

Philosophy of Radical Fundamentalism Based on Ethnoreligious Identity in the Southernmost Thailand

ปรัชญามูลฐานนิยมแบบสุดโต่งบนอัตลักษณ์เชิงชาติพันธุ์และศาสนาในชายแดนภาคใต้ประเทศไทย

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บทคัดย่อ

บทความวิชาการนี้มีจุดมุ่งหมายมุ่งตอบประเด็นคำถามที่ว่าอะไรคือสาเหตุที่แท้จริงของความขัดแย้งที่รุนแรงที่มีรากเหง้าจากปรัชญามูลฐานนิยมแบบสุดโต่งที่ยังคงมีอำนาจภายในสถานการณ์ปัจจุบันในภาคใต้ โดยอุดมการณ์แล้ว ปรัชญามูลฐานนิยมแบบสุดโต่งได้ฝังอยู่ในใจของชาวมุสลิมบนแนวคิดชาตินิยม ผู้เขียนได้วิเคราะห์ผ่านแนวคิดของเบคอนในเรื่องเทวรูปของมนุษย์ ความยึดมั่นถือมั่นที่ได้พันนาการมาเป็นสื่อบนเทวรูปของมนุษย์ กล่าวคือความเป็นชาติพันธุ์ ความเป็นศาสนา ระบบการศึกษาและภาษา กลายเป็นวาทกรรมของอัตลักษณ์แห่งตัวตนในฐานะปัจเจกนิยมจนกลายเป็นการเมืองเชิงอัตลักษณ์ แนวคิดแบบสุดโต่งได้เกิดขึ้นเพื่อพยายามเรียกร้องดินแดนอาณาจักรปัตตานีคืนมา สิ่งที่ได้ให้ประประสพการณ์ทางประวัติศาสตร์ที่ซับซ้อนและวิกฤติหลายครั้ง สามารถทำให้เข้าใจได้ว่าสิ่งที่รัฐไทยทำในช่วงเวลานั้น ๆ ก็เพื่อรวมจำนวนให้เป็นหนึ่งเดียวและทำให้เกิดเอกภาพของความเป็นรัฐชาติไทยขณะเดียวกัน ชาวมุสลิมได้เรียกร้องการสถาปนารัฐที่มีความเป็นอิสระที่อยู่ภายในประเทศไทย แต่ข้อเรียกร้องของพวกเขาไม่ได้ประสบความสำเร็จ ดังนั้น ความมีอยู่ของแนวคิดมูลฐานนิยมแบบสุดโต่งก็ยังคงดำรงความขัดแย้งอยู่ในพื้นที่ภาคใต้ของประเทศไทย

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Abstract

This academic article is aimed at raising the questionable issue of what the actual causes of the violent conflict rooted from philosophy of radical fundamentalism are that have still prevailed within the current situation of the deep South of Thailand. Radical fundamentalism is ideologically in the Malay-Muslim minds based on nationalism. The author has analyzed through the Baconian concept of human idols. The attachment that has sired to four kinds of human idols – ethnicity, religiosity, educational system and language – is the discourse of self-identity as individualism become into identity politics. Radicalism rose to attempt to irredentism of calling for Patani Sultanate. Given many complex and critical historical experiences of the periods, it is understandable what the Thai state did at that time was amounted to consolidation and unification of the Thai nation state. Meanwhile, the Malay-Muslims called for the creation of a semi-independent state within Thailand, but their petition has not accomplished. So, the existence of radical fundamentalism has still been maintained the conflict in the deep South of Thailand..

