpecker, Golden-bellied Gerygone, Great Barbet, Greater Coucal, Greater Flameback, Greater Racket-tailed Drongo, Green-legged Partridge, Green-tailed Sunbird, Large Scimitar Babbler, Large-billed Crow, Lesser Yellownape, Malaysian Pied Fantail, Mangrove Pitta, Moustached Barbet, Paddyfield Pipit, Puff-throated Babbler, Red-breasted Parakeet, Red-wattled Lapwing, Richard's Pipit, Ruby-cheeked, Sunbird, Rufous-backed Sibia, Sarus Crane, Scarlet-backed Flowerpecker, Silver-eared Laughingthrush, Sooty-headed Bulbul, Spot-breasted Parrotbill, Spotted Dove, Spotted Owlet, Square-tailed Drongo-Cuckoo, Striated Grassbird, Stripe-throated Bulbul, White-gorgeted Flycatcher, Yellow-bellied Prinia, Yellow-browed Warbler, Yellow-vented Bulbul, Zebra Dove

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There are 4 speeches/readings from 4 different people. I listed the main content and background of each here, including the link to original sources.

1.

Introduction and background of the content:

Zakariya Amataya read his poem "Home" and "Narration" on occasion of 61 years - **Haji Sulong** had been forced disappearance on the 14 August 2015. Hajji Sulong, was a notable figure in understanding the Muslim insurgency of southern Thailand. Labeled as a reformist and a separatist, he sought for greater recognition of the *Jawi* community in Patani (the far south of Thailand).

His motives for doing so, was in response to General Phibunsongkran's concept of 'Thainess' in which every citizen has to subscribe to the ideology that it is the duty of a Thai to be Buddhist, speak Thai and love the monarchy. This nationalist ideology, prejudiced other ethnic groups in Thailand, like the *Jawi* community, and deemed the *Tai* ethnic groups superior to others. Haji Sulong's request for reforms in education and public administration in southern Thailand were deemed disruptive and viewed as an act of rebellion by the central Buddhist state based in Bangkok. Till today, tensions between the central Buddhist state and the Muslim insurgents have not been quelled, and Haji Sulong's demands still stand firm and synonymous with the various insurgent groups in southern Thailand.

As the leader of the Provincial Islamic Council of Patani (PICP), Haji Sulong formulated a seven-point declaration, which he felt was important in attaining some autonomy for the public administration in southern Thailand. The central government rejected Haji Sulong's demands in the seven-point declaration, as they felt that the existing system

was sufficient to rule the region of southern Thailand. His demands also meant that some power over southern Thailand would have to be decentralized to make way for the politicians in the region.

Over the following years, he was pressured to stop his political involvement and told to report to the authorities periodically in order to ensure his obedience.

In 1955, Haji Sulong and his eldest son was told to report to the police station along with his close associates. He was then to be transferred and face a trial in court for his involvement in the rebellion. He mysteriously disappeared on his way to the court and till this day, no one had taken responsibility of his disappearance. It was believed that thier body were through into a river that connected to the sea in Songkha City. Today, Haji Sulong has achieved almost a mythical-like status for his reforms, and his demands for autonomy or independence still remain relevant.

The poet, Zakariya Amataya is an award winner of the Southeast Asia Writer (S.E.A. Write Award) in the year 2010.

The following translated from his reading in Thai.

Home

(Translated to English by Manuela Bianchi)

When he built his home, a lantern was lit
Then they came to sweep and reignite the light
So its brightness would shine onward

Once the light of the mind is lit,
it must be passed on to the next bearer,
to keep it shine graciously forever.

The rain pours, the storm rages on
Shakes the frame into fragility.
But the home within remains steadfast
If the foundation perseveres and maintains its course

Through the whole village
Where the voice of scriptural recitation resounds far and wide
If we believe that tomorrow retains the brightness of the sun
Death is just a temporal moment of life,
The breaking point of a traveler who enters the moment of realization
That here, at this point, the long path has not yet come to an end.

That house toward which all drift
The first house of Ibrahim and his son
Which casts a frame around the foundation of faith
Is the house of dreams and universal passion.
This is the house that built faith
That lights the lamp to enlighten learning
His obscurity must come to an end
Illuminated wisdom, thought
Will lead them from the dark,
Though he who built the house has forever departed into eternity.

Narration

(Translated to English by Phrae Chittipalangsri)

It must have been the steam, or the beast, that swallowed him alive. Without a trace, without any news. Some said he lived in stories.

Many would want him to live in narration. Nobody recalls his name. Only official records do. Some would remember him as the drowned seven desires.

Nobody remembers him, since he became a mountain, a river, a land stretching to the edge of the Melayu peninsula.

Because he didn't belong to the angels, all he did was living and dying, just like those close to him, like the people he knew and didn't know, like his compatriots living in his motherland.

He had lived his life more than just to the fullest. He travelled to learn, to teach what he knew, and to gain more experience. How small the world is! How big the world is! His actions proved himself.

Was it the steam that swallowed him? Or was it a monster? Nobody has the answer. It's not important how he died. Those without a grave could find his grave anywhere.

Those without a grave could find his grave anywhere.

(Home and Narrative by Zakariya Amataya) 14 August 2015

Sound source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gGTleS9hQMk> (นาทีที่ time period 0.9- 4.20)

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2.

Introduction and background of the content:

Nattawut Saikua is a Thai politician. He is the secretary-general and spokesman of the United Front for Democracy Against Dictatorship ("Red Shirts"), and a Member of Parliament for the Pheu Thai Party list.

Nattawut, alongside Jatuporn and Veera, is one of the leaders of the United Front of Democracy Against Dictatorship (UDD), colloquially called the "Red Shirts". The UDD is a political pressure group that campaigned and fiercely protested against the 2006 Thai coup d'état, which overthrew the government of Thaksin Shinawatra, against the military-installed government and the government of Abhisit Vejjajiva.

