

History and Politics of the Muslims in Thailand



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1: Introduction

The Muslims are a significant minority group in Thailand. They are the second largest minority next to the Chinese. Unlike other groups of minorities, the Muslims had their own kingdom in the southernmost Thailand from which the living history and culture of its people still lives. The history of the Muslims in the Greater Patani Region,¹ which comprises the four provinces of Satun, Yala, Pattani and Narathiwat, has been one of independence followed by subordination to Siam's domination and annexation. The prevalent feelings and thinking among the local Muslims therefore have been dominated by an awareness of political agitation vis-à-vis the Thai state, from which their culture and religion were important sources of the political ideology. Politically, the Muslims of the South thus posed the most challenging task to the Thai government in its attempt to assimilate and "modernize" them along with the nation's mainly Thai-Buddhist culture and politics.

It has been a commonplace to speak of the Southern Muslims as one of the major political problems threatening the security and unity of Thailand, ever since the formation of the Thai nation-state in the late nineteenth century (see Appendix I), mainly because resistance and rebellion against Thai government rule were so strong among the Muslim population. It is necessary to emphasize here that the Muslims are not only a regional ethnic group in Thailand but, in fact, they are a national group of people. Although the concentration of the Thai-Muslims is heavily in the southernmost provinces, they constitute about half of the total population of the Thai-Muslim community in the country, the other half of the Muslim communities were scattered around various regions of the country, of which the central region is the most populated. Their relations to the Thai state and society are rather different from those of the South. Although they are sympathetic to the plight of the Malay-Muslims of the South, the central Muslims tend to imagine themselves as Thai national and citizens. This complexity thus gives rise to a diverse and dynamic group of people who share their particular past and experience with other Thais in forging a unified and tolerant nation-state.

¹ The English rendering of the name "Patani" is based on Malay spelling, while the Thai government usage of "Pattani" is based on Thai spelling. In the 1980s, the spelling of the word "Pattani" or "Patani" became a political act reflecting the ethno-religious consciousness of the works. "Patani" is used with historical connotations preserving the sense of a former Malay sultanate comprising the present-day provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. On the other hand, the word "Pattani" is a Thai-ified spelling. It merely signifies the name of a province in southern Thailand. Historically, "Pattani" refers only to an administrative entity and a sense of a struggle already ended. See Chaiwat Satha-Anand, "Pattani in the 1980s: Academic Literature and Political Stories," in *Sojourn*, Vol. 7, No. 1 (February 1992), pp. 1-38.

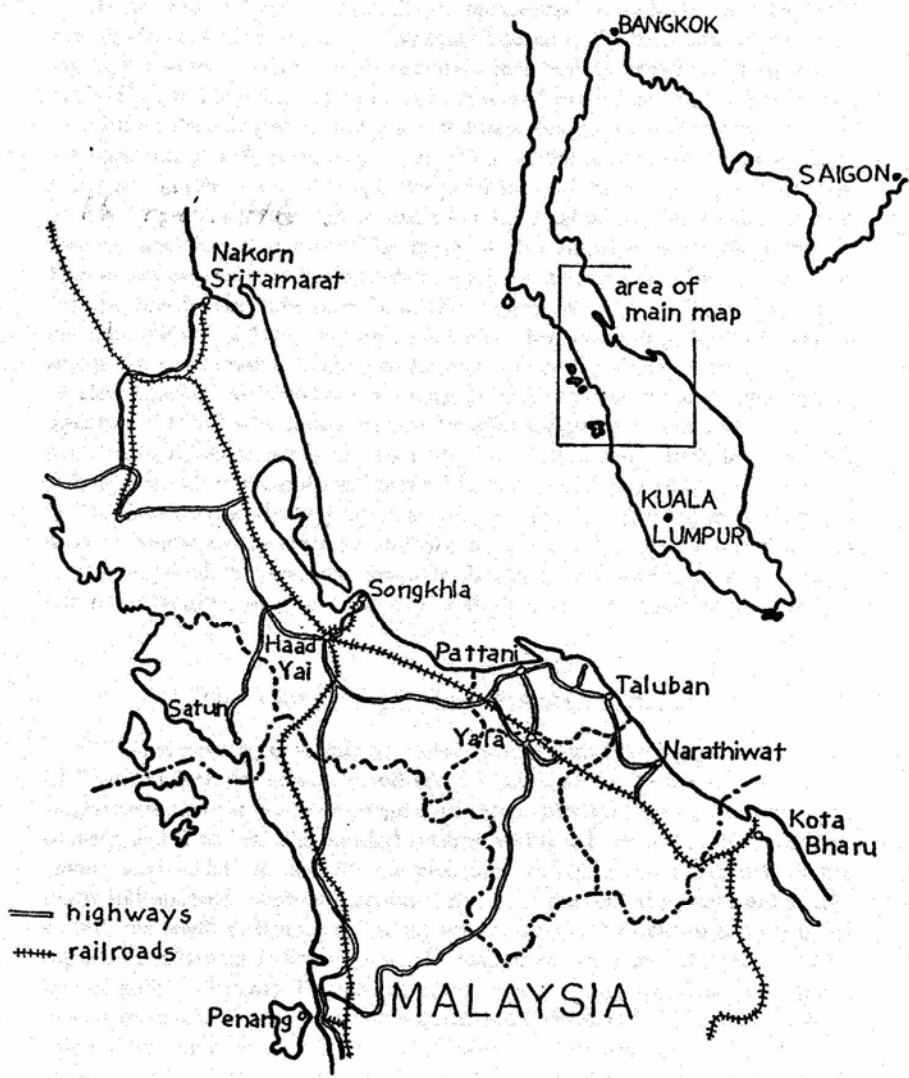


Figure 1. Map of Southern Thailand

2: Characteristics of the Muslims in Thai society

The common name that Thai speakers use to refer to Islam and its followers is *khaek* while the more educated and official ones have been *Thai Islam* and *Thai Muslim*. The word *khaek* means a stranger or an outsider and a visitor or a guest. Original usage of the term regards *khaek* as one among several macro-ethnic categories into which the non-Thai world is divided. Gradually the term *khaek* is used as a qualifier to specify particular costumes, language and eventually ethnic Malays and Islam followers including Arabs and Indians. By the late nineteenth century *khaek* was used by the kings in their descriptions of the Malay Muslims in the south. Reflecting the political conflict of the Malay Muslim in southern Thailand, the term *khaek* has been regarded as inappropriate and insulting to the Muslim people because it creates a sense of contempt and social distance among the different races and religious beliefs.

The terms ‘Thai Islam’ and ‘Thai Muslim’, however, had been created during Pibulsongkham government in the early 1940s. As part of the government campaign of promoting Thailand as a civilized and unified nation, the words were thought to be a polite mode of official Thai reference to Islam and Muslims in Thailand. Their use was part of a general movement to build nationalism and to promote the assimilation and integration of minority groups at that time. Despite the backlash against Pibul’s nationalist policies in cultural affairs, the two terms, in fact, have gained popularity not only in the government bureaucracy and in popular journalism, but also among central-Thai speaking Muslim scholars and academics.²

Culturally the Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand belong to the Malay world. Politically they are part of the Thai nation-state whose state religion is Buddhism. Four fifths of all the Muslims in Thailand are ethnic Malays living primarily in the area near the Northern part of Peninsular Malaysia. They comprise four percent of the total population of Thailand (65 million in 2001) and are the second largest minority group after the Chinese. Thai-Muslims are divided into two categories, the Malays and non-Malays. The Malays are the majority at 80%, while the Thai, Pakistani, Indian, Chinese and others of Muslim faith constitute about 20% of the Thai-Muslim population.

In their determination to integrate all Muslims into the Thai nation, the Thai government refers to all Muslims as “Thai-Islam” so that the differences of race and culture are mitigated. The problem is that, while the word “Thai” is synonymous with “Buddhism”, for the Malay-Muslims the word “Muslim” also means “Malay.” So how can they be both “Thai” and “Islam”? The category of “Thai-Islam”, therefore, has been regarded as insensitive, if not an insult, on the part of the Thai government by the Muslims, especially those in the South. They prefer to be called by the historically and politically correct term Malay-Muslims.

² A.V.N. Diller, “Islam and Southern Thai Ethnic Reference” in Andrew D.W. Forbes, ed., *The Muslims of Thailand* Volume I, Historical and Cultural Studies. (Gaya, India: Centre for South East Asian Studies, 1988), pp. 134-155.

For comparative purpose, we could divide the Muslim community in Thailand into two broad groups; one is an “assimilated” group and the other is an “unassimilated” group. Assimilated group means the group that displays a high degree of cultural similarity with the ethnic Thai-Buddhists save in the area of religious practices and customs. This group includes a whole diversity of ethnic groups such as the Muslim Siamese, the Haw Chinese, the Bengalis, the Arabs, the Iranians, the Chams, the Javanese, the Minangkabaus, the Baweans, the Pathans, the Punjabis and the Samsams. The ‘unassimilated’ group is predominantly Malay who live in the Southernmost provinces of Yala, Narathiwat and Pattani where the group still displays a distinct culture of its own, notably in the realm of language and the tangible aspects of non-Thai religion and culture such as the Malay language, Malay names, Malay folklore and music and attire. An exception to this category are the Muslims in Satun province, also in southernmost Thailand, who have assimilated to Thai culture.