Keywords: Philosophy of Radical Fundamentalism, Ethnoreligious Identity, the Southernmost Thailand

1. Introduction

The author tries to shed light on the fact that the original sources of violent tensions are concerned with philosophy of radical fundamentalism, in order to scrutinize clearly and distinctly raising the questionable issue of what the actual causes of the violent conflict rooted from radical fundamentalism are that have still prevailed within the current situation of the deep South. Let's the meaning of radical fundamentalism. Fundamentalism is basically not different from logocentrism, but adding at the point of one's own imagined-self and communities concerning their marginalized identity politics and leading to create their political mobilization to preserve and struggle their rights, justice and benefits rooted from the politico-religious interpretation and later named "*radical fundamentalism*". In this article, the author disagrees with the term

“*Islamic Fundamentalism*” which is determined by Western media and is the Western rendition of Islam, and not an expression which Muslims have anything to do with. Because the adherents of two sects in Islam - Sunni and Shia – agree that the Qur’an is the word of the Almighty as revealed to the Prophet Muhammad and believe that the Prophet Muhammad was the last of all the prophets. Further, both proclaim that Islam constitutes an ideology which goes far beyond mere praying, and that it provides universal principles for all crucial aspects of social life expected to practice. The author thinks that the term “*Fundamentalism*” in its original sense is based on certain characterizing economic, political, familiar to religious features. These features of a given ideology are its fundamental principles which are in all human minds. When that sense of fundamentalism has a political implications emphasized on nationalism, it adds the strong value of that implication and become a radical fundamentalism.

The conflict for the three southernmost provinces of Thailand is difficult to search for its documents. Fundamentally, the author believes that the human attachment is congenitally to stimulate the inflammability in the far South. To understand clearly this assumption of attachment, the author would like to bring out the Buddhist philosophy of the Dependent Origination (*Paticcasamuppada*) for the briefly consideration here. The attachment is ego-consciousness (*ahamkara*) having been wrapped up to accustom to ignorance (*avijja*) and craving (*tanha*). Both ignorance and craving have been melted down to attachment (*upadana*) to obscure our perception and separate us to coexist with pertinent factors of relationship between subjective and objective. The three uncondusive tendencies: ignorance, craving and attachment - drive people to embellish in their various ways including the violent conflict. All of them are supported one another to force all behaviors to succumb the mind and flow in accordance with the power of destiny. We can, in particular, say ignorance is their root. In general meanings, ignorance is belief in a self and not the understanding of the truth of things, craving is wanting self to exist or not to exist in a certain fashion and attachment is to attach mistakenly the imagined self to various things. So, the imagined self is the master who controls the things and makes them go according to its desires; i.e. if the direction is set blindly by means of ignorance, craving is the unprincipled action and attachment is like the

uncontrolled movement. With the functional cycle of uncondusive tendencies involved in our everyday life, it can be found out the way of problems like the unrest in the Thailand's southernmost provinces. It can certainly be signified that the root causes of violent conflict - ignorance, craving and attachment - are called three poisons. Moreover, the three poisons are powerfully structural dynamics working in the opposite direction focusing attention on the quality of possessive individualism of which it is called as "human idols". In this regard, the author thinks that the Baconian concept should be considered here.

Francis Bacon (1561-1626) was a British philosopher who experienced in the Crusade religious war. He saw the problem why the medieval philosophers who trained themselves to enter priesthood since they were very young and observed strictly the regulations of religious traditions, and differently gave their reasoning, what the real obstacle of human thinking was to reach the same truth. He tried to find out the truth to be modified by individuals to make sound judgments. He provided a purely mechanical procedure for attaining knowledge that is openly available to anyone, and finally discovered that the human mind must be cleared of all falsehoods which has been conditioned to accept and carefully directed. He thus exposed the psychological motives and covert personal interests hiding behind earlier philosophies and standing in the way of real progress. He assumed that all fallacies come in four types of which he allegorically calls "Idols". The term "Idols" are the objects to influence for human thinking. Kirti Bunchua distinctly simplifies that "*By this token idols can symbolize prejudices. A thought is called prejudices only when somebody believes it, but I don't believe it...what I believed is a fact or a truth for me, but it may be a prejudice for those who don't believe it*".^๒

To show the understanding of the four idols is necessary to recognize them. For each one of them has influenced in human mind that is deeply grounded before exerting any opinions or reasoning. What is the meaning of four types of human idols? Firstly, the idols of the tribe are fallacies inclined to bias based on a sort of wishful thinking: this is the result of mind generalizing from affirmative instances while neglecting negative instance through an