Nattawut co-organised the mass protests in 2009 and, together with the other UDD heads, led the "Red Shirts" in the fierce protests from March to May 2010 that led to the bloody military crackdowns of April and May. Nattawut, Jatuporn Prompan and other Red-Shirt leaders surrendered themselves to police to prevent further bloodshed during the violent military crackdown on 19 May 2010. Afterwards, Nattawut was prosecuted on terrorism charges. He was released on bail terms on 22 February 2011.

At the 2011 Thai general election, Nattawut Saikua was elected Member of Parliament on the winning Pheu Thai Party list. When Prime Minister Yingluck Shinawatra reshuffled her cabinet on 18 January 2012, Nattawut was named Deputy Minister of Agriculture and Cooperatives. After the Cabinet reshuffle on 28 October 2012, he changed to the Ministry of Commerce. He lost his government office during the coup d'état on 22 May 2014. After the coup, he was held in military detention for seven days, alongside other "Red Shirt" leaders.

In the eye's of the poor, he is a leader and hero to fight for democracy and justice. This speech is touched many followers, including the late young people who joined the movement. Because once they started to join and initiative the movement in 2020, they got treated badly by authority. It made them to feel what the Red-Shirt would encounter to in the last decade. The major message of this speech said: We, the people, value as the ground and the royal family who hold the real power of the country behaves as the sky, which make us too far away from each other. However, once many of us gather and shout to them, our voice must be heard in one day.

He gave a speech in Thai, which I translated only the most important part as follows:

We were born on the ground. We grew up on the ground. We walk on the ground. We stand firmly on the ground, and that's why we are so far away from the sky.

Dear brothers and sisters... When we stand on the ground, we only have to crane our neck just to realize how far we are from the sky...

When we are on the ground, we only have to look down to realize that we are mere dusts on the ground...

But I am convinced by the strength of the Red Shirts that grows day by day and minute by minute.

Even when we remain on the ground, and speak from the ground, but we sure will be heard through the sky!

(From ground to sky by Nattawut Saikua) 30 December 2007

(Translated to English by Phrae Chittipalangsri)

Sound source: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PchvwM5gvWk&t=17s> (นาฬิกาที่ time period 0.1- 4.20)

3.

The text read by Som Supaparinya (the artist of this project) in Thai language. She read a poem “Immortal, Stubborn Grass” by Mainung Kor Kunthee who read it first time in March 2009, to pay respect to Jin Kammachon and the other brave people who joined the democracy movement. Jin was a leading member of a music band, “The Labour” formed it in the Mahidol university when they were students there during a watershed student uprising in the year 1973.

As an active political and shape poet, Mainung Kor Kunthee became a target of the Thai authority. He was shot dead on the 23rd April 2014, a month after that there was a coup by military and the military leader still hold the power until today. The case has not progressed and eventually quiet.

The poem is translated from Thai as followed:

(Translated to English by Phrae Chittipalangsri)

Our homage to our masters,
the free, someone like Jin Kammachon,
and the people, our brothers and sisters,

the brave who wear red.

Let's honour those who are awake,
those who bravely face the blinding light.
Pretentious, fake gods—
how could you suck up water from our land and make us poor?

Let's honour the commoners, who walk the streets.
They are the army of the suffered.
They fight the thieves ransacking this country.

Let's honour the grass that is walked all over by mighty elephants.
Tirelessly, it expands and blankets the earth indiscriminately.
The grass leads the life of honesty.

Let's honour those who are awakened.
They who know reasons, their minds are not clouded.
They who firmly know their rights,
they are not dust beneath anyone's feet.

Fight, us commoners!
Do not bow to any tyrants.
The high wall of a castle, let us climb.
Break the tip of the thief's crown!

Immortal, Stubborn Grass by Maieung Kor Kunthee, 22 March 2009

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4.

This is a speech by Anon Nampa. He is a Thai human rights activist, lawyer, pro-democracy activist and political activist. He is renowned in Thailand for openly criticizing the monarchy of Thailand, breaking the country's taboo. On the 16 September 2020, he gave an important speech to request the monarchy to reduce their power below parliament and law. It is a straight forward opinion which no one would say it in public. Nevertheless, he was arrested many times after that for his influence in the movement.

The speech I use as a reference to create this work is the major content of the speech on that day. However, I selected the full translation of a poem he read below. The poem is an important part of the speech.

The Poem to the Court

(Translated to English by Phrae Chittipalangsri)

This court is but the scales of justice, a leader of liberal rights, a seat of integrity, a guarantor of democracy. 'Tis not and ne'er for the celestial gentry!

Behold your gown drenched in our taxes, / Those insanely expensive cars. Who got you that? Behold the rice you eat, the ground you walk, the house you live in — they're bought with our sweat and toil.

Not any gods' avatars, servants, are you to our country. Not higher than anybody, just a mere human assuming a pointing finger of death.

A pillar is a pillar is sacred; It won't sway at a swooshing wind. The higher the pillar, the firmer integrity it holds.
It can never be bought with money!

Open your mind, step out from the closet where you pretend to read. On your bench, listen to no poisonous flatter. In your court, do not succumb to nepotism.

A judge is proof of our sovereignty—power of us commoners, not anyone else drowned in ignorance.

Use your conscience! Bring out your humility! Let your name tarnished not by corruption. Point not your finger at those you betray.

Listen, Judge, use your free will. Execute this heavy burden to perfection. Serving the unlawful order means you should get lost!

Anon Nampa speech on the 16 September 2020

Sound source: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sJaEMCI_aU
time period 6.55 – 11.40 and 21.50 -24.44