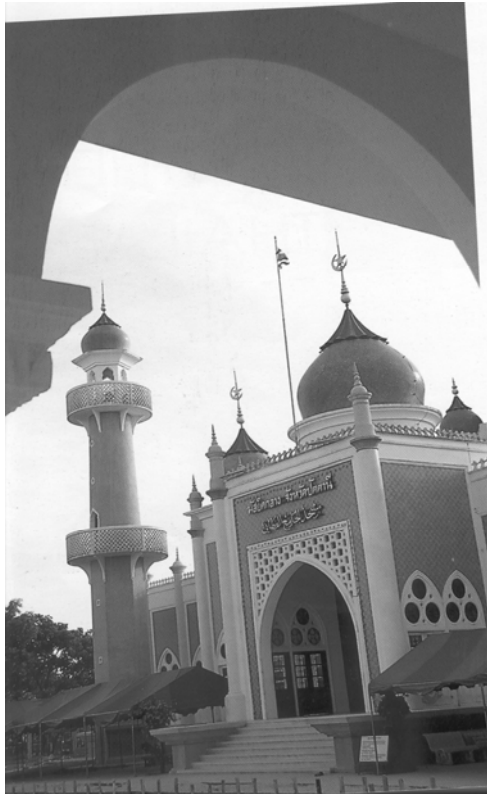


Figure 2. Masjid Patani

3: History of Islam in Thailand

Islam is a major religion in Southeast Asia, particularly in the areas where it has become the dominant religion, notably Indonesia and Malaysia. In mainland Southeast Asia, however, Islam has been a minority religion and Buddhism is a national religion. Historically the region had been dominated by Hinduism and Buddhism for centuries before the arrival of Islam around the ninth century. Muslims have been in Thailand since before the formation of the Thai kingdoms in the ninth century. As early as the ninth century Muslim merchants settled in Malakka, Aceh and Melayu peninsula including the area that was then the southern part of Siam. From there, Islam spread to other parts of Southeast Asia like Sumatra, Java, and Borneo or Kalimantan. The kingdoms and cities in that period were influenced by mixture of Hindu, Buddhist and Islamic practices. Ethnic communities were centered according to their religious and custom practices.

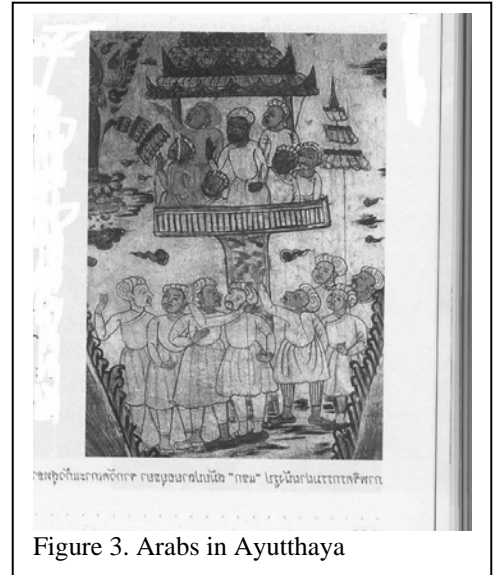


Figure 3. Arabs in Ayutthaya

Unlike Persia and the Arabian heartland, Southeast Asian Islam did not operate exclusively as the only civilization for the region, chiefly because Islam arrived here after the region had already flourished with a tapestry of beliefs and practices coming from Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and animism. Though Arab-Muslim traders traveled through island Southeast Asia as early as the seventh and eighth centuries, there was little settlement until the late thirteenth century. Ruling elites in the Malay peninsula were converted in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, as were those of the Southern Philippines. Thus Islam did not come to construct a new civilization; it helped to transform those that it found when it reached this region. Islam, however, did bring about a new dimension to the region of Southeast Asia. Prior to the coming of Islam, Hinduism and Buddhism functioned as the foundation of the region's political and cultural growth.



Figure 4. Persian Troops

Their influence had been trans-racial, encompassing all kinds of races and groups of people. When Islam arrived, its influence was confined to the people of the Malay race, who inhabited the islands and the southeastern reaches of the Asian landmass. The Malay principalities of the past consisted of Patani, Kedah, Trengganu, Kelantan and Perlis. Until the first quarter of the eighteenth century, there was a succession of kings ruling Patani known as the Kelantan Dynasty. The royal network of kinship extended throughout the Malay peninsula. It is obvious that Patani elite developed closer connections with its neighbors in the Malay world than with its neighbor on

the northern side.

Before Islam spread and integrated into the mainland, western colonialism overtook it and became a new force spreading through the region. Colonialism thus introduced new culture and modern practice that upset the pre-modern power relations among the people of various races and religions. It intensified the contention between the Islam-dominated area of the lower South and the Buddhist-dominated area of central Thailand. From then on, it was possible to speak of the distinct Malay-Muslims of the South and the Thai-Muslims of the central Thailand.

4: Patterns of Islamization in Thailand

Generally speaking, there are two patterns of Islamization in Thailand. The first originated from and grew within the local area which gives rise to its own distinct history and culture. This pattern, starting at least from the ninth century, is the history of Malay-Muslims in the areas of southernmost states of Thailand known as Greater Patani. The Malay-Muslims are Sunni and engaged mainly in agriculture. They were the majority population of the three southernmost provinces of Thailand.

The other originated outside of Thailand and migrated at one time or another into the Thai kingdom. Among these groups were West Asian groups from Persia and Arabia. The others were those from South Asia. The Shiite Muslims from Arab and Persia were the most prominent and were successfully assimilated into the noble class of Siamese by marriage and by serving the Siamese monarchs from the Ayutthaya in the seventeenth century down to the Bangkok kingdoms in the eighteenth century. These Persian Muslims were able traders and, unlike the Malay-Muslims in the South, engaged mainly in trade and commerce in urban settlements. By the middle of the seventeenth century the Persian Muslims married local Thai women and set up families in Ayutthaya. Later King Songtham of Ayutthaya (r. 1610-1628) appointed the leader of the Muslim community to be Chularajmontri (Sheikhul Islam) overseeing the activities of the Thai-Muslims in the kingdom.

The relations between the Malay-Muslims and the Thai state had been mediated through state relations between Patani kingdom and Thai kingdom, while relations between migrant Muslims and the Thai state had been mediated mostly through individuals and personal relations. During the tributary system of rule, Bangkok rulers rarely had any direct contacts with the Malay-Muslims of Patani. They were first subjects of and governed by the local Muslim rajas who had pledged allegiance to the Thai overlord. The autonomous status of Patani kingdom had been curbed gradually in the eighteenth century relations with Bangkok dynastic rule and finally was relinquished in 1902 by becoming a province under direct rule from Bangkok government.



Figure 6. The Moor



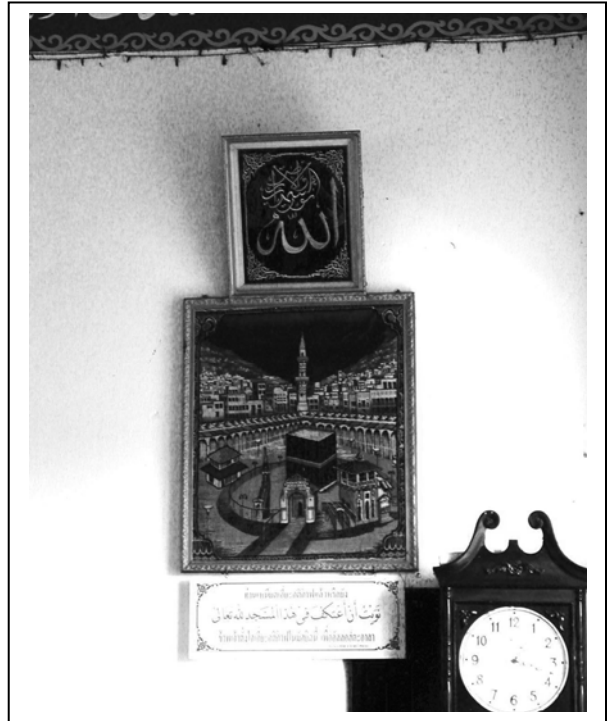
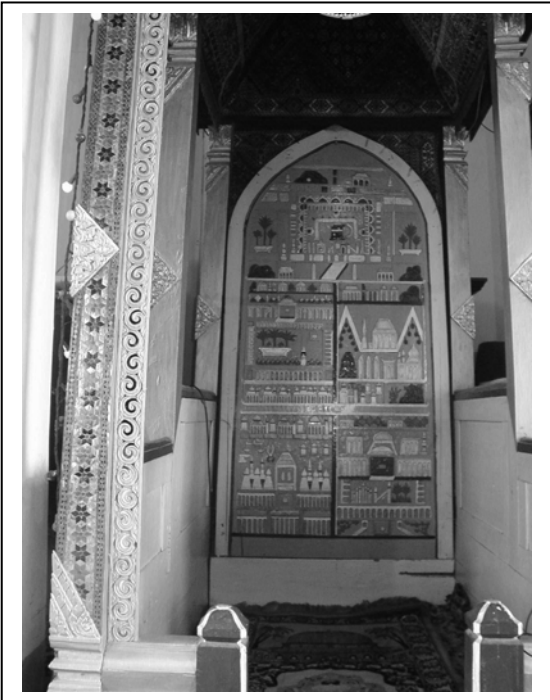
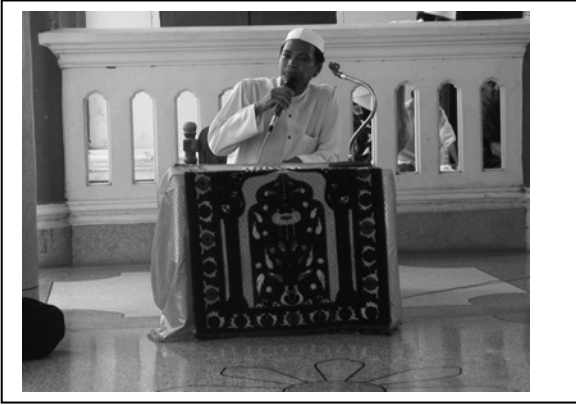
Figure 5. Persians

The Muslim-Thais of central Thailand engaged mainly in trading, especially long-distance trade, and in local commerce. They occupied key positions in the Siamese court as official interpreters and were appointed as nobility in the King's foreign office. Apart from the Chinese, non-Malay Muslims in the central were gradually integrated into Thai society and government and found their place in the country's

economy and cultivated their own customs and religious beliefs alongside the Thai and other ethnic groups. There was no racial or religious conflict with the government until the rise and formation of the modern Thai nation-state, at which point the Muslims and other ethnic groups were labeled as minorities and Buddhism was proclaimed the national religion.

7-7.10. Images from the Takia Ayutthaya Mosque





Section II: The Malay-Muslims in the Formation of the Modern Thai State

1: The Malay-Muslims and the Pre-modern Thai state

In the pre-modern Thai kingdoms, all subjects were identified, not by their ethnicity or religions, gender or race, but by their loyalty to the king. It was the king as a central force that bestowed on them status, security and wealth, in short, their political and social identities. There was no individual or national identity except that of the king's. From these subjects were required loyalty and obligations to the monarchy and the realm. So Thais, Chinese, Malays, Chams, Mons, Laos, Khmers as well as Buddhists, Muslims, Christians, and Confucianists and animists were said to be equal subjects under the umbrella of the Thai monarchs.

Early relations between the Thai kingdom and Patani kingdom were based on a framework of the tributary system under which weaker principalities and states acknowledged the supremacy of the Thai king. In practice, they periodically sent tribute in a symbolic form of silver and golden flowers (*bunga mas*) to the Thai court. Such power relations are theorized as a system of mandala whereby the power is strongest in and around the center and recedes the farther away it is from the center. This means that historically a vassal state like Patani had some autonomy in its own government while maintaining its tributary status with Siam.

From the fifteenth century, when the elite of this southern region converted to Islam, the desire to incorporate these southernmost states into the Thai kingdom had been constant. Patani was an important port for trade and commerce with the outside world. The early history of subjugation of the Malay-Muslims under the *sakdina* system of government therefore aimed at securing the Patani kingdom as a tributary or vassal state of Siam to ensure it could function as an entreport for the foreign trade of Siamese kings.

Historically, there were two types of rule conducted by the Thai government over Patani region. One was direct rule and the other was indirect rule. The direct rule involved sending Thai officials to rule over the Muslim kingdom; the Siamese imposed on the local ruling group and population. The result from early on was resistance and dissatisfaction of the Patani rulers and people. Indirect rule, however, tended to allow more role and interests to the local Muslim elite and thus provided longer terms of peaceful relations between both sides. Usually, the Thai kingdom would appoint a local Muslim ruling family whose loyalty to the Siamese king was guaranteed to rule over Patani as an autonomous state.

By the late Ayutthaya period and well into the early Bangkok period, the Thai rulers adopted a policy of divide and rule in dealing with the Muslims states in the South. After many rebellions of these Muslim states, Bangkok divided them into smaller cities and delegated authority over the vassal states in the South to a major Thai-Buddhist city in the area, which acted on behalf of Bangkok. Songkhla and Nakhonsrithammarat were the chosen cities. This arrangement reflected the limitations of the Bangkok bureaucracy and the desire to rule over these distant tributary states by political means of creating multiple powerful groups among the local elites so that no one elite was strong enough to make a successful rebellion against Bangkok. Such policy of divide and rule proved to be effective in spite of the inefficiency of the Siamese bureaucracy.

The tributary relationship between Siam and Patani region lasted about five centuries, from the middle of the thirteenth century to the late eighteenth century. Early on we can see

traces of rough relations between Ayutthaya kingdom and Patani. The Ayutthaya royal chronicle recorded that in 1564 when Ayutthaya kingdom was forced to capitulate to the Burmese, a unit of Malay forces from Patani, who were requested to come to assist Ayutthaya against Burma, saw the opportunity and decided to turn against Ayutthaya's king by managing to seize his palace for a short while. The king was evacuated from his palace before a later attempt to drive the Malay rebels out of Ayutthaya. Other rebellions took place between 1630 and 1633 under King Prasat Thong, and the last bid was in 1767, following the sack of Ayutthaya by Burma.

Starting in 1785 under King Rama I, Patani was incorporated into an integral part of the Kingdom as a result of the southward expansion of Bangkok. In addition to Kedah and its dependencies, Bangkok also added to the Kingdom two new tributary states, Kelantan and Trengganu. Soon an abortive uprising occurred in 1789-91 after which the raja of Patani was captured and deposed. After another rebellion in 1808, Patani was divided into seven smaller muang or provinces: Saiburi, Pattani, Nongchik, Yala, Yaring, Ra-ngae, and Rahman. By this time, the raja of Patani came under close and strict scrutiny of Bangkok. Nevertheless, the 'divide and rule' policy was unsuccessful in making the Patani region into an obedient state under Thai rule. During the nineteenth century, the seven provinces again attempted to rebel against the increasing Thai authority over the area.

Although there were rebellions and resistance from Patani rulers in the Ayutthaya and Bangkok periods, they were mainly conflicts among privileged and powerful groups of both sides over the control of manpower and wealth in the area. Not until the modern history of nation-state did conflict start to come from the people's sense of their religious and cultural identification. With the rise of Thai nationalism and expansionism during World War II, the Malay-Muslims in the deep South became the target of Bangkok's Thai-icization policy. From then on the age-old regional conflict turned into a separatist movement involving all Muslims in that area, not only the elite class as before.

2: Islam in an Era of Nation-States

The impact of the creation of nation-states in Southeast Asia was the introduction of modernity into the region. This process was carried out either by colonial governments or by local ruling groups. One of the important characteristics of the nation-state was the integrity of the independent nation. By the late nineteenth century, Siam's independence had been achieved through negotiations with France and Great Britain according to the Anglo-French Declaration of 1896, in which the two powers accepted the status of Siam as a buffer state. By the nineteenth century, the structure of tributary system had changed. Mainly this was due to the impact of the West and the decline of China as a moral and political superiority in the region.

The major impact of Western knowledge and colonization was the introduction of structural changes into the society and government including cultures of the region. After years under colonial rule—both direct and indirect in the case of Siam or Thailand—the society and politics of the region had been shaped largely by modernization, including an invention of a centralized administrative government, a modern education system and a modern economy. The period from mid-nineteenth century to 1932, which was the rise of the Thai nation-state and the end of absolutism in Siam, characterized the role of Bangkok as a domestic colonial power in its new relations with the traditional principalities in the North, Northeast and the South.

Interestingly, for the young generation of Muslim intellectuals, the rise of nationalism also took them back to the Islamic principles. Their modern worldview and political ideology would be based on the original text rather than on traditional practice of the older generations. Thus, it can be said that the Western impact that drove Siam to secure its independence and modernization also gave the Malay-Muslim states an opportunity to assert its own autonomous state and religion vis-à-vis the modernized Thai nation-state. During the reform period in the 1890s the history of relations between Siam and Patani turned a new page.

The Malay-Muslims have become Thai citizens, not by their own choice, but by the conscious force and coercion by the Thai government in a series of actions intended to enforce the Thai-ization of the Malay provinces, from 1902 to 1944. As a result of the administrative reform under King Chulalongkorn (r. 1868-1910) in 1890s, the traditional principalities, which enjoyed autonomous status, were turn into provinces under direct rule from Bangkok. In the case of Patani, the reform began in 1902 and completed in 1906, to coincide with the final agreement with the British, who ratified the boundaries between Siam and British Malaya. With that reform, the raja and royalty in Patani were removed from positions of influence and interest and replaced by Thai bureaucrats from Bangkok.

The Thai and British governments turned the Malay vassal states into their colonial states. The Anglo-Thai Treaty of 1909, in which those Malay states concerned neither participated nor were consulted for, agreed that Siam transferred its suzerainty over Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, Perlis to Great Britain and in return Great Britain recognized Siam's sovereignty over Patani and Satun. Most important was that the British also renounced their extraterritoriality rights in Thailand. Thus the political exigencies of the colonial powers resulted in a fateful division and redrawing of territory, which would have far-reaching consequences for the Malay population in the southern border of Thailand. The crux of the

problem is that Thailand now was also anxious to have the remaining Malay states as its border against the British power.

From the very beginning of the policy of centralization under King Rama V, careful considerations were put forth in order to integrate the Muslim population into the Thai citizenry. The government realized the religious differences between Thais and Muslims, so they allowed the Patani local elite to rule with Islamic law while trying to translate Islamic law into the Thai code so that they could be integrated into the Thai law court.

The first impact of the Chulalongkorn Reform was Patani's legal autonomy under absolute monarchy. In 1902, Bangkok stipulated that "no law shall be established" without specific royal consent. This was meant to deter the rajas from using their influence in the area. The king wanted a single legal system applicable to the entire country. Faced with disapproval from determined religious leadership, which regarded the decree as transgressing their sacred domain, they reached a compromise that the state would refrain from imposing its will over the sensitive areas of family relations and inheritance. This followed the British colonial practice in setting up the rule of law in Malaya by leaving 'the personal law' in the hands of the indigenous rulers and traditional elites. The government, however, still controlled procedural matters involved in the administration of the religious courts or "the Qadi's Court"(Sala To' Kodi or Sala To' Kali). In order to maintain the religious court within the Thai legal structure, the government involved in the selection of the 'ulama' to sit on the panel of justices. The rift of mistrust and misunderstanding between Thai-Buddhist and Malay-Muslim was planted and waiting to be exploited by subsequent political developments in Thailand and Malaya.

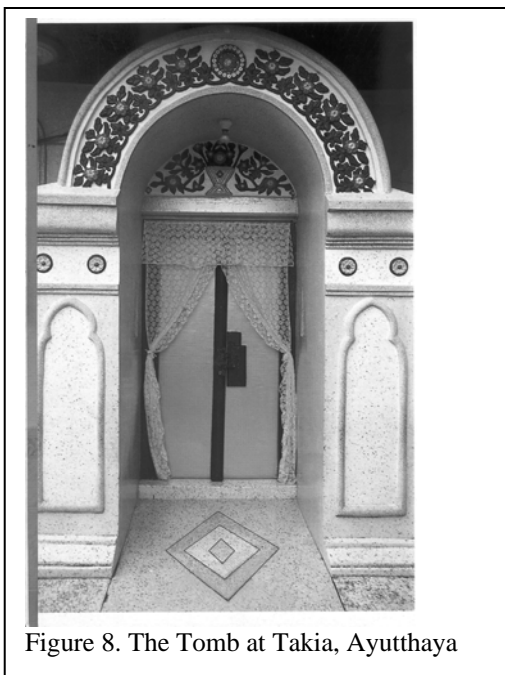


Figure 8. The Tomb at Takia, Ayutthaya

Outside the personal realm of religious concern, the Chulalongkorn administrative reforms penetrated more extensively into the rajas' base of influence. It transformed the Greater Patani region into the Seven Provinces under the supervision of a Thai governor appointed by Bangkok. New policies involved the new fiscal, judicial and policing arrangements according to the Bangkok government goals. The local Malay officials who were allowed to retain office were converted into salaried officials.

The resistance from the rajas of the Patani and other Malay principalities was instant. Battleships and military detachments were sent into Patani to quell the resistance. Raja Abdul Kadir Kamaroodin of Patani was arrested and taken to Bangkok before being put in jail in Phitsanuloke province in Northern Thailand. After serving two years and nine months in prison, he was released with a promise that he would never engage in political activities again. In 1915, Abdul Kadir left Patani to take up residence in Kelantan, which was under the British. The former king of Patani continued to inspire rebellions against Thai rule even from the other side of the border. In 1906, the Muslim principalities were grouped into a new monthon

[circle], a regional administrative unit, and given the name Monthon Patani. By that arrangement neither power nor influence was left to the former nobility. The area had become an integral part of the emerging Thai nation-state.

The incorporation of the Greater Patani region into the Thai administrative system in 1902 was not only a political act of centralization of power by Bangkok, but what was more problematic and devastating was the intervention into the basis of Islamic community by Thai-Buddhist practice. The most important one was the abolition of the Sharia (Islamic law) and Adat Melayu (Malay customary laws), which were the basis of Islamic practice in daily

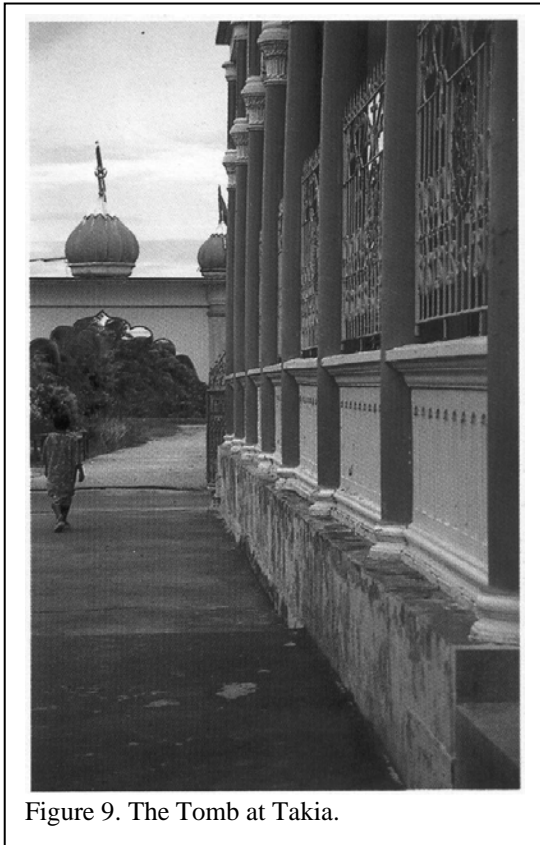


Figure 9. The Tomb at Takia.

life. Before the incorporation of the Greater Patani region, the region was ruled by a Malay raja (king). Although Patani was under Thai suzerainty, its raja still ruled on the basis of Sharia and Adat Melayu. Important Islamic institutions were the mosque or *masjid*, or in Thai *qadi*, and *pondok* (religious school). The *masjid* functioned as a center of rule and administration as well as a place for religious practice and community hall. The *pondok* was a learning center for the community. These two institutions were very important for the existence and well being of all Muslims. The implementation of the administrative centralization in this region inevitably intervened and replaced its local rule and customs with the central rule and regulations. Soon after, the provincial hall replaced the old *masjid*, as a signification of the coming of the separation of religion from politics.

The abolition of Sharia came as a result of the implementation of Thai laws in all areas under the sovereignty of the central absolutist government. The reform law required that Islamic law previously applicable in all Muslim regions be replaced by Thai secular law, except for family and inheritance

cases. Even in the case of family and inheritance laws, the decision of a Muslim judge was not final until it was agreed upon by the sitting Thai judge. That meant the Muslim judge in the reform court, unlike previously practice, had no power at all. And when the case went up to the superior court, they had to accept a decision by a Thai judge who was not a Muslim. This was against the Muslim belief and practice.

From the early incorporation of the Greater Patani Region in 1902, the crucial area of great concern for the Thai state was in education, which was perceived to be one of the necessary means of achieving modernization. In other parts of Thailand, the education reform was carried out by local Buddhist monks and temples together with the government education officials. The Muslim communities had their own system and language of instruction. They used Malay or Arabic in instruction and writing while the content was Islam. The instruction was carried out at the local masques prior to the establishment of a *pondok* school. Comparatively speaking, there was no systematic formal education among

the Malay children except the memorization of section of the Qur'an. When the education reform came to the Muslim communities, they were required to read and write in Thai and the content was oriented toward secular subjects and even on Buddhism. The immediate reaction among the Muslims was reluctance in regards to sending their children to the public schools. The Malays viewed the Education Act as the "limit of endurance". They accused the Thai government of "trying to stamp out the hated Malay language and changing the natural status of the rising generation of Malay to Siamese."

The forced integration of the Malay-Muslims continued in the reign of King Vajiruvudh or Rama VI (r.1910-1925) who campaigned intensely to unify the Thai kingdom under an official nationalism. The Malay-Muslims of Patani posed a challenge to the king's idea of Thai essence which emphasized the trinity of nation, religion (Buddhism) and king. The government issued the program of compulsory Thai education to inculcate the new sense of nationalism. Such policy and practice affected the Malay-Muslims in the South since their education was done in the mosques and pondok. The requirement that they had to change the language and curriculum to Thai was unacceptable. In 1910 and 1911, rebellions broke out under the leadership of certain Hajjis [religious leader]. The 1922 rebellion was more conspicuous because it involved some religious leaders and the former Malay nobility including the former raja of Patani, Raja Abdul Kadir. The aim of the rebellion was independence.

In 1923, the Bangkok government was forced to reassess its policy of compulsory education, bureaucratic penetration and involvement of social and economic affairs of the Malay-Muslims. The revised policies instructed the officials not to violate the Islamic religion and not to tax the Malay-Muslims in Patani greater than the Malay states under the British, and government officials to be assigned there should be honest, polite and firm. For the time being, the Malay-Muslim elites in the region found that their political assertion of autonomy and religious rights were heard by the Thai government leaders. Even though the general policies of cultural assimilation and power consolidation of the Thai state had not been dismissed, the changing political structure and economic conditions in the 1930s, both in the central-Thai government and also in Patani province, brought in new atmosphere of democracy and nationalism from which for a brief moment seemed to provided the Muslim elites and population some hope for a better future.



Figure 10. Kudee Chaufaa

Section III: Politics of a Cultural Assimilation

1: Political Assimilation or Coercion?

The Coup of 1932 overthrew the absolute monarchy in Siam and replaced it with constitutional monarchy. A representative form of government came into being; the Malay-Muslims felt that they could have their voice now for the government and politics of their concern. The first two elections in 1933 and 1937 showed a high degree of political participation of the Malay-Muslims in the South. In the elections of the representatives, all four provinces except Satun the Muslim representatives won their seats in the Parliament. The democratic government under the People's Party recognized the grievances of the southern Muslims and tried to foster integration of the minority population into the mainstream of the nation's political life. Yet the hope to mediate the government's penetration into the Muslims' lives and society was cut short by the failure of parliament's role and influence in national politics. The centralized bureaucracy continued to exert its power and control over the provinces. With the rise of militarism in 1938, the government under Field Marshal Pibul began to mobilize the population under the banner of Thai-nationalism, from which a policy of forced assimilation was promulgated with little or no toleration for the unique culture of other minorities.

Pibul's nation-building policy was aimed at the reform and reconstruction of the social and cultural aspects of the country as well as its physical representation. Since the coup in 1932 had ended the absolute monarchy, this was the first time that the government attempted to really replace old ideas and feudalistic practices among the population with what they thought a modern and civilized practice.

In his address to the Cabinet and senior officials in 1941, Pibul said:

“In an effort to build a nation with a firm and everlasting foundation, the 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.”

His stress on culture was a result of the rise of militarism and nationalism in post-World War I Asia. The other factor was the opportunity to break away from the traditional fetters of the monarchy. The imminent threat of war among the major powers persuaded Thai leaders to choose which side the country would be. One was the civilized and strong the other was the slave and weak. In order to be recognized as civilized and modern by powerful nations, the country must do away with “the people [who are] remain poor in culture and exhibit ignorance about hygiene, health, clothing, and rational ways of thinking.” With these firm beliefs on the goal and status of a nation, Phibul's government enforced the



Figure 11. Chaufaa Mimbar

National Culture Act. The most sensitive one was known as ‘ratthaniyom’ or the State Decrees. Under this policy came the idea of Thai-ness and Thai nationalism.

The perception of a civilized Thai nation-state devoid from remnants of feudalism was completed. No doubt that various minority groups were affected by this cultural policy. The Malay-Muslims of the South, however, were gravely hit by these new culture laws and regulations. The terms “Southern Thais” and “Islamic Thais” were to be referred simply as “Thais”. The term “Thai Islam” was an invention of the Thai government to indicate that while it did tolerate religious differences now, it did not consider that there should be any other significant differences among citizens of Thailand.

Under these laws penalties were prescribed for those who failed to observe the regulations concerning “proper dress, behavior and etiquette” when appearing in public places. Other regulations required women to wear hats and Western dress, forbade the chewing of betel and areca nuts, and instructed the use of forks and spoons as the “national cutlery”. The most sensitive one was the abolition of the Islamic laws of family and inheritance laws, which had been allowed to function since the annexation of the Patani region. Furthermore Malay-Muslims were no longer permitted to observe Fridays as public or school holidays. More disturbing were Thai attempts to convert Muslims to Buddhism.

The policy of forced integration and assimilation of Malay-Muslims into the Thai state was halted in 1944 when Phibul fell from power. Subsequent governments were more sympathetic to the Muslim sentiments and plight, and quickly addressed the new radical protest arising from the Muslim constituency in the South. Two political movements in the Southern borders finally shaped the new political movement in Patani. The first was the rising of the nationalist movement in British Malaya. The second was the increase of armed struggle of the Malayan Communist Party, which was based in the border areas of southern Thailand. This led to the introduction of joint military operations between British and Thai governments in the area. From now on, the Muslim political movement would be perceived by the Thai government as an attempt to separate the Muslim region from Thai territory by armed struggle.

In order to appease and normalize the radicalized political situation in the Muslim South, the Thai government under Prime Minister Khuang Aphaiwong, which was advised by Pridi Phanomyong, the Regent, in 1946 issued the Islamic Patronage Act aiming at restoring “pre-Phibul conditions” in the four southernmost provinces. The observation of Friday as a holiday and the restoration of Islamic family and inheritance laws were also returned to the Muslim community. The reform of Islamic affairs also reappointed the Chularajmontri (head of all Muslims in Thailand) to act on behalf of the king regarding the Muslim concerns. They also created an Islamic Central Committee to function as a national organization for the Muslims.

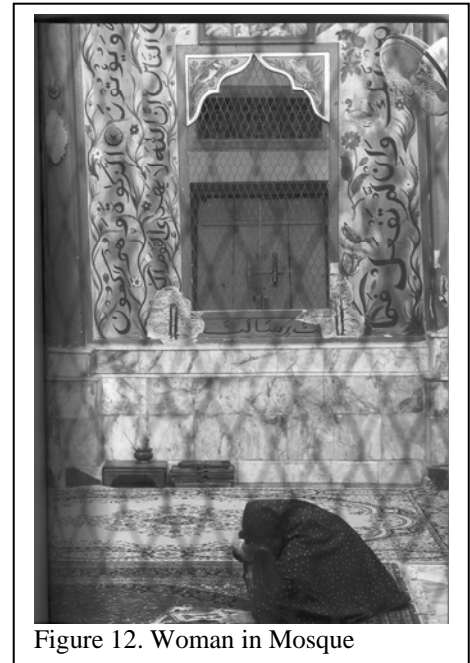


Figure 12. Woman in Mosque

The Chularajmontri (Sheikhul Islam) was an old appointment dating back to the seventeenth century of the Ayutthaya kingdom. In practice, the king appointed a trusted Muslim leader to be his advisor on matters relating to Islam. It was first set up in the reign of King Songtham (r. 1620-29). Since the time of Ayutthaya kingdom there were four Chularajmontri. All of them became noble and worked in the Harbor department dealing with foreign affairs, mainly with trade and control of Muslim groups in the kingdom. There were four Chularajmontri in Ayutthaya kingdom. By the time of the Bangkok kingdom, the Chularajmontri had become an official leader of all Muslims in Thailand. In the Bangkok kingdom, there were seven Chularajmontri, all of whom were descended from the Ayutthaya Chularajmontri, and all of whom served under the Siamese kings as high-ranking nobility in the Harbor department. They were Shiite from Persia. The majority of Thai-Muslims in the South, however, are Sunni. Interestingly, the first three Chularajmontri in the Bangkok kingdom thus were involved in military campaigns including the suppression of rebellions in the Southern states, including Kedah, and Patani. The third Chularajmontri, who was responsible for laying down regulations in governing of Southern states, became governor for many months after the quelling of the rebellion.

Following the 1932 Revolution, there was no appointment of the Chularajmontri after the death of the previous Chularajmontri in 1936. It was not until the turmoil and disaffection from the Muslims in the South following Phibul's forced integration policies, against which the rise of the Malay separatism threatened the stability of the central Thai government that the new Chularajmontri was hurriedly appointed. The law of 1945 made Chularajmontri the king's advisor in matters relating to Islam. The first Chularajmontri in the democratic period was a commoner, Cham Promyong, a Sunni Muslim who was a member of the People's Party and senior government official in the Public Relations department at that time. He was born in Samudprakan, a province next from Bangkok to the east, and had studied Islam at a university in Egypt. His immediate duty was to mediate with the local Muslim intellectuals and movements. Unfortunately the coup of 1947 forced him out of the office and he went into exile in Kelantan. Phibul appointed Tuan Suwansat, who was a religious teacher to be a new Chularajmontri from 1947-1981. Phibul also reiterated the role of the Chularajmontri to be the advisor to the government not to the king as before. The present Chularajmontri is Prasert Mahamad, also a Sunni teacher from Bangkok.

From Ayutthaya to Bangkok kingdoms, the Chularajmontri came from high-ranking nobility who were responsible for foreign trade for the kingdom. They all were Shiites. Only the last two Chularajmontri were not government officials, but Islamic scholars. And the last three in the democratic period were Sunni Muslims from Bangkok.

The Islamic Patronage Act of 1945 (revised in 1948) authorized the government to form a National Council for Islamic Affairs (NCIA) of Thailand, headed by an ex-officio Chularajmontri. The Chularajmontri was appointed directly by the King, on the recommendation of

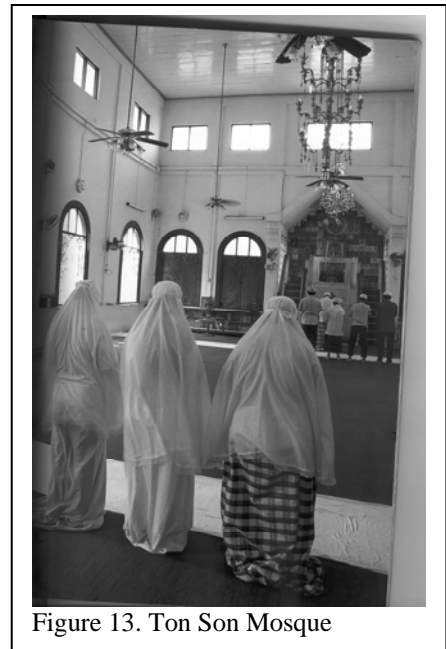


Figure 13. Ton Son Mosque

the Minister of Interior, and can only be removed by the King. His tenure is for life. The NCIA functions as an Islamic advisory committee to the Interior and Education Ministries. Located in Bangkok, the NCIA committee is the apex of the Islamic administration system. The Committee has responsibility for the overall supervision of mosques, provincial committees, and for the allocation of finance. It also has attempted a number of translations from Arabic to Thai with variable success. However, its primary function is to incorporate Islam and the Muslims into the state administration, again with varying degrees of success, especially in the South, which regarded the institution of Chularajmontri as an imposition of a Thai institution rather than a legitimate or genuine Islamic institution.

The law also creates the Provincial Council for Islamic Affairs (PCIA) in provinces where there are sufficient numbers of Muslims population. The PCIA in turn is delegated to aid and advise Thai authorities at provincial level in matters concerning Islam and to supervise the Mosque Council formed under the Royal Act of 1947. Primarily, it has two functions: first to supervise the competence and practice of the Mosque Committee, and second, to act as adviser to and liaison with secular provincial authorities.

At the bottom is the Mosque Committee or Council. The Mosque Acts of 1947, 1955, and Regulations of 1948, 1949 stipulate the main duties of the Committee are to manage the mosque and its property according to Islamic and state law, to ensure the proper observance of Islam and to provide for and maintain the registration of the mosque. Registration is not compulsory, but without it a mosque is not entitled to government financial aid. The great majority of mosques, more than 2000, are therefore registered.

The Pridi Islamic reforms succeeded in establishing the national Islamic institutions acceptable to both the government and the Muslims, generally outside the Southern region, but could not deflect the course of Malay-Muslims disaffection of Thai rule and the growing nationalist sentiment.

The origins and growth of Patani intellectuals could be traced back to the first two decades of the twentieth century when a wave of reform and modernization blew through the Malay world. The first generation of Patani intellectuals went from local *pondok* education to further studies in Mecca and came back to open the modern religious school in the South. They began to break with the old school of Muslim leaders. Next the Patani awakening was influenced partly by religious students, most of them inclined toward modernism, who had come over from or gained experience in the north Malaya states when these came under Thai administration during World War II. It also drew intellectually on Malay nationalist and populist sentiments expressed by political groups in Kelantan and Kedah.

In April 1947, a group of Patani Malays, led by the charismatic *ulama*, Hajji Sulong bin Abdul Kadir, President of the Provincial Islamic Council, submitted a list of seven demands to the Bangkok authorities. The petition called for a considerable element of regional autonomy by granting them the right to elect locally born officials with powers to govern the four provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat and Satun. Other demands stated that the official languages should be both Thai and Malay; eighty percent of government servants in the four provinces to be Muslims; all revenue and income derived from the four provinces to be utilized locally. Importantly the Muslims laws had to be recognized and enforced in a

separate Muslim court independent from the Thai civil court. The petition did not call for an independent state but an autonomous regional and cultural entity to preserve its special identity. That meant that the Malay-Muslims were to live their own traditional way of life and Islam was to be preserved. Haji Sulong summed up the aspiration and desire of the Malay-Muslims in the South that:

“We Malays are conscious that we have been brought under Siamese rule by defeat. The term “Thai Islam” with which we are known by the Siamese government reminds us of this defeat and is therefore not appreciated by us. We therefore beg of the government to honor us with the title of Malay Muslims so that we may be recognized as distinct from the Thai by the outside world.”

The petition was deemed too radical and unacceptable to the Bangkok government. Before any further negotiation was to be pursued, the coup led by the army took place in November 1947, the progressive government of Pridi was overthrown and the liberal environment was terminated. Worse, Phibul was invited back to head the military-dominated government again. Malay-Muslims, afraid of similar oppression from previous Phibul government, petitioned the British government not to recognize the Phibul regime and to assist the liberation of the four Malay provinces. To the Malay’s great disappointment, the British government was silent to their calls chiefly because of the declaration of Emergency in Malaya due to the threat of Communist insurrection. The British, therefore, needed the Thai government’s cooperation in suppression of the Malayan Communist Party, which had been operating from the Thai borders.

In the meantime, the Malay-Muslims’ self-awareness and identity were growing under the leadership of Hajji Sulong who belonged to the modern generation of Muslim intellectuals. He was the first *Patani ulama* who had studied extensively in Mecca. On his way home in 1930, he found that the local practices were incorrect and Islamic faith still mixed with local Thai animism. He was among the *ulama* who distrusted the government’s involvement in the religious affairs of the community. He believed that the political intrusion into the legal and religious matters of the Muslims since the reign of King Chulalongkorn was corrupting the purity of Islam. He made clear that his life mission was to follow the footsteps of the Prophet to “elevate and purify Islam”. His idea of a true Muslim community must link humanity, religiosity, justice and divinity together with their manifestation in the Muslim community. Hajji Sulong was thus convinced that such a community could not be established as long as it remained under Thai rule. In the course of his popular religious leadership in the province, he had realized the potency and possibility of Islam as a political force. The Muslim movement thus carried in itself deep Islamic faith and outward political involvement and social activism. His strong belief in Islamic principles of politics explained why in 1945, when the Thai government restored Islamic law to the region and established a religious position in a civil court called Dato Yuttitham, Hajji Sulong disagreed with the idea and resisted it throughout. His

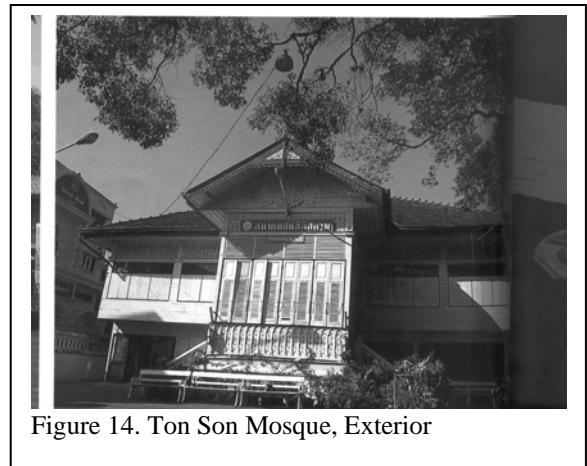


Figure 14. Ton Son Mosque, Exterior

objection was that the government could not appoint a Muslim judge because it was a non-believer or *kafir*. It amounted to a breach of Islamic faith and practice.

Hajji Sulong's politico-religious activities covered both sides of the borders. Official reports to Bangkok were that separatist sentiments were rising among the Malay-Muslims and eventually would lead to a rebellion. In order to press their seven-point demands on the government, Hajji Sulong and his followers planned to boycott the coming general election in their provinces. The Phibun government reacted by arresting Hajji Sulong and his associates and charged them with treason in January 1948. The arrest touched off simmering discontent in the region and the flames were rapidly fanned by the Malay politicians across the border. Late in February, a popular rising took place in several districts of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Violence clashes with police and security forces occurred all over the four provinces with hundreds killed and thousands migrating to Malaya. The most serious of all took place at the village of Dusan Nyor in Ra-ngae district, Narathiwat, in April 1948. Led by a religious leader, Hajji Abdul Rahman, a group of thousand men fought against the police in an open battle during which over one hundred Malay-Muslim peasants were killed.

For the first time, the Patani issue attracted international attention including the Arab League and the United Nations. The most important step was the creation in February 1944, of the Gabongan Melayu Pattani Raya (GAMPAR) or the Association of Malays of Greater Patani in Kelantan. It became a coordinating organization for various elements working for the final liberation of Greater Patani. It received support from Malay groups in Thailand as well as from the Malay Nationalist Party in Malaya. The situation was intense. Guerrilla operations began to move across the border from inside Malaya into Southern Thailand. Religious leaders on both sides of the border were calling for a Jihad (holy war) against the Thai authorities.

Meanwhile, Hajji Sulong was put on trial in Nakornsithammarat province in the upper South for fear of popular disturbances in Pattani and was sentenced to prison terms of seven years, not on sedition charge, which was unfounded, but for "libeling the Government" in pamphlets distributed to the local people. He was jailed for four years and six months before he was released in 1952. Hajji Sulong returned to Pattani, which had been rife with anger and resentment against the government. Then in 1954 Hajji Sulong mysteriously disappeared from the region after reporting to the Special Branch Police office in Songkhla province. Popular belief held that he and other followers were drowned by the police in Songkhla lake. This was one of the deep wounds which the Malay-Muslims of the South find it difficult to forget and forgive.

2: The Muslim South in an era of modernization

The modernization period in Thailand was largely a product of Cold War international politics in Asia. In the case of Thailand it covered the period from 1957 to 1973 first with the rise of Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat and ended with the demise of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikachorn in the student-led popular uprising of 14 October 1973. Sarit succeeded Pibul in a coup led by him. The main theme of the government policy now was socio-economic development aiming at internal peace and unification of various classes and ethnic groups in the country under the rule and guidance of the ideology of nation, religion, and king.

. From the 1960s onward, the government introduced development policy aimed at raising social and economic conditions of the Malay-Muslims in order to convince them of the good intention of the Thai government. The policy involved many projects, programs, and activities on many levels of the government and the local communities. Many promises were made concerning the practice of religious freedom for the Malay-Muslims and the respecting of Islamic law and customs in the four provinces. The government also provided funds for construction at Patani of the largest mosque in Thailand (about two hundred thousand dollars).

For the South especially the Muslim provinces, the government believed that the social chasm which separates Thai-Buddhist and Thai-Islam communities were mainly economic. But in order for the Muslims to be able to receive the material progress from the government they had first to relinquish their unique identity and merged into the national one. Consequently the national development policy became a contradictory force within the Malay-Muslim society. It did bring about social and economic improvements to the people but at the same time it also weakened the social values and cultural institutions that had for a long time served to resist government penetration into their society. The resistance put forth by some religious leaders and younger Muslim activists led to the emergence of the violent separatist organizations rallying under the banner of Islamic principles. Interestingly while the government succeeded in gaining national security from its development and pacification programs in the sensitive areas, a sense of insecurity, however, was created among the minority groups of people.

Instead of creating a modern state based on western model, Sarit turned to the Buddhist conception of political sovereignty, which historically had been regarded as the essence of Thainess. By employing the monarchy, Buddhism and the national bureaucracy as the instruments for national development, the government in effect forced a particular form of Thai-ism into the Malay-Muslim communities. One blatant example of such national policy was the display of a Buddhist image in front of the school yard in every school with no regard to the sentiment of the Muslim teachers and pupils in that school.

The Sarit government policy of integration of the Muslim South hit the right mark when it seized control of the traditional institution of religious purification and transmission, the pondok. In 1961 the ministry of education launched a unified system of public schools with a common curriculum throughout the country. In the official mind pondok schools offered low quality education. The government thus used both carrot and stick strategies in dealing with the Muslim schools in the south. They were persuaded to bring their schools into line with national education standards. Or they would not get financial aids and support from the government. As it turned out, many of the pondok followed the government instructions so that they could survive financially and politically. The next step for

assimilation program was to build a higher education institution to prepare the Muslim students to work in government bureaucracy. In 1967 a new state university, Prince of Songkhla Narakin, was established in the south for the first time. Its first campus was established at Rusamilae in Pattani as faculty of education with a huge central library named John F. Kennedy funded by the Rockefeller Foundation. To ensure the admission of Muslim students, the special quota system was set up.

In spite of all efforts to modernize the Muslim communities, dissatisfaction and resistance especially among religious leaders persisted and burst out in political struggle against government tampering with their religion and customs. The main contention was the idea that Islam and modern education was not separable.

In contrast to the doctrine of separation of state and religion in the development of modern Western political system, Islam has from the beginning maintained the unity of religion and politics. From its inception, Islam stresses the importance of egalitarianism and self-rule among the Muslims. A political system is not a design of man but the manifestation of the will of God that has to be worked on earth. Political power has to be defined in accordance with 'Ilm' or 'knowledge', in the sense of Sacred Learning embodied in the Sharia (Islamic law). The real and the political must be constructed in the image of the ideal and the divine. Thus the potential political leaders are drawn from the only group of religious teachers and leaders, '*ulama*', who possess knowledge both the theoretical sciences concerning the divinity, and the practical sciences whose end is action alone in the arena of politics.

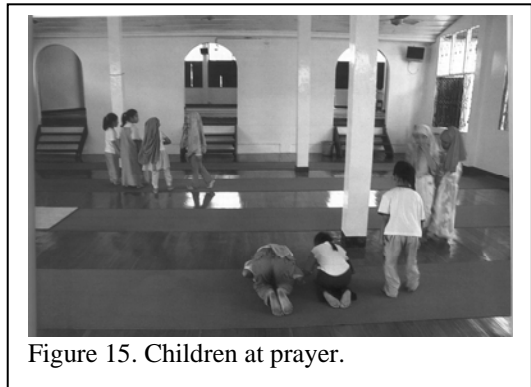


Figure 15. Children at prayer.

This connection between religious principles and human actions and the union between the sacred and the mundane means that there can be no distinction between the affairs of religion and the practice of politics. Every political act becomes a religious service in the sense that it is based on a sacred principle of justice and aims at realizing the will of God on earth. Likewise, no religious function can be divorced from its political context. The ultimate religious aim of a Muslim is to submit oneself to the will of God manifested in the form of the divine law, the Sharia. To realize that aim (s)he needs to be a participant in a political system which seeks to conform itself to that law. "For the law, being of divine inspiration, was superior to the state, which existed, in fact, only to execute it"

The Thai government, however, has been successful in employing Buddhist *sangha* in the service of the state. Even though the government secular courses incorporated some study of basic principles of Islam and rituals, in the main the curriculum closely followed government secular education including ethics. Secondary students read the Quran, its exegesis and the Prophetic Traditions, Islamic jurisprudence. But all textbooks designed by the Ministry of Education were either in Thai or Arabic, not Malay. From 1970 all other textbooks were declared illegal, despite the fact that they were still popularly used by local instructors. The semi-secular curriculum introduced into the *pondoks* actually had lowered their academic standard. Since the Muslim community did not satisfy with the quality of

religious education in the government-controlled *pondoks*, more and more of the younger generation were being sent abroad for their Islamic studies.

In short the period from 1930s to 1940s marked the formation and growth of Islamic political movement in the four provinces of Southern Thailand. From then on the resistance movement went from the call for autonomy to independence and from spontaneous rebellion to an organized armed revolt. By the 1960s, political separatism became the accepted norms among the Malay-Muslim communities in the Lower-South. The politics of Islamic community was no longer domestic and traditional but had become international. The movement was ready to link and receive spiritual and material support from outside the region especially from the Islamic center of the Arab world.

3: Towards a more peaceful Muslim identity?

The main problem for Muslims lies in government policy. It oscillates between integration and assimilation. Given the diverse and long coexisting of many religions and customs of the region, the Muslims of Thailand are moderate and accept changes from outside. Although the Thai state accorded some degree of religious freedom to the Muslims, a plurality and autonomous of culture have never been accepted. The authority is satisfied with a degree of assimilation of individual Muslims. But when Islam identifies with a non-Thai culture, as in the Malay-Muslim South, then conflict with the state becomes inevitable. In the official mind, to be Islamic is acceptable for Thai citizens, but not Malay-Muslims.

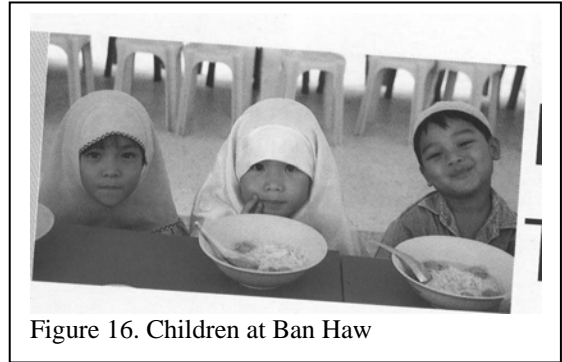


Figure 16. Children at Ban Haw

From the late 1950s to the present, relations between the Malay-Muslims of the South and Thai authorities have been relatively the same. Mistrust, patronizing and misunderstanding on the part of the government officials are still prevalent. Fear, resentment and disapproving of Thai rule and power are also rampant among the Malay-Muslims. Similar policies aimed at integration and assimilation of the Muslims are still being prescribed to the local offices.

But the conflict and constraints were there and could hardly be wiped out by modern economic and education programs aimed at alienating the new generation of Muslims from their local communities. In the meantime, the central bureaucracy and its officials, including the military and armed volunteer organizations set up to safeguard the border areas from Communist insurgency and terrorist organizations, had grown enormously. By the 1970s, in response to government military campaign against disgruntled and radical anti-government movements, various separatist Muslim organizations were established and operate in the four Southern Muslim provinces. The prominent ones were the Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Pattani (BNPP) which originated in the 1940s with headquarters in Kelantan; The Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) organized in 1974; The Bertubuhan Perpaduan Pembebasan Pattani (PPPP) or PULO was set up in 1968 and is considered to be the most influential Muslim separatist armed organization in the South.

By the 1980s and with the rise of fundamentalist Muslim groups following the Iranian revolution, there appeared similar trend among the political separatist organizations in the area, for example, the *Sabilillah* (The Path of God) and *Grekkan Islam Pattani* (GIP), which so far had garnered little support from the local population. Another lesser known among the militant groups was the *Black December* (1902) group. The name of the group was taken from the historical event of final incorporation of Patani region into the Thai kingdom in December 1902. The group was active in Yala and claimed responsibility for the bomb explosion in the royal presence on September 22, 1978.

This historical background of the problem and conflict between the Malay-Muslims in the Southernmost Thailand testifies to the fact that the political conflict could be resolved as long as the Thai state is willing to compile and respect their grievances and ethno-religious

identities. The complications of the conflict also come from the external influence, which unfortunately have been exploited by both sides in order to strengthen and achieve their own causes.

Suggestions for further reading

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Appendices:

I: Chronology of Thai history

II: Structure of Patani under Thai rule

III: The Structure of the Thai-Islam Socio-religious Bureaucracy in Thailand

IV: Rattaniyom [State-preference Policy]

V: The Patronage Islamic Act of 1945

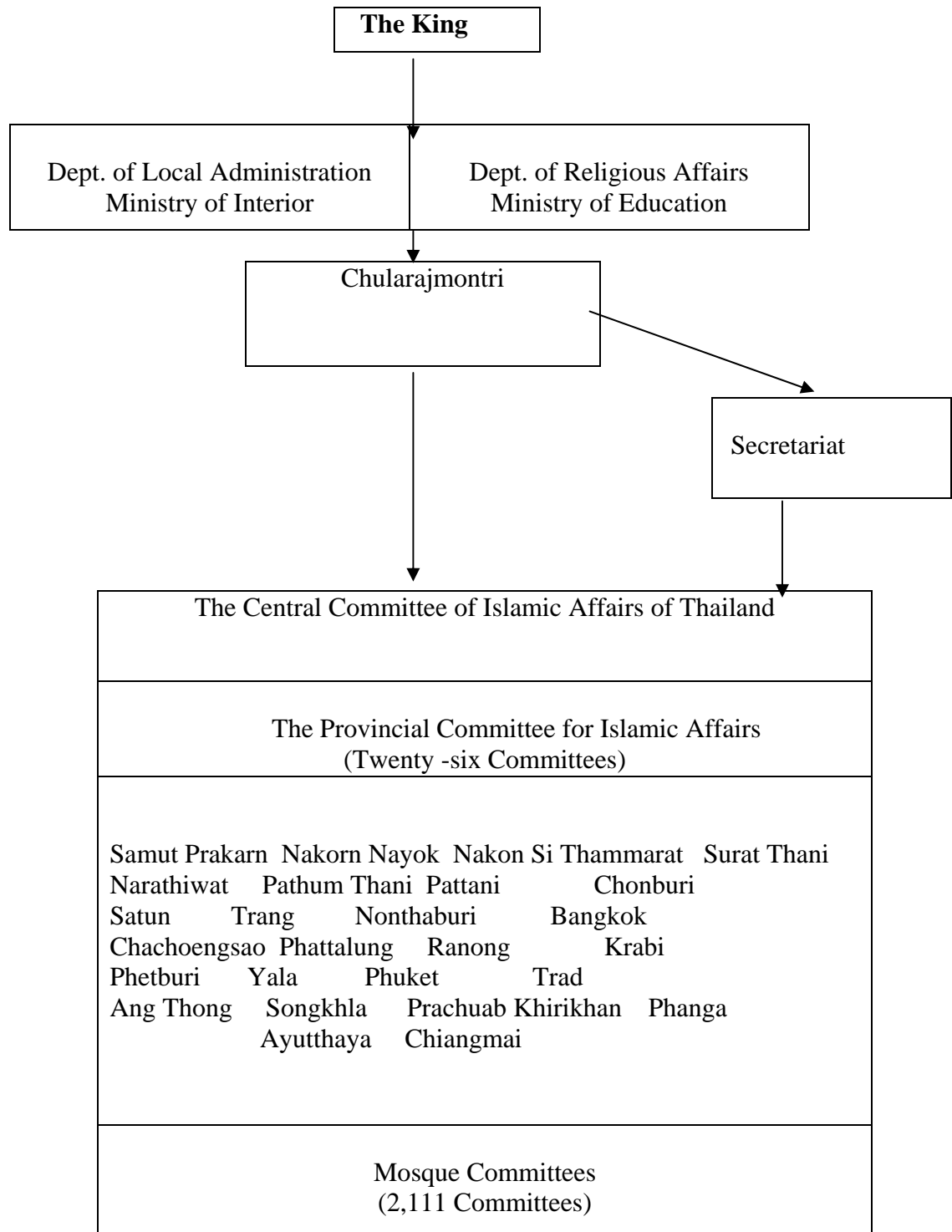
Appendix I: Chronology of Thai history

Period	Kingdoms	Leaders
1200-1351	Sukhothai	King Ramkhamhaeng
	Lan Na	King Mangrai
	Lopburi	
	Nakhon Si Thammarat	
	Patani	
Pre-modern	Ayutthaya Kingdom (c1351-1767)	King Songtham, Narai
	Thonburi 1767-1782	King Taksin
	Bangkok 1782-1868	King Rama I, II, III.
Modern Era	Bangkok Kingdom (1868- 1932)	King Rama IV, V, VI, VII
	Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat annexed 1904	
	Constitutional Monarchy (1932-present)	Pridi Phanomyong, r1946
		Phibulsongkhram.r 1938-44; 1948-57
		Haji Sulong b.1895-1954

II: Structure of Patani under Thai rule

Pre-1808	Patani was an autonomous state and gradually came under Sukhothai influence as a vassal state and under Ayutthaya control as a tributary state.
1808	Bangkok ruled and divided Patani into 7 muang [states]: (1) Patani (2) Nongchik (3) Yaring (4) Raman (5) Yala (6) Saiburi (7) Rangae
1832 and 1838	Revolts in the “Seven States”
1901	Bangkok under Rama V launched a central administration of the provinces and issued the “Regulations Concerning the Administration of the Area of the Seven Provinces” which aimed at increasing centralized Thai control over the area.
1902	Raja of Patani, Abdul Kadir, led a rebellion against the Thai Reform.
1906	The “Seven States” were made into a Circle[monthon] Patani
1909	The Anglo-Siamese Agreement established the present border between Thailand and Malaysia.
1932	Revolution overthrew the monarchy
1933	Abolished the Circle system; re-organization of the southernmost area into (1) Pattani Province (2) Yala Province (3) Narathiwat Province and (4) Satun Province

Appendix III: The Structure of the Thai-Islam Socio-religious Bureaucracy in Thailand



Source: Omar Farouk, “The Muslims of Thailand: A Survey” (1988).

Appendix IV: Ratthaniyom or State Preference Policy

“Ratthaniyom” or “State-Preferred” was a series of guidelines announced by the Phibul government (r. 1938-1944) to instill a nationalist sentiment and proper behaviors for the public to perform. The twelve pronouncements reflect the state’s attempt to create nationalism and a new political culture. Each announcement was aimed at changing the outlook of the people on a wide variety of subjects, from the changing of the name of the country, lyrics in the national anthem, daily activities of the people, and emphasis on certain social values. It was a dualistic attempt to raise Thailand to the level of a civilized (read Western) society while at the same time trying to preserve the special characteristics of the Thai.

Announcement of the Office of Prime Minister on State-ism (No. 3)

Re: The appellation of the Thai people

As the Government is of the opinion that the names by which the Thais in some parts of the country have been called do not correspond to the name of the race and the preference of the people so called, and also that the appellation of the Thai people by dividing them into many groups, such as the Northern Thais, the North-Eastern Thais, the Southern Thais, Islamic Thais, is not appropriate for Thailand is one and indivisible.

It thereby, notifies that the State Preference is as follows:

1. Do not call the Thais in contradiction to the name of the race or the preference of those referred to.
2. Use the word “Thai” for all of the Thais without any of the above-mentioned divisions.

Given on 2nd August, Buddhist Era 2482.[1939]

Phibulsongkhram
Prime Minister

Announcement of the Office of the Prime Minister on the State Preference (No. 4)

Re: Respect for the national flag, the national anthem and the anthem for His Majesty the King.

As the Government considers that the national flag, the national anthem, and the anthem for His Majesty the King are of great importance to the nation which deserve reverence from all Thais, it thereby, proclaims the following as State Preferences:

1. Whenever one sees the national flag being raised or lowered from any government office at the prescribed times, or hears a solo trumpet of whistle announcing that flag is to be raised or lowered, one must pay due respect in the manners prescribed for uniformed personnels or other customary preactices.
2. Whenever one sees a regimental flag, a national ensign, a flag of the Yuth Corps or a Boy Scout’s flag being officially paraded or displayed by the

- troops, the Youth Corps or the Boy Scouts, one must pay due respect in the manners prescribed for uniformed personnels or other customary practices.
3. Whenever hearing the national anthem officially played at any official function or privately played at any ceremony, those who participate in the event or are in the vicinity are to pay due respects in the manners prescribed for uniformed personnels or other customary practices.
 4. Whenever the anthem of His Majesty the King is officially played at any official function or privately played at any theater or party, those who participate in the event or are in the vicinity are to pay due respects in the manners prescribed for uniformed personnels or other customary practices.
 5. Whenever one sees a person not paying due respect as stated in clauses 1-4, one must admonish him to indicate the importance of paying respect to the national flag, the national anthem and the anthem of His Majesty the King.

Given on 8th September, Buddhist Era 2482.[1939]

Announcement of the Office of Prime Minister on State-ism (No. 9)
Re: The Thai language and alphabet and civic duties of good citizens.

As the Government deems that the continuity and the progress of Thailand depends on the usage of the national language and alphabet as important elements, the Council of Ministers has thereby unanimously voted to proclaim the following to be the State Preference:

1. Thais must respect, show esteem, and venerate the Thai language, and must feel honored to speak or to use the Thai language.
2. Thais must recognition that one of the civic duties of a good Thai citizen is to study Thai which is the national language, at least until being literate. Secondly, people of Thai nationality must consider as their duty to help, advise, and convince other citizens who do not know the Thai language or are not able to read Thai to become literate in Thai.
3. Thais must not regard the place of birth, domicile, residence or local dialects which varies from locality to locality as marks of differences (rift). Everyone must consider that being born as a Thai means that he has Thai blood and speaks the same Thai language. There is no (inherent) conflict in being born in different localities or speaking the Thai language in different dialects.
4. Thais must consider it their duty to be good citizens, to help, advise and also to convince those who do not know and understand the civic duties of good citizens of the Thai nation to know and understand such duties.

Given on 24th June, Buddhist Era 2483.

Phibulsongkhram
Prime Minister

Announcement of the Office of Prime Minister on State-ism (No. 10)
Re: The dress code of the Thai people.

As the Government has observed that the mode of dress of the Thai people in public or populous places is not proper in accordance with the culture of the Thai nation,

The Council of Ministers thereby unanimously voted to proclaim the following to be the State Preference:

1. Thais should not appear in public, populous places, or in municipal areas without proper clothing, for instance, wearing only underwear (drawers), no shirt or with loose shirt-tails.
2. Clothing considered to be proper for the Thai people are as follows:
 - A. Authorized uniform worn as the occasion require.
 - B. Western clothing properly worn.
 - C. Traditional clothing properly worn.

Given on 15th January, Buddhist Era 2484.[1941]
Phibulsongkhram
Prime Minister

Announcement of the Office of Prime Minister on State-ism (No. 11)
Re: Daily Activities of the Thais.

As the Government feels that the proper carrying out of daily activities is an important factor for the maintenance and promotion of the national culture and hence the vigorous health of Thai citizens and their support to the country, the Council of Ministers thereby unanimously voted to proclaim the following to be the State Preference:

1. Thais should divide each day into three parts, that is, the time to carry out occupational tasks, the time to handle personal matters, and the time to rest. This should be conducted regularly as a habit.
2. Thais should carry out their daily activities as follows:
 - (a) To punctually eat their meals not more than four times.
 - (b) To sleep for six to eight hours.
3. Thais should attend to their respective tasks without becoming discouraged or evasive. And they should stop to rest and have lunch for a period of not over an hour. After the working hours in the evening, they should exercise by playing outdoor games for at least an hour, or engage in other tasks such as growing vegetables, raising animals or plants. After cleansing their bodies, they should have their meal.
4. Thais should use their spare time at night to finish up their work, converse with members of their families or friends, educate themselves by listening to the radio, reading, or go for entertainments or art exhibits.
5. Thais should spend their holidays in manners useful for their bodies or minds such as religious activities, listen to a sermon, make merit, study, travel, play games or rest.

Given on 8th September, Buddhist Era 2484.[1941]
Phibulsongkhram
Prime Minister

Source: Thinaphan Nakhata, "National Consolidation and Nation-Building (1939-1947)", in Thak Chalermtiarana ed. *Thai Politics, 1932-1957: Extracts and Documents* (Bangkok: Social Science Association of Thailand, 1978): 243-254.

Appendix V: The Patronage of Islam Act of 1945

Whereas the constitution of the Thai kingdom grants full freedom of religion to the people with the king as the Great Sustainer of religions and considering the fact that some Thai people in a certain region profess Islam, it is appropriate that the Muslim should be assisted and protected in their religious affairs according to their faith befitting of a citizen of Thailand which is an independent country.

.....
Article 3. The king appoints a Chularajmontri as his personal aid to perform His royal duties in the patronage of Islam. The government shall provide appropriate financial support to the Chularajmontri.

Article 4. When appropriate the Ministry of Education may establish "Islamic College of Thailand" for the study and training of Islam in religious studies. The graduates from this college entitle to be chosen to go to Mecca according to religious tradition on His Majesty scholarship from which the number of grants will be determined by His Majesty on each occasion.

Article 5. The government may set up a committee called "The National Committee for Islamic Affairs of Thailand" to advise the Ministries of Interior and Education in matters regarding Islamic affairs.

Article 6. The National Committee for Islamic Affairs consists of the head of the Committee and members of no less than 5 persons to be appointed and removed by His Majesty on the recommendation of the Minister of Interior. Chularajmontri is an ex-officio head of the National Committee for Islamic Affairs.

Article 7. The Ministry of Interior may establish the Provincial Committee for Islamic Affairs in every province which has a large Islamic population. The Provincial Islamic Affairs gives advise to the provincial authorities on matters relating to Islamic affairs. The Provincial Islamic Affairs is presided over by a chairman and must consist of not less than five members to be appointed and removed by the Ministry of Interior.

Any province that does not have The Provincial Islamic Affairs shall have the National Committee for Islamic Affairs operates in its place.

Article 8. The Provincial Islamic Affairs may establish the Mosque (Masjid) Committee with the consent of the provincial authorities. The Mosque Committee is headed by an *imam*. The procedural regulations concerning appointments and removal and the management of the mosque property shall be determined by the National Committee for Islamic Affairs with the consent of the Ministry of Interior.

Article 9. Members of the National Committee for Islamic Affairs, of the Provincial Islamic Affairs, of the Mosque Committee and Islamic officials entitle to wear the robe and decorate His Majesty's initials pin according to the regulations which shall be drawn up by the king.

.....
Khuang Aphaiwong
Prime Minister

Source: Prayoonsak Chalayondecha, *Muslim nai prathet thai* [Muslims in Thailand], (Bangkok, 1986): 293-295.