^๒ Bunchua, Krti. **Contextual Philosophy**. (Bangkok: Assumption, 1992), p.85.

elaborate but socially sanctioned self- deception. Secondly, the idols of the cave are personal prejudices stemming from one's own individual temperament, beliefs, upbringing and education. The mind is, therefore, not the window but a false mirror of reality, because whatever human mind seizes and dwells upon with particular satisfaction is to be held in suspicion. Thirdly, the idols of the marketplace are ideas, rumors and beliefs passed along in social settings which are classified as the language. This process, Bacon said, has been particularly devastating for philosophy, because when philosophers had taken part in empty religious debates, they had led to literally arguments. Finally, the idols of the theater are fallacies-modes of thinking influenced by tradition, customs, religious faith that infected the mind with superstition and glorified ignorance.^๓

As all above-mentioned postulation, the author comprehends that the attachment that has sired to four kinds of human idols - ethnicity, religiosity, educational system and language - is the same term of the present discourse named "self-identity". So, we may conclude that the self-identity is the root causes of violent conflict in the southernmost Thailand. From now, it will concretely be investigated to regard the question of what the existing factors of the self-identity are functioning in the situation of the deep South, as follow:

2. The main factors on Malay-Muslim ethno-religious identity

The idol of tribe is the passion included to bias in attitude that in transmitted through genealogical links with actual ancestors. In this sense, the self-consciousness of Malay-Muslim ethnicity in the Thailand's South had been emerged in more two hundred years evolving the living history of turbulent struggle against the Thai central governments. In the case of the Malay-Muslims, their feeling with the Thai state is antagonistic and often hostile. They have been categorized in the pejorative guest (*Khaek*). Disdainfully, the self-determination of the Malay ethnic minorities insinuated constantly and finally, culminated to the emergence of separatism in the 1940s onwards. However, the southernmost people's sense of belonging to the once prosperous Patani Sultanate is still survived today. Their remembrance of the mournful history - suppressing a

^๓ See in Daniel Kolak, **Lovers of Wisdom**. (Belmont, Californai: Wardsworth, 2001), pp. 182-185.



number of rebellions, imprisoning many nationalist and religious leaders and transmigrating a large of Malay-Muslims from the South to Bangkok - still haunted.

The consolidation of populations in the southernmost provinces are distinct in terms of Malay ethnic identity, using the widely spoken Malay and dialect Yawi language and relying the Islamic way of life. It should be noticed in this regard that the culture of the Malay-Muslims in the southern borders is strictly served by Islam as the legal system in administering them. The conflict in the past mostly called for the Malay ethnical identity. As seen in the last chapter, Haji Sulong Tokmeena submitted, in January 1947, on a seven point plan to the Thai government, but its petition was not responded. Furthermore, in January 1948, Haji Sulong was arrested, and later kidnapped and drowned in the Songkhla Lake. Likewise, Samart Eamwirote, the Member of Parliament of Pattani province, was also assassinated by gunmen. So, this sentimentalism dealing with injustices is perpetrated by government officials from a different ethnic, linguistic and religious denomination groups who were interpreted as treason. Since the time of the last Sultan to nowadays, the Thai government has always said against insurgents as traitors.

2.1 The Malay-Muslim Identity Politics

Notably, the violent conflict that has presently happened in the southernmost Thailand is the result of the process of intense Western modernization characterized by the rise of Thai nationalism. Dissent in the South grew in the early 1940s with Prime Minister Phibul Songkhram's nationalist, dictatorial policies and goals of social reformation. Prior to Phibul, the southernmost dissent was dealt with benign neglect. His construction of the Thai national identity transformed to the Malay-Muslim ethnical identity, such as banning Islamic dress and Islamic law or enforcing the compulsory attendance of Thai-language schools. The disdainful feeling of Malay-Muslims in the South suffered the worst political oppression of Haji Sulong's case.

Given such complex and critical historical experiences of the period, it is understandable what the Thai state did at that time was amounted to the consolidation and unification of the Thai nation state based upon the central Thai imagination. Eventually, the Malay-Muslims called for the creation of a semi-independent state within Thailand, but their petition has not accomplished.

This is the beginning of militant separatism in 1946. With, having futilely delivered by Haji Sulong's ultimatum to the Thai government and enigmatized his death, approximately 2,000 to 6,000 Muslims fled across into Malaya and insurgency, violence and riot have occurred. Nevertheless, the efforts of Thai national assimilation under Prime Minister Sarit Thanarat in the South was renewed by the educational approach called "*pondoks*" or Islamic schools which were under the control of the Ministry of Interior. Sarit coerced *pondoks*, which usually taught only Malay and Islam, to contain Thai and other parts of the required government curriculum.

The conflict of which the multi-ethnic societies is formed to promote the mono-ethnic identification, may not be accepted from the ethnic minority. The problem with the mono-ethnic state appeared in many Southeast Asian countries, such as the Philippines, Burma, Sri Lanka and even Thailand. The mono-ethnic difficulty did not imply any escalation in the violent conflicts as long as the central government lacked the capacity to effectively pierce the peripheral ethnic minority. Possibly, the ethnic nationalist confrontation will fundamentally be affected the minority community by the political and economic consideration resulting in the assimilationist centralization character of state penetration. For the conflict for the southernmost Thailand, Brown analyzes that in each period of administrative centralization, when indigenous Patani elite have been displayed from positions of authority by Thai officials, the result had been protests and rebellion as: *the dispossessed members of the traditional ruling elite (sought) to reestablish their positions of power in the area.*^๔ Furthermore, the government administration interfered to assimilate the ethnic minority through the appointment of governorship including provincial governors and any degrees of officials in the southernmost region. On the other hand, Clive J. Christie gives a succinct account of the interplay of history and political ideology in the origins and development of separatist movements Southeast Asia. He points out that the form and content of each separatist movement in the

^๔Thanet Aphornsuvan. **History and Politics of the Muslims in Thailand**. Available at <http://www.enaudi.cornell.edu/southeastasia/outreach/resources/MuslimThailand.pdf>.



region was the process of decolonization starting after the World War II. A common historical experience that informed separatist movements was interwoven among the emergence of the nationalist movement resisting colonial power, the research for respective national identities and finally the establishment of independent states.^๔

2.2 The Restoration of Malay-Muslim Identity Politics

Attempts to the irredentism of calling for the Patani Sultanate became aggravated into separatism. Radicalism rose, not only in the form of militant Islamic extremists but also communists. All the Thai government authorities tried to reveal this problem, but it cannot be absolutely eliminated. Without doubt, when we take Freudianism to utilize the explaining the power of human's tribal solidarity, we see that the ethnic identity is powerful not only in consciousness of each individual, but also in the establishment of the identity of the core, of the communal culture: that is to say, its importability is the dynamic persistence of primordial affinities and the lasting power of attachments. At this point, the instrumentalism of ethnic attachment provides in the face of conditions to purpose the self-identity. It may be incorporated by the subjective cooperation of the subliminal, subconscious or instinctive elements and by objective cooperation such as history, language, religions. In this case of the current violent conflict for the three southernmost provinces of Thailand, however, the separatists have tried to simultaneously accumulate the instrumentalist strategies of irredentism.

3. The Supported Factors of Malay-Muslim Identity Politics

The ethno-religious identity of Malay Muslim in the South reliably conformed with incidents starting from foraying on the Royal Thai Army's 4th Engineering Battalion in Cho Airong district of Narathiwat province, especially the events happened at Krue Se mosque of Pattani, Takbai district of Narathiwat and many incidents. Besides, there are also many ingredients of nutrition supported

^๔ Clive J. Cristie, **A Modern History of Southeast Asia: Decolonization, Nationalism and Separatism** (London: Tauris Academic Studies, 1996), p. VII.

to the causes of the violent conflict for the far South as the influences of Islamic misinterpretation, educational system and language.

3.1 The Identity of Islamic Religiousness

The idol of the theater is the separated outstanding of traditions customs and faiths. This token has differently been distinguished to sacrifice our own religion. When man accepts the different religion, he has the views and ways of life differently, and finally he is one who has different culture. Sensitively, the author believes that all religions, without exception of Islam, are good and are the source of civilization of humanity. Furthermore, they philosophically signify to the projectuality of wisdom development regarding the human world as the relationship between the ethical and metaphysical values – the ethical values are the beneficial way of controlling human conduct to function both for oneself and others, meanwhile the metaphysical ones are the way to realize the truth for liberation from suffering – based upon this theoretical and practical correlation. Unfortunately, the religious values have sometimes been brought them the instrumental condition to respond desires of each one.

For the conflict in the southernmost Thailand, Islam of the Malay-Muslim population had been played the important roles in the religious difference commented by the former Patani elites to stir rebellion or implemented by the Thai government to cultivate the cultural assimilation efforts. So, the Thailand's southernmost problems are interestingly without political disapproval inseparably with Islam in the term of ethno-religious identity of Malay-Muslims. The majority of Malay-Muslims in the southernmost Thailand is chiefly supported their life under the norms of the religious tradition of Sunni. Nevertheless, even given the lack of vibrant social relationship between the Malay-Muslims and non-Malay Muslims, living together in the region had peacefully coexisted all segments of society. With the elevation of the violent conflict and increased range in human targets exhibited over the past years, the negative feeling of the southernmost people – fearing, untrustworthy – have actually been sensed an interchange of communal interaction between Thai-Buddhists and Malay Muslims.

It is a matter of fact that the identity politics of the Malay-Muslims in the South installs strong emphasis on the ethnic aspect of their adherence to the Islamic religiousity. The contextuality of Malay-Muslims in the South cannot be divided out of their ethnic identity and Islamic identity. Imtiyaz Yusuf concludes that



“the ritual matic/narrative, experiential /emotional, ethical and legal, social, material, and political dimensions of life are all interpreted and perceived through the lenses of ethnic identity. Here ethnicity and religion are intermixed resulting in the formation of an ethnicized view of Islam”.^๖ Thus, the ethno-religious identification of Malay-Muslim identity has been uniquely combined for ulterior interests of claiming one’s own nationalism and often resulting in explosive conflicts in the identity politics.

The consideration of ethno-religious nationalism is here seen in the case of the Thailand’s southernmost Muslims influenced, e.g. from the religious interpreters of the concept from Jihad and Brotherhood in the Qur’an acquired through studying at local and foreign educational institutions in the Middle East and South Asia.

It should be divided into two kinds of the Islamic interpretation in the South: the first group is the Islamic traditional interpretation that represents Islam based upon the syncretistic type involved the intermingling of local practices with normative Islam. The Islamic traditional interpretation has been tolerant toward the harmonic means of customs and social etiquettes to the non-Muslims and it did not contradict to the Islamic monotheism. While the other is the reformist interpretation concerning Salafi-Wahhabi, representing Islam for the puritanical forms based upon the fundamentalists, militants, extremists, radicals, fanatics, and Jihadists.^๗ For the conflict in the South, it had been associated with the Salafi-Wahhab reformism, especially, a Southern Muslim scholar as Haji Sulong bun Abdual Kadir bin Muhammad al-Fatani (d. 1954) who was educated in Mecca and was influenced by the philosophy of Islamic reformism in the Middle East and with Muhammad Ibn Abdul Wahab (1703 – 1792), Jamaluddin al-Afghani (1839 – 1897) and Mahammad Abduh (182 – 1905) respectively.^๘

^๖ Imtiyaz Yusuf, “The Southern Thailand Conflict and the Muslim World” **Journal of Muslim Minority Affairs**, Vol. 27, No. 2, August 2007, p.11.

^๗ Imtiyaz Yusuf, “Face of Islam in Southern Thailand” in **East-West Center Washing Working Papers**, No. 7, March 2007, pp. 9-10.

^๘ Ali Rahmema (ed.) *Pioneres of Islamic Revival* (London: Zed Books, 2005). Quoted in Imtiyaz Yusuf. *Loc. cit.* p.11.

To understand briefly its concept and mission, Wahhabism is a Islamic movement that seeks to purify the religious practice of the deviation from teachings of the Prophet Muhammad and his companions. It is a puritanical form of Sunni Islam and is protected in Saudi Arabia and Qatar. The term “*Wahhabism*” is the name of important Muslim scholar named Muhammad bin Abd al-Wahhab (1703 – 1792). Christopher M. Blanchard says that in the eighteenth century, Mahammad bin Saud, founder of the modern-day Saudi dynasty, with Abd Al Wahhab as his partner to begin the process of unifying disparate tribe in the Arabian Peninsula. Since the foundation of modern Saudi Arabia in 1932, there has a close relationship between Saudi ruling family and the Wahhabi religious establishment.^๙ However, the Wahhabi reformism arrived in Thailand since the 1920s and was exiled to Thailand due to its involvement with political security. For the conflict in the South, upon returning to Pattani in 1930, Haji Sulong reformed the Malay-Muslim community mixed together with its Hindu and Buddhist accretions and the practice of the blind following to return to the original sources of Islam. He proposed seven ethno-religious demands to seek the political autonomy, but these demands were not accepted by the then Thai government, and finally the insurgency militants occurred. After the death of Haji Sulong, there were many southernmost Islamic reformists and they modified many means of persuasion as Abdullah Chinarong founded a school named *Rongrian Islam Prasanwit* or the Thai Muslim youth established the Young Muslim Association of Thailand (YMAT) operated by adopting Malay as the language of their communication in the South.^{๑๐}

Some passages of *Berjihad di Patani* have been referred to the energy of religious interpretation for its adoption by the Malay-Muslim youths to depict them felt as marginalized, disenfranchised and alienated from minority, and to challenge the existing and building its own hermeneutic space through the consolidation of the group, ready for sacrifice and become symbolic martyrs. In addition to this, the secretive misinterpretation resulted in the death of 107 Muslim militants, 5 security personnel and 17 arrests. Most apparently, many

^๙ Christopher M. Blanchard, “The Islamic Traditions of Wahhabism and Salafiyya” in **CRS Report for Congress**, Order Code RS21695, January 25, 2006, p. 2.

^{๑๐} Imtiyaz Yusuf, *Loc. cit.*

Muslim militants who were killed in the blockade of the Krue Se mosque with shoot-to-killed orders, engage in mystical religious prayer comprising recitation of sacred verses and drinking of holy water and indoctrinated with the ideological fighting to Allah. The jihadist insurgency of the Malay-Muslim youths has been provoked through the Islamic misinterpretation and especially, the Islamic educational system.

3.2 The Identity of Islamic Educational System

The idol of den is the passion influenced from the educational system. The empowerment to grow the education is the subject to change human opinion, character and behavior since our birth up to the present moment with the accumulation of this idol of the den willy-nilly. For the educational system in the southernmost Thailand, it had its own identity, because of the difference among ethnicity, religion, language, norms and culture. The educational system of Malay-Muslim communities in this region cannot separate from the Islamic teachings, so, all levels of the educational management has significantly concerned with the ethno-religious identity. The attitudes of Malay-Muslims in the far South favors the educational systems of their children by supporting both religious and secular knowledge; especially the compulsory system, of an education for the Islamic religious knowledge is given. Naturally, the Islamic educational institutions in this region brought out Mosque (*Masjid*) playing a bona fide role of informal education for worshipping Allah. By the formal educational management is an inaugurated Islamic kindergarten to be confined to the pre-school level. Two kinds of such a school are the general private schools and the Islamic private schools undertaken the Committee of Private School. They provide both religious and secular subjects, but they are different from *Tadika*. *Tadika* emphasized on mostly religious disciplines. All *Tadikas* are private institutions who teachers are called *Che'gu* or *Ustaz/Ustazah*. Mostