

The Malay-Moslem and Thailand Administration: A Power Relation Perspective

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Abstrak

Artikel ini bertujuan untuk mendeskripsikan mengenai perkembangan hubungan politik antara orang-orang Melayu Muslim di provinsi-provinsi perbatasan selatan setelah perang dunia kedua. Kebijakan pertama yang diterapkan adalah pendirian Majelis Ugama Islam untuk mengendalikan seluruh aktivitas kaum ulama. Setelah itu disertai dengan kebijakan mengubah status pondok sebagai lembaga islam tradisional menjadi sekolah-sekolah islam semi pemerintah. Kedua kebijakan ini berdampak pada munculnya gerakan separatisme yang bertujuan untuk kemerdekaan provinsi-provinsi Thailand Selatan. Perubahan politik pada tahun 1978 mendorong pemerintah untuk menyelesaikan separatisme di Thailand Selatan dengan pendekatan sosial ekonomi sehingga mampu memadamkan semangat kemerdekaan orang-orang Muslim Melayu. Namun pada awal tahun 2004, pemerintah Thailand di bawah Perdana Menteri Thaksin Shinawatra menerapkan kembali pendekatan keamanan untuk mengatasi gejolak-gejolak sosial di Thailand Selatan sehingga menimbulkan ratusan korban masyarakat sipil.

Keywords: Malay Moslem, Thailand Moslem, relation

Preface

After World War II ended, some adaptations in the borders between British Myanmar, British Malaya and French Indo-China took place. The International Commission determined that Thailand had no right to Indo-Chinese territory because of the differences in ethnicity, geography, and economics. So Indo-China was redelivered to France. Meanwhile, in relations with British Malaya, Thailand had to relinquish Kelantan, Kedah, Trengganu and Perlis to British Malaya which had held them before the War. The southern border provinces were still under Thailand as determined by the Anglo-Siam Treaty of 1909. However, some turbulence in the southern border provinces became greater, influenced by nationalist awakening in the Malay states mainly in British Malaya and the Netherlands East Indies. This paper will describe the relation between Malay-Moslem in southern border provinces and Thailand administration after World War II.

State Policies toward Islamic traditional Institutions

In response to the rise in Malay nationalism in the southern border provinces of Thailand, the administration of Thailand enacted the *Patronage of Islam Act* on 3 May 1945 proposed by pro democracy scholars and the architect of the Revolution of 1932, Mr Pridi Banomyong, and a Moslem senator from Bangkok, Cham Promyong. Based on this, Islamic intellectuals (ulama), mosque councils, Islamic schools (madrasah), and chulrajamontri (National Ulama Council), were integrated into the Thai administration. Surin Pitsuwan (1989: 78) says that the policy was addressed to weaken the separatist movement. The separatist groups were supported by some traditional elite members such as Tengku Mahyidin (a son of Sultan Abdul Kadir Kamaruddin) and Tengku Abdul Jalal.

Astri Suhrke (1989:5) explains that the chularajamontri was a council established at the national level to manage the problems of Moslem people in Thailand. At the provincial level, The Majelis Ugama Islam or Islamic Religion Assembly was set up by

the local government to give advice to the local government about problems regarding Islam and the problems of Moslem people. Besides that, the government also acknowledged the Mosque Council or Dewan Masjid to manage any mosque problems. The Islamic law relating to the family and heritage law was put into effect in regions where there were Moslem people. The Islamic judges were civil servants of the Ministry of Justice and were appointed by the Ministry of Internal Affairs. According to an informant, the MUI Pattani, of the 76 provinces in Thailand, 33, in southern, central, and northern Thailand,¹ were inhabited by Moslems.

The Ulama integration policies were intended to disrupt relations between the Ulama groups and the groups of aristocrats and give a sense of belonging from the Ulama groups to the Thai kingdom (ibid.: 79). Before World War II, the Thai administration never intervened in Moslem peoples' problems. King Chulalongkorn always emphasized that Islam was acknowledged as a religion in Thailand for the southern border province citizens. The Kingdom never regarded the Ulama groups as the foremost leaders. The act mentioned that it would found what was called chularajjamontri, a state institution that connected Moslem people and the government. The chairman of the chularajjamontri was acknowledged as the spokesman for the Moslem people in Thailand and was assigned as an adviser to the King and the administration concerning how to help Moslem people and their activities.

Prime Minister Pridi Banomyong tried to return legal autonomy to the Malay Moslems in the southern border provinces thus influencing the State Accommodation Policy in 1945-1946. After Pridi was overthrown in 1946, the situation in the southern border provinces got worse. The new Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram arrested those Members of Parliament who were sympathetic the Malay Moslems. On the other side, the struggle of Malay Moslems for local autonomy increased under a very popular Malay Moslem figure, Haji Sulong bin Abdul Kadir bin Muhammad al Fatani.²

If looked at more closely, Haji Sulong's demands were addressed to maintain the culture and Islamic identity that already united the Malay Moslem people.³ These steps

¹ Based on an interview with Tengku Hasan, the secretary of the Majelis Ugama Islam of Pattani on 25 May 2004 in the Majelis Ugama Islam building in Pattani.

² Haji Sulong was born in 1895 in Arnohru, Muang District, Pattani, when Pattani was under Sultan Sulaiman's governorship. After studying Islam with his father, Haji Abdulqadir Bin Muhammad who was the nephew of Tuan Minal (Haji Zaidal Abidin Bin Ahmad), he was sent to Pondok Bana Phatham of Datoh Haji Abdurorseh (Sas Sanu Phatham School, Bana, Muang District). In 1907, his father sent him to Mekah to study Islam with the Tunisian ulama 'Habi Bulloh'. After the death of his first son in 1927, Haji Sulong came back to Pattani with his family and hoped to live there for 2 years. However, he felt the call to improve the situation of the Malay Moslems, so in 1929 he established the first Islamic Studies School, Madrasah Al-Ma Arif Al-Wataniah. After his demands to implement Islamic law was rejected by the local government, he convened a conference of 100 ulamas on 28 Shawal 1362H (1943) to talk about the responsibilities of an ulama. The meeting appointed Haji Sulong Abdulqadir Tohmeena, Haji Muhammad Idris Burmin or Poomee, and Haji Abdulmajid Bin Abdulloh as judges, responsible for the implementation of Islamic principles. In 1945, the central government appointed Haji Sulong chairman of the Majelis Ugama Islam Pattani. Because of his petition in 1948, the Governor of Pattani under the charge of separatism arrested him. The court of Nakhon Si Thammarat imposed a sentence of 3 years in 1949 which the Appeal Court lengthened to 7 years and the Supreme Court of Thailand upheld.

³ The leaders including the governor in the southern border provinces should be Moslems and sons of bumi-putera (indigenous), there should be teaching of Malay language in schools in Pattani, all taxes from Pattani should be used for the welfare of Pattani people, 80% of local government officials should be Moslem, Malay should be allowed to be the formal language along with Thai, Islamic law should be

were needed as minimum programs to maintain the traditional ways and Islam (Pitsuwan 1989:118). The administration of Thailand did not accept the demands since they were worried that other provinces inhabited by minority groups such as those in northern Thailand would make the same demands and so threaten the integrity of Thailand. Responding to the rejection from the central government, the Malay Moslems in the southern border provinces threatened to boycott the General Elections in 1948. The administration of Thailand responded by arresting Haji Sulong on 16 January 1948 for instigating separatist movements and being involved in political activities.⁴

Prime Minister Phibun Songkhram continued his ultra-nationalist policies until 1957, when he lost his position to Marshall Sarit Thanarat⁵. The administration replaced his ultra nationalist policies with ones for development or *patanakarn*. National integration would be achieved through social and economic development. The policy was easy to understand since as a result of the implementation of the development in the southern areas as western strategy to blockade communism in developing countries. In line with the development ideology, the administration focused on economic development and national integration rather than on improving democracy. Buddhist institutions which had supported the Kingdom of Siam for a long time, had a significant role in overseeing development.

The administration of Thailand tried to integrate the ulama groups in 1946, but really only started to incorporate all social and cultural institutions from all groups of society including Islam, in 1957. Like the Sangha (Buddhist institution) hierarchy that supported and inspired the unity of the Kingdom, the Malay Moslem groups were expected to let themselves be reconstructed by the administration to support the state authority. The state proposed to intervene in Islamic traditional institutions, so conflict moved from political conflict to ideological conflict. This appeared particularly in the state policy on the modernization of Islamic traditional institutions (pondok).

Thalib (1999) says that the pondok (*private Islamic boarding school*) was an institution that had a significant role in the history of the Malay Moslems in maintaining the Malay Moslem community in the southern border provinces of Thailand. The pondok had a role in the teaching and development of Islamic thought and the construction of the knowledge of society about Islam. The pondok had become an identity that closely bound the Malay Moslem people. The pondok even became a symbol of resistance in fighting against the *wat* (Buddhist temple). Hasan Madmarn (1999) in his studies about the pondok 1930-1950 in Chana, Songkhla, claims that Chana society respected the pondok

implemented in the southern border provinces and the Majelis Ugama Islam given full authority for laws and regulations regarding all Moslem problems and Malay culture.

⁴ Haji Sulong was released from prison in 1952. Two years later, on 13 August 1954, he was drowned in the Lake of Songkhla with his two friends and a son (Ahmed Tohmeena) as translator, after being interrogated by the Police in Songkhla, according to the report of the Investigation Commission established by Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat (1957-1963). As an impact of Haji Sulong's petition, rebellion came to the southern border provinces in 1958 when Phibun Songkhram became Prime Minister. Haji Sulong is known as 'the Father of Freedom of the great Pattani'. Although Indonesian and Malay leaders sympathised with him and the Malay Moslem movement, there was no support from British Malaya. The rebellion of the Malay Communist Party in northern Malaya disturbed British Malaya.

⁵ Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat (1957-1963) is known for his declaration of a state emergency in October 1958 that killed the democratic process that had been in place since 1955. Sarit Thanarat emphasized his policies on two fronts i.e. the realization of the Thai social order of the past and acceleration of economic development in Thailand.

which had a high reputation among Thai and British Malayan scholars who came to study in the city. Ulama from the pondok came from old ulama groups or Islamic traditional schools that implemented studying like in the Middle East. As in the states of the Malay Peninsula, the old ulama were challenged by young ulama groups. According to Hasan Mamarn, Tok Guru Ghani, a youth leader implemented a modern education system, which was called *madrasah* into the traditional education system represented by the *pondok* (Thalib, 1999). The madrasah was different from the pondok since they were not only focused on religious teaching but also applied science and had a curriculum that could be measured by the standards of the Islamic schools in the Middle East.

Marshall Sarit Thanarat launched a set of education improvement programs in 1961 to change the pondok to become pioneers of social change and modernization. The Ministry of Education was assigned to enlist all the pondok and to determine which pondok fulfilled the pre conditions to get funding from the administration. A research centre and coordination institution was founded in Yala to incorporate a secular curriculum into the pondok. The government thought that it could better and more efficiently adapt the pondok than establish secular schools in the southern border provinces. This was addressed to guide the Malay Moslems to accept the changes needed by the administration. (Pitsuwan 1989:145).

To realize the administrative policies Sharit Tanarat took some steps as follows: First, the government gave a new status to the pondok as Islamic educational institutions since the institution stood outside the primary education category and private middle or state schools. The pondok was a private school that taught Islam. Second, the government persuaded the pondok to accept adaptation by offering them financial support. The schools were under the supervision of the government and became private schools as private schools for Islamic studies. Although the pondok were private schools they had to be subjugated to government regulations if they wanted to receive financial support (ibid: 145). Nuaimah Thalib (2003) explains that the program was addressed to transform the pondok from private schools to become schools that were subjects to government regulations. This changed the image from the pondok as a religious institution to an educational institution and indirectly to reduce the role of Islam in social life.⁶

The pondok secularisation policy resulted in great negative impact on endeavours to create an Islamic identity and the Malay Moslem culture. The pondok no longer produced Islamic scholars who served rural society. State intervention in the pondok certainly encouraged negative responses from Moslem figures. In June 1907, 109 pondok were closed as a protest against the state intervention policy in pondok management.

The state policy had assumed that by developing the Thai language and the Thai moral order, it would create a sense of brotherhood and awareness among the people. This policy was addressed to force the Malay Moslems to change their identities to Thai Moslem such as that of the Moslem people who lived in Bangkok and northern Thailand.

⁶ Until 1971, the administration of Thailand had enlisted 400 *pondok* in the southern border provinces of Thailand and gave them the status of private schools. Hasan Madmarn (2003: 74) mentions that Moslem teachers objected to Islam being under the supervision and the control of the government but did not resist the registration that enforced the use of the Thai language in pondok activities. As a result, non Moslems were included in the pondok to teach the Thai language and thus increase the political grip of the government on pondok activities. Besides that, the curriculum on ethics and morality was taken from Buddhist thought and not Islam. This was direct state intervention in Islamic institution that had been respected as sacred institutions.

This hypothesis was not right and these policies promoted the growth of separatist movements that broke out in 1970. The private Education Office controlled the pondok and formulated the objective of pondok secularisation policy as follows:(Pitsuwan 1989: 149):

1. Implant and create awareness and imbue the Malay Moslems with loyalty to the Thai nation, Buddhism and the Thai administration.
2. Develop the Thai language as the national language among low status people by emphasizing language and social sciences.
3. Improve the quality of secular and specific education.
4. Support basic education in Islam for all children in the southern borders of Thailand.

The policies had a background of government elite political interest that seized power through a military coup. Keyes (2003) says that Marshall Sarit Thanarat (1959-1963) became a supporter of the monarchy to obtain political legitimacy for his administration. The basic principles of Thai nationalism, first introduced by King Vajiravudh (1910-1925) were activated again and became social and cultural programs. To implant nationalism, every child in Thailand was obliged to be taught Thai principles through schools and every adult person should hear those repeatedly in all activities. The principles were acknowledged as three pillars in Thailand i.e. *chat*, (the Thai nation), *satsana*, (Buddhism), and *phra mahakasat*, (the monarchy).

As it was implemented in the administration of King Vajiravudh (1910-1925), this regulation was put into effect for every ethnic group in Thailand including the Chinese and Malay Moslems. Whatever their background and citizenship, Chinese people were obliged to speak Thai and be loyal to the Thai nation, Buddhism and the Thai administration. However, as Thai society was basically a plural and diverse one that policy was resisted by minority groups. They called this a forced cultural assimilation which should be rejected. The forced assimilation policies of minorities were undertaken by the military administration in 1957-1962, 1976-1987, and 1991-1992. Almost all of the military elites in Thailand based their legitimacy on the nation, religion, and kingdom. So that, the continuity and existence of minority culture was sacrificed by military administrations in order to get political legitimacy for their administrations.

Surin Pitsuwan (1989:152) strengthens that opinion by stating the fact that the Special Committee of Parliament concerned with the Malay Moslems had recommended that the Thai administration should adapt its bureaucracy to the social and economic characteristics of local the people. The Committee did not advise the government to change the pondok to become private schools as ordered by Mr Kukrit Pramoj. Parliament suggested that Thai officials should learn the Malay language and not force the Malay Moslems to speak the Thai language. The Committee also recommended that the secular curriculum of the government should be reviewed and adapted to the Malay Moslem culture. The government should establish higher education institutions and develop human resources to handle the requirements of Islamic knowledge.

However, the military had different views. They were still holding on to Thai nationalism which every minority in Thailand should accept without regard for their culture or religion. The military assumed that integration in Thailand should be undertaken without regard for the Malay language or pondok as among Bangkok

Moslems. This assumption implied that Malay culture should be separated from Islam. Between 1967-1973, the administration determined that teachers in the pondok should be supervised by government officials to make certain that they did not become enemies of the state.

After General Thanom Kittikachorn replaced Marshall Sharit Thanarat⁷, the secularization policies aimed at the pondok were continued without significant changes. As a consequence, the Malay Moslems were treated as second class citizens undergoing exploitation, social inequality, and injustice (Rahimmula 2003). The killing and punishing of the Malay Moslems continued without legal procedures. The Malay Moslems had no choice but to struggle against the Thai government to maintain their lives and culture. The forms of their struggles varied from protests to rebellion movements undertaken at the end of World War II. The objective of the separatist movement was to set the Malay Moslems free or realize an independent Great Pattani from the Thai. political elites that had lost their power and ulama groups that had failed in maintaining the Malay culture such as language, ideology, and Islamic traditions. The alumni of the pondok and the people who were loyal to the continuity of Islam and Malay culture supported the movement (ibid).

The fall of the military regime in 1972 and establishment of a democratic system for 3 years (1973-1976) resulted from university student protest in Thailand⁸. All social, political, and economic violence from the military regime towards the people surfaced including the worst treatment of the Malay Moslems.⁹ In the period of democratic regimes, high ranking officials torture, implementation of state violence, and corruption in the state apparatus towards the Malay Moslems blew up. The political changes in 1973 brought a new spirit to politics and encouraged the Prime Minister Kukrit Pramoj (14 March 1975-20 April 1976) and Seni Pramoj (15 February-14 March 1975, 20 April-6 October 1976) to determine a policy delivering greater authority to the local government through the *tambon programme* (op. cit. Astri: 7). The Tambon Council was an institution which functioned as a legislative council at the district level where their membership was elected from every village. Nevertheless, the old democratic government did not get a long term. After this, the administration of Thailand was under the ultra nationalist administration of Prime Minister Thanin Kraivixien (8 October 1976-20 October 1977). The General Kriangsak Chomanand (1977-1980) replaced the government in 1977.

⁷ After the death of Marshall Sharit in December, 1963, General Thane Kittikachorn (1963-1973) became Prime Minister and Praphas Charusathian (Deputy Prime Minister). Thanom and Praphas maintained the government policies of Sharit Thanarat in economics and politics such as GNP growth of 8% a year in 1960.

⁸ In early 1970, it was revealed that his son, Narong Kittikachorn, would replace Prime Minister Thanom. But he was not a popular figure either in civilian or military political elite groups. The student movement articulated their disagreement and launched demonstrations at the Victory Monument, Bangkok in October 1973. They demanded that Prime Minister Thanom should resign. Public sympathy increased when the police killed some of the university students. Finally, the Kingdom and the military withdrew their support of the Prime Minister. After this the Prime Minister went into exile overseas.

⁹ The military regimes administered Thailand under a Prime Minister from a military background, implemented ultra nationalist policies, and seized power through a military coup. Until 1973, Prime Ministers of military regimes were: Phibun Songkhram (1938-1944, 1948-1957), Sarit Tahanarat (1959-1963), and Thanom Kittikachorn (1963-1973).

The Malay Moslems needed an effective leader after Thailand succeeded in entering the Islamic traditional education system. When they faced the government officials, the people depended on the university students. The Moslem Malay youth who came from universities and Islamic high schools started to articulate peoples' aspirations based on principles campaigned for by democratic regimes for freedom, equality, and insurance of political rights for all citizens. They said: 'if every Malay Moslem should be a Thai Moslem, the Malay Moslems should get the same treatment as other Thai people' (Pitsuwan 1989: 168).

One of changes in that period was the development of Moslem militant groups in the southern border provinces to free Pattani from Thailand. In the middle of 1970, the separatist movement organization was established with the name Organisasi Kesatuan Pembebasan Pattani (*the Pattani United Liberation Organization/PULO*). The organization succeeded in getting considerable support from the Malay Moslems. There was even talk that the government of Libya under Colonel Khadaffy gave financial and military aid to the organization. Conflict between PULO and the administration of Thailand escalated at the end of the 1970s when ultra nationalist groups took power from the democratic regimes.¹⁰

The administration of Thailand in the early 1970s faced criminal movements and communist rebellions after the US withdrawal from Vietnam. The administration determined policies to cope with the rebellions, known as 'The Policy to win over the Communists or Prime Ministerial Order no. 66/2523'. The policy gave much authority to Prime Minister General Prem Tin Sulanonda (1980-1988)¹¹ and the Central Command of Military Operations of General Chavalith Yongchaiyudth. Coinciding with this, the Communist Party of Thailand (CPT) launched an armed rebellion and developed as a dangerous power beside the Malay Moslem resurgence. In some cases, there was cooperation between PULO and CPT since they experienced the same poverty, misery, and injustice from the government of Thailand. However, CPT was based in northern Thailand, while PULO was based in southern Thailand. The rebellions made the political elites search for an alternate way to overcome the separatist movements.¹²

The Royal Thai Armed Forces (RTAF) concluded that the alternative way to cope with the separatism was to separate the separatist movement from the common people. Furthermore, military and political operations focused on communist rebellions and placed military agents in communist organizations using political methods to obtain intelligence. On the other side, to weaken separatist movements, the administration of Thailand also campaigned in a war against corruption and poverty. To follow up the policies, the administration set up the Prime Ministerial Order no. 66/2523 *The Policy to Win over the Communists* and no. 65/2525 *the Plan for a Political Offensive*.

¹⁰ To learn more about separatist movement development in southern Thailand, please read the article by Chicanouk Rahimmula, *Peace Resolution: A case study of separatist and terrorist movements in the southern border provinces of Thailand*, 2003.

¹¹ General Prem Tin Sulanonda was chosen by the Parliament following the General Election of 1979 called by General Kriangsak Chomanand.

¹² Santi Mingmomgkol in 'Communists and Thailand's Muslim Problem' in Southeast Asia Chronicle October 1980 writes as follows: *Three years of massive counterinsurgency operations in Thailand's south have produced an unexpected result: an upsurge in Muslim separatist activities and an apparent alliance between some Muslim separatists and the Communist Party of Thailand.*

The PMO no. 66/2523, mentioned that the root causes of the appearance of the communist movement were social, political, and economic inequality from undemocratic regimes. This gave power to a number of political elites and was addressed to personal rather than public interest. To explain the policy, Alagappa (1987: 36) says that national security in Thailand was undertaken in the following context:

The Royal Thai Government is determined to maintain strictly the nation, religion, and monarchy and the democratic form of government with the king at its head; harmonize the people's interests and preserve the Thai national identity; resolve economic, political, and social problems justly and peacefully and instill in the Thais a sense of idealism, especially one which encourages the sacrifice of the individual for common interest.

As a consequence, political democracy development and elimination of the authoritarian political system became alternative choices to defeat the communist movement besides the military operations, promotion of social justice, harmonizing the interests of different classes, improvement of bureaucracy, and the promotion of democratic forces. In relation to the root causes of the separatist movements in the southern borders of Thailand, Alagappa (op.cit.: 216) details the results of the diagnosis as follows:

1. The lack of socio-economic development in the four provinces. This diagnosis has its roots in the rule of Rama V and was the basis for the Sarit approach to national security and regime legitimacy in the other regions.
2. Government misadministration in the border region. The grievances of the Malay Moslem community are a consequence of ignorance of the Thai bureaucrats of the Malay society, its language, religion, and culture and also because of the bureaucrats' arrogant and corrupt behaviour. Moreover, local government in this area is inefficient and does not meet the needs of the people.
3. Armed separatism is mainly the effort of the traditional political and religious elite to recapture political power; that is, it is characterized as flowing from selfish motives of a small elite group with little or no popular support.
4. External support is the root of armed separatism. Without external support, the Malay Muslim community will have no choice but to be integrated into Thailand. Armed separatism cannot be sustained with local means alone.

Besides the implementation of PMO no. 66/2523, to defeat the separatist movements of the Malay Moslems, the administration of Thailand also conducted the security policy as proposed by the National Security Council on 24 January 1978. The policy produced to prevent an increase in conflict escalation evaded political intervention from other countries or international organization as experienced by the Philippines. The method implemented was as follows: (ibid: 217)

1. To increase the number of people in the southern border provinces that spoke the Thai language through teaching of the Thai language focused on the younger generation;
2. To implant loyalty of the Malay Moslems in the southern border provinces to the government and the main kingdom institution to make them Thai Moslems rather than a minority group;
3. To raise the living standards of the Malay Moslems living in the southern border provinces that were living in poverty;

4. To protect the people in the southern border provinces from disturbances from terrorist and bandit groups;
5. To make the Moslem nations understand that the real problems were about management of government and common welfare in southern Thailand. This was addressed to Moslem countries that gave financial and military aid to southern border provinces.

These policies were prepared to execute a number of programs as follows: pressure to teach the Thai language and secular subjects to the Malay Moslems, tolerance in religious relations, economic development in the southern border provinces, administrative improvement, state apparatus quality and human resource improvement both civil and military, measured and limited military operations and negotiations with the separatist movement (ibid.: 217-218). Before 22 June 1977, the administration had determined a set of policies in appointing of local government officials in the southern border provinces as follows: (1). They should understand the Malay language and the Moslem people; (2) If they were not Moslems, they should understand and be able to speak the Malay-language; (3) If they could not speak Malay they should be Moslems; (4) If they were not Moslems and could not speak Malay they should have a perspective on local traditions and ethnicity.

To coincide with the cultural assimilation policy and tolerating Islamic development, the administration of Thailand also undertook a number of military operations under the coordination of the *Committee for the Resolution of Security Problems in the Southern Border Provinces* headed by the Secretary General of the *National Security Council*. At the local level military operation, it was undertaken by *The Fourth Army Region* supported by *the International Security Operation Command*, Police, and paramilitary troops. Nevertheless, the military operation policy was followed up by a peace campaign based on PMO Orders no. 66/23 and no. 65/25 offering amnesty to the separatist movement members who surrendered to the government.

LTG Harn Leenanon claimed that a number of policies were carried out effectively from October 1981 until September 1983. As proof, 700 people of the separatist movement and the communist rebellion surrendered since an amnesty was offered to them. By using that tactic, the military could limit the area of the separatist movements. Although the military could not eliminate all of the separatist movement resistance, The Civil-Police Military Task Force (CPM-43) could maintain the southern border provinces for a long time, from the separatist military disturbances. After that, the Fourth Army Region campaigned for *Tai Rom Yen*, which meant peace and stability in the southern border provinces. The military budget for the southern border provinces increased from 1,917 million baht in 1979 to 4,150 million baht in 1983 to realize this policy.

The Thai policies until 1980 impacted significantly on Islamic development. Islam had been constructed as a religion in Thailand although not a national religion through the patronage to the King in developing studies about Islam and the Al-Quran. The significant policy was choosing local officials in the southern border provinces who were sensitive to the *distinctiveness* of religion and culture. That meant a number of local government official who were appointed were Malay. In line with the political liberalization and democratization in Thailand developing since 1980, the Malay Moslems had affiliated to the Democrat Party. This party undertook a political

recruitment of the Thai Moslems as parliamentary candidates. A Malay from the New Aspiration Party, Wan Muhammad Nur Matha¹³, was chosen as the Speaker of Parliament and appointed as Minister of Internal Affairs and Deputy of Prime Minister in the Thaksin Sinawatra administration.

However, religious tolerance for those living in Thailand, encouraged since the 1980s, was tentative because of the development of fundamentalist Islamic groups which emphasized their Islamic beliefs and their ethnic identity (Keyes, 2003). Public culture established in Thailand tended to be Buddhist influenced culture. The appearance of fundamentalist groups in the southern border provinces encouraged Thai Buddhist militant groups to again demand Thai nationalism and a Thailand that was Buddhist. The conflict potential strengthened again in response to the fundamentalist groups to retain their *distinctiveness* in religion and ethnicity.

The secularization of the pondok policy and the prohibition of the Malay language in Islamic schools and pondok did not impact on the appointment of local government official in the southern border provinces. A survey undertaken in 1978 showed that 5-15% of *assistant district officers* were Moslems (Astri Suhrke 1989: 6). However, no Moslem person was appointed a governor, deputy governor or head of the provincial education office. Until now, the pattern has not changed. According to Prof Peerajot Rahimulla, the majority of kingdom officials were Buddhists. This was because the Buddhists were more fluent in Thai than the Malay Moslems. The mastery of the Thai language became a standard in the recruitment of civil servants and high officials. In reality, the majority of Malay Moslem scholars had graduated from higher education institutions in Indonesia, Malaysia and Middle Eastern countries, so they usually did not fulfill the criteria to speak the Thai language fluently.

Besides that, compulsory cultural assimilation of the Malay Moslems impacted on the migration of the Malay Moslems from the southern borders of Thailand to Malaysia. They had dual identity as Thai and Malaysian citizens that had deep feelings of brotherhood since the times of their ancestors (Hortsman 2000). This impacted indirectly to increase human trafficking from and to Pattani. The migration was most complex from the economic, the political and cultural reasoning. The migration was not only addressed to maintain their culture but also to satisfy their economic interests. So migration encouraged the growth of border economic contacts. However, the human trafficking impacted on social values transfer from the Malays to the southern border provinces mainly concerned with the development of the *revival of religious ideas in Pattani*, as a result of the interaction between Malays and foreigners both in and outside Pattani.

The human trafficking across the Thai Malaysian border on a certain level had become big problems for Thailand and Malaysia. The Malaysians stated that the northern borders of Malaysia were places of criminality, insecurity and sex-tourism. Illegal logging, drug trafficking and weapon trading also became the main characteristics of the border area. To overcome the problem, the administration of Malaysia built a high wall

¹³ Wan Muhammad Nor Matha was a senior politician from the New Aspiration Party. He came from the Moslem minority or Bangsa Melayu Pattani and was the first from that group to be chosen as the Speaker of the Thai Parliament, Minister of Internal Affairs, and Deputy Prime Minister. The appointment as the Speaker of Parliament by Prime Minister Chavalith Yongchaiyudh was a form of political accommodation to the Malay Moslems who had suffered discrimination from the Thai administration in the past.

that separated Malaysians from those living in southern Thailand. Meanwhile the Thai administration stated that Malaysia was a haven for fundamentalist Islam since many separatist movement elites escaped across the Malaysian border. The border area was not only used as a trade area but also for the transaction of ideas between Malaysians and the Malay Moslems of Thailand. Here was the early awakening of Islamic fundamentalism in the southern border provinces of Thailand.

The policies of the Thai administration to integrate the Malay Moslems through the politics of culture by the incorporation of ulama groups in the bureaucracy and pondok secularisation policy can be said to have been successful enough to separate Islam from the Malay Moslem identity. This was proven by the economic and social developmental approach to reduce inequality in economic and social culture between Bangkok and the southern border provinces of Thailand as written in Ministerial Order no. 66/2532. However, after the Cold War ended, some military governments still implemented Thai nationalism to try to get political legitimacy. As in the end of World War II, the national integration policy of Thailand was influenced by international interests i.e. to obstruct communist power in Southeast Asia through economic development cooperation. After World War II, relations between Thailand and western countries such as Britain and the USA increased. The relations did not only cover trading cooperation but also security and defence cooperation. Thailand was one of the main supporters for the establishing of the *South East Asia Treaty Organization* (SEATO).¹⁴

The State Policy toward Terrorism

The political integration policy and security problems can be differentiated into two stages, i.e. the peace period (1992-2003) and the period of violence (2004). The peace period policies undertaken were based on the *National Security Policy for the Southern Border Provinces* proposed by the *National Security Council* and ratified by the Prime Minister. The southern border provinces defined in the document are Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala, Songkhla, and Satun. The policy assumed that the political situation after 1999 had changed from the old situation that was dominated by violence and social restlessness, low living standards of the Malay Moslems, low infrastructure development, low tolerance for cultural differences and using military operations to cope with the separatist movements. It had changed into a new situation that was characterised as: high tolerance of other cultures and other ways of life, not using physical power to cope with the problems, appearance of scholars and the political generation.

Unresolved problems are adaptation of the Malay Moslems to political liberalization and globalisation such as drugs in youth groups, poverty, and feelings of injustice in the society, and growth of political participation based on the Constitution of

¹⁴ SEATO was a military cooperative of allies established in 1954, the organization was the result of an agreement for defence cooperation among Australia, France, Britain, New Zealand, Pakistan, the Philippines, Thailand, and the United States of America. The establishment of this organization had the background of the loss by France of Indo-China and was addressed to fight the communist movement in Asia. The agreement covered some articles called 'the Pacific Charter', strengthening of civil society of Asian and Pacific countries for equality and self-determination, and the obtaining of cultural, economic, and social objectives. The SEATO headquarters were in Bangkok. Working programs of this organization were annual joint military exercises. Since SEATO failed in military intervention in Laos and Vietnam this organization was disbanded in 1979.

1997¹⁵. So the central government intended to change its perspective on the Malay Moslems as follows: (Dasar Kestabilan Negara di Sempadan Selatan, 1999-2003: 61) First, every Thai Moslem in the southern border provinces has a right to live happily with his/her identity, religion, and culture. Thai Moslems, a minority in Thailand should be able to live as Moslems in Thai society. Second, every citizen should respect cultural differentiation that has become powerful and clever in trying to bring about political stability, security, and development. Third, the local community should have the opportunity and a role in the problem solving process and in development.

The political integration policy was intended, in the new era of the democracy development process to start reforms and change based on the Constitution of 1997. The national security policies were addressed to obtain objectives as follows (ibid.: 62): First, to develop the potential of the people and of the society both in the public and the private sectors in order to be able to understand the changes taking place in society, domestically and abroad, and to create awareness and readiness for adaptation based on their identity and way of life. Second, to develop the surroundings that would facilitate the development of the potential of the society and the potential of the people by adjusting and developing all their surroundings to support and sustain the development of the potential of the society and the potential of the people in line with cultural diversity and local wisdom. Third, to increase the participation of all parties in the area by allowing the people to take part in development and problem solving, especially public disorder and narcotic problems, by asserting cultural power to solve social problems in order to avoid conflict, and bring about peace and tranquillity.

According to Prof Peerajot Rahimmula (interview in May 2004), political integration policies in 1999-2003 were placed in the context of the democratic development process towards the establishment of a multicultural society through peoples' political participation growing in the public spaces. However, this policy had removed military operations in 2004 through Martial Law which was undertaken in the years before 1978. Even, in the period of 1999-2003, some intellectual groups in the southern border provinces had implemented political education of the society through socialization of the Constitution of 1997 protecting human and civil rights.¹⁶ The military policies were suspected of giving a sign that there were groups of political elites that did not want peace in the southern border provinces. This was part of the endeavours of political elites to close the illegal businesses in the southern border provinces.¹⁷

Now, state policies in the southern border provinces are influenced by the discourse of resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism rising globally. The resurgence of Islamic radicalism or Islamic militancy in southern Thailand cannot be separated from the global context in 1980-1990 which was called the era of religious fundamentalism. The modernization process undergone by western states had a specific history which could not become the only standard value or judgement to measure the advance of Moslem society. In relation to the resurgence of religious fundamentalism in Pakistan, Egypt, and Turkey, Javaid Saeed (1994:1) explains as follows:

¹⁵ The change of Constitution in 1997 was carried out in the period of Prime Minister Chuan Lekphai (1997-2000) after Thailand and other Southeast Asian countries experienced a monetary crisis.

¹⁶ Interview with Prof Peerajot Rahimmula from Prince Songkhla University on 24 May 2004.

¹⁷ ibid.

The issue of development and modernization of Islamic countries cannot be analysed, explained and addressed in terms of the existing paradigms in the discipline formulated to analyse and explain the issues involved in the development and modernization processes of developing countries as a whole.

The modernization in Thailand like in other countries in Southeast Asia was implemented with development as the main ideology. The government has a strong role in planning, executing but also controlling development programs to obtain high economic growth, promoting a better quality of life for the people, and increase of social welfare. The problem which should be questioned in this context, is what is the perception of the government of development and how it impacts on the Islamic roles in society. Michael R.J. Vatikiotis says in his book, *Political Change in Southeast Asia: Trimming the Banyan Tree* (1996: 139):

What does the tenacity of religious devotion in the modern context tell us about Southeast Asian societies? In general terms, it underlines the fact that, contrary to widely held predictions about the course of modernization, religious identity in Southeast Asia is still very much part of the fabric of society. Classical Weberian sociological theory argues that with modernization, primordial religious values are eventually replaced by secular national and civic values. But this vision of a despiritualised society seems misplaced in Southeast Asia.

Religious identity in Southeast Asia on some levels is bound with the ethnic identity or united with local culture. That is reflected in the Malay language as; *adat bersendikan syara' dan syara' bersendikan kitabullah*. It means: tradition is based on the law, and the law is based on the Quran and Islamic principles. Islam is different from other religions since it does not differentiate between divinity and social relations. The role of Islam in society is not only as an inspiration, but also as the law determining the social life and government. (Christie 2000:132). The sociological theories of Weber claim that in modernization, religious values are replaced by secular values. It was called a despiritualization of the society. However, in reality, it succeeded in realizing an Islamic society including that of the Malay Moslems in the southern border provinces of Thailand.

On one side, development was regarded as able to increase economic growth, to promote a better social life, and to promote social welfare. However, on the other side, there is the question, for whom is the development undertaken and to what extent can it be useful for society that is marginalized politically and economically, as is the Moslem society in Southeast Asia. That has become an instigator of Islamic fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is a religious ideology to get religion back into the social order. It is not only born in the context of the religion itself, but also has a deeper root in political, economic and cultural inequality undergone by religious minorities in the midst of a national majority. It can be concluded that the root cause of the development of Islamic fundamentalism in Southeast Asia comes from the failure of development and the free market economy encouraging poverty, misery, and marginalization of the Moslem people.

Meyer (2002) states that fundamentalism was a political ideology born in the 20th century inviting membership based on ethno religious equality. The experiences of *humiliation, misery, despair* and *lack of acknowledgment*, can contribute significantly to the development of a fundamentalist ideology. The joining of those elements basically is pragmatically instrumental in deriving a set of doctrines that evolved in the pre-tradition

period. Fundamentalist identity is the political instrument in a society with different cultures, although there are some varied objectives meeting stresses equally varied. Fundamentalist leadership implanted a desire to use their followers to mobilize their power to consolidate political power or confirm their violent activities against their declared enemies. The pressure of fundamentalist groups can evolve strongly and effectively if it is founded on oppression and conditions of marginalization joined with past experiences of *downward mobility* and *economic insecurity*. The economic and cultural crisis persisting can give a greater impetus for the development of a fundamentalist movement.

Coinciding with the resurgence of Islamic fundamentalism manifested in the attack on the WTC in New York on 11 September 2001, the violent activities of the separatist movements in southern Thailand started appearing again after 10 years of peace. In response to these activities, The National Security Council of Thailand declared Martial Law on 5 January 2004 in the southern border provinces. It was undertaken after serious invasions by the separatists of the public facilities and military operations in Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. Two days before the declaration, 18 schools and 1 kindergarten and primary school were burned and the separatists stole 300 weapons after they killed 4 soldiers. Almost all the school buildings were destroyed preventing 651 students, including 95 Moslems, from studying.

In the following days, a bomb exploded in Pattani and killed two police officers. Military groups in Bangkok accused local Moslem separatist groups such as Mujahiddin Pattani which was suspected of having a close relationship with the Malaysian Mujahiddin Association and ties with the Al Qaidah network through Jamaah Islamiyah. Ret Gen Kitti Rattanachaya said that efficient coordination with the terrorist invasions showed that the terrorists had received professional military training from the Al-Qaida. Martial law was put into effect in 3 provinces: Narathiwat, Pattani, and Yala. This policy allowed the armed forces to undertake military operations in areas suspected of harbouring terrorist camps in the southern border provinces of Thailand. In line with this mainstream opinion, the Prime Minister Thaksin Sinawatra announced that violence in the southern border provinces was the work of Moslem separatists with dual Thai and Malay citizenship who run away from the southern border areas to Malaysia where they stay with their relatives or friends.¹⁸

Cheow (2003) supports this argument. He says that the southern border provinces of Thailand had become centres of closed terrorist activities and involved all terror activities from drug smuggling, human trafficking and prostitution to weapon smuggling. The planning of bombing raids was undertaken in southern Thailand when Malaysia, Indonesia, and the Philippines closed their territories to fight against terrorism. In reality, many Moslem separatists and terrorists escaped to Thailand to plan bombing of other Southeast Asian countries. Jamaah Islamiyah elements were suspected of meeting in southern Thailand at least twice to plan the Bali bombing and other bombings in

¹⁸ The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Malaysia on 5 February stated: ‘ the objective of the JI, which was established by Abdullah Sungkar and has a hierarchical set-up, aims at overthrowing by force the legitimate governments of several Southeast Asian countries and later, to unite to form a pan-Islamic Southeast Asia, encompassing a part of Thailand, Malaysia, Singapore, Indonesia, Brunei and the southern Philippines. While JI is not part of the international Al-Qaeda network, the loose linkages established between certain leaders of the two groupings led to arrangements for mutual benefit’

Indonesia. The separatist movement is also assumed to have a network with the MILF and Abu Sayyaf groups in southern Philippines.

Cheow (ibid) also mentions that there are five reasons why southern Thailand had become a centre of terrorism as follows: First, the southern Thai border provinces were the underbelly provinces in Thai economics or peripheral regions in both economics and politics. The economic growth and development were not effective in producing a trickle down effect into the Malay Moslem community. The poverty and marginalization of the Malay Moslems had encouraged a state of relative deprivation which supported the concept and spread of terrorist activities. Second, many Moslem youths in pondok are Wahabi followers; they obtained financial aid from the Middle East to develop Mosques and schools. Some of them had also obtained military training in Afghanistan under the Taliban regime.

Third, these area were dominated by the war against *attrition and hit and run operations* to fight against central government symbols such as: Police, Armed Forces, and local government. Some of the separatist movements had appeared in the past time. Fourth, Prime Minister Thaksin undertook a war against drugs going so far as proposing the death penalty for drug distributors. Drug smuggling was suspected of being fund raising for terrorist activities. Fifth, the terrorists were influenced by political conditions in Kelantan and Kedah where fundamentalist Islam had already established Islamic Law.

Nevertheless, interviews with a number of civil society figures both in Bangkok and Pattani show that terrorism is only a discourse and political symbol among the government and military elites to destroy the Malay Moslems in southern Thailand. Terrorism is a political instrument of propaganda from the military and civilian political elite groups that has a hidden agenda as follows: First, the local police and local government elites control a lot of illegal businesses such as prostitution, illegal logging, and weapon smuggling on the Thai-Malaysian border. A number of people with support from the kingdom officials are suspected of undertaking the illegal business. One of the informants from the Prince Songkhla University Pattani campus (PR) said as follows:

‘Some of the Thai Kingdom officials do not wish for Malays to live in peace. Because here many of us southern Thais do not understand that illegal business yields a great deal to employees who in the main are not Moslem. Economic activity on the Malaysian border according to our studies included illegal prostitution, weapon smuggling, drugs and so on, to earn an income of about 10 million baht per year (equal to Rp 2,2 milliard). Half of those who enjoyed the illegal business were members of the Kingdom’s police force. If the border areas were at peace then those employees would lose their illegal incomes as this would go to benefit the community.

Second, to repress the criticism of the Malay Moslems of government policies. Everybody that conducted a critique of the Kingdom officials or civil servants would be stigmatized by the local and central government officials as a group behind the separatist movement including a Member of Parliament from Pattani who always criticised unfair government policies, Den Tohmena bin Haji Sulong.¹⁹ So the policy of war against the

¹⁹ Taipei Times, 24 March 2004, page 5 reports: *A senior Thai senator yesterday accused police of torture in obtaining evidence that he helped plan the attack on the army arsenal. Senator Den Tohmena, who represents the Province of Pattani, said in a speech that Anupong Panthachayangkoon, a village headman held by police in connection with the attack, had lied about him because of police pressure.* Besides Den Tohmena, the Police also arrested two Members of Parliament from the Thai Rak Thai Party, Najmuddin Umar and Areepen Uttarasin. Den Tohmena is the son of Haji Sulong, in 1957 he and his older brother Haji Amin nominated for the General Election but failed. In 1960 Haji Amin was arrested by indictment for being involved in the separatist movement. Den Tohmena was chosen as a Member of

terrorists manifested by the Martial Law in the southern border provinces could be categorized as state terror against the civil society. The centralized political system enabled the kingdom officials in the southern border provinces to report to the central government that there was a number of separatist movement uprisings. Since the PULO (Pattani United Liberation Organization) power was weakened, the terrorism issues were addressed to the Jamaah Islamiyah. To follow up on these issues, the government created the Barisan Mujahiddin Pattani.

If the details are traced, based on an interview with the chairman of the Majelis Ugama Islam in the Province of Pattani, there was no organization named Barisan Mujahiddin Pattani. The suspected people were some youths who had graduated from Middle Eastern institutions, as a large number of the Pattani youth went to school in Middle Eastern countries such as the Sudan, Egypt, and Saudi Arabia since the period of the Pattani Kingdom. Some of the incidents were planned and constructed by the police to legitimize Martial Law. One of my informants (PR) mentioned that the story about the theft of 300 weapons which supposedly took place at the Narathiwat military camp on 4 January 2004, was not true. The weapons had been lost in the previous 4 months. The military approach would not be able to cope with the separatism problem; and would indeed encourage new problems. Prof Peerajot Rahimmula stated (interview on 16 May 2004) as follows:

‘Half the kingdom employees in the border areas see us as second class citizens, they accuse us of being separatists who support anti-Thai movements. They do not want Malays to sit with people of other religions. Because there is no justice Malays are humiliated. We need justice, we need the protection of human rights as there is no justice or human rights in southern Thailand, on the contrary they accuse us of being separatists or people who want independence’

The substantial problems in the southern border provinces of Thailand basically were not separatism issues but the inequality in socio economic, socio cultural and socio political issues in Malay Moslem life. The socio political inequality was indicated by the strength of central government power and the Malay Moslems’ lack of autonomy. Meanwhile, inequality in social and cultural lives was proven by the forced separation culture and discouragement of Bahasa Melayu on the Moslem people as shown by the forced cultural assimilation. The Malay Moslems were obliged to accept the assimilation policy in order to become Thai Moslems rather than Malay Moslems. Although the Constitution of 1997 protected multiculturalism, this was only a limited discourse. Those matters indicate that the root causes of the separatism issues were that there was no autonomy of rule by the Moslems in the southern borders (Paribatra, 1983:3)²⁰. This matter was also reiterated by an informant from Chulalongkorn University (SW) who claimed that no country including Thailand wants the *politics of differentiation* but prefer the *politics of homogeneity*.

The politics of homogeneity applying to the minority ethnic groups such as the Lao, the Hmong, and the Chinese did not have as much impact as it did when applied to

Parliament from the Democrat Party in 1976 but went away to Britain after the military coup. In 1980, he was elected a Senator and was appointed Secretary of the Defence Department.

²⁰ Sukhumbhand Paribatra says: ‘essentially separatist movement can be conceived of as attempts by ethnic minorities on the periphery to attain political autonomy from the governing power of the centre’ in ‘Factors behind Armed Separatism: A Framework for Analysis,’ ISEAS, 1983.

the Malay-Moslem. The similarity of religion and tradition among the Thai, the Chinese and the Hmong did not make them experience many problems in the forced cultural assimilation. However, in the Malay Moslem case, when the politics of homogeneity are in line with economic and political inequality, there is always room for resistance even though at a minimal level. For example, the political, economic, and cultural pressures encourage the Malay Moslems to regard the Thai administration as foreign. The principal leader of the great Mosque of Pattani, Teuku Umarsyah claimed that the Thai administration is a colonial government and the relationship between the Thai administration and the Malay Moslems is like the relationship between the Indonesian people and the Dutch government in colonial times.

The war campaign against terrorism of the Thai administration was greatly influenced by American political and military interests in Southeast Asia. It was often regarded as an endeavour by the US to reestablish its military power in the Southeast Asian regions as in the period of the Cold War. At that time, the US had two military bases at Clark and Subic Bay in the Philippines and was involved in the setting up of the Southeast Asia Treaty Organisation. If in the period of the Cold War the US military presence in Southeast Asia was necessary to blockade communism; now it is necessary to eradicate terrorism. Other political analysis says that the war against terrorism is actually addressed to blockade the economic expansion of China that has developed as a big economic power.

Except for Singapore and the Philippines, Thailand is the main ally of the US in Southeast Asia. The American Secretary of State, Colin Powell at the meeting of APEC leaders on 18 October 2003 in Bangkok said that APEC should talk about the trading and investment issues in the context of the war against terrorism. On that day, the US and Thailand signed *the Air Cargo Agreement*. Two days later, on 20 October 2003, President George Bush visited Thailand and chose it as a main ally outside of NATO, valued for cooperation in the campaign against terrorism. As a follow up in this issue, the US provided middle range missiles for air to air combat to Thailand as replacement for those offered by Malaysia and China. To help the US in Iraq, Thailand also sent 433 paramedics and technicians there on 3 December 2003. After that, on 15 December 2003, Thailand with Singapore and the US started Cope Thunder Air Exercises, that are undertaken annually, (the 10th), in the Singapore Military Command. As a show of gratitude, the US helped Thailand to handle 15.000 Hmong refugees who had escaped from Laos after the Communist Party took power in that country in 1975.

Thus it is clear that the strong tendency of the policies for war against terrorism in southern Thailand are influenced by US political interests. Separated from this is whether or not Jamaah Islamiyah exists. The Malay Moslems had become the object and military target of Martial Law so this community became very miserable.²¹ For example, through the murder of 85 Malay Moslems on 25 October 2004 when the military arrested 1.300

²¹ Bangkok Post reported that The National Commission of Human Rights would investigate the lost people from January-March 2004 in the southern border provinces of Thailand. The Central Islamic Committee of Thailand (CCIT), The Law Society of Thailand, The Senate Committee of Human Rights, and the Moslem Lawyers Association (MLA) said that there were a number of reports of violence such as murder, torture, and mutiny in Narathiwat, Yala, Pattani, and Satun. It was suspected that 65 civil servants and military died and 105 Malay Moslems also died during the military operation. Source: Centre of Excellence, in Disaster Management and Humanitarian Assistance, Asia Pacific Daily Report, 25 March 2004.

people demonstrating in Tak Bai, Naratiwat. The incident showed that the military had no proper perspective in facing the rights of civil society in articulating their aspirations. The Martial Law had killed both the Malay Moslem people and the democratic process that is the right of all citizens in the world. The elements gave advantages from Martial Law to the US that sold weapons to Thai Armed Forces and the Thai Armed Forces succeeded in obtaining control over some resources after they occupied the southern border provinces.

Conclusions

The administration of Thailand has removed the policy to coup separatism. The Prime Ministerial Orders no. 65 and 66/2325 based on social and economic development to eliminate inequality were replaced by the Martial Law that was based on military operations. The Malay Moslems became the victims of the policy which encouraged the development of the separatist movements in the southern border provinces of Thailand. The political integration of Pattani was addressed to building territorial borders, citizenship borders, and cultural community borders. The integration of Islam into the Thai culture was conducted by a forced assimilation policy to strengthen Thai nationalism. The state killed the public spaces to proceed towards establishing a multicultural society. The politics of the state were to support homogeneity of society in the midst of a plural society based on loyalty to the Buddha, the Thai nation, and the monarchy.

So the conclusion, in this paper, can be formulated as that the political integration policies of the Thai administration of the southern border provinces were dominated by the politics of violence, forced cultural assimilation, and economic development that proved failures to get the sympathy of the Malay Moslem people. These policies only forced the Malay Moslems to accept the Thai authority symbolically. Nevertheless, the political integration still remains unfair and unjust for the Malay Moslem people and could at certain times lead to separatist movements. The political change in 1997 was dominated by the establishment of the democratic and constitutional process which did not automatically produce a conflict resolution policy that eliminated all problems of injustice for the Malay Moslems. As shown when under the democratic government of Thaksin Sinawatra, the administration implemented Martial Law.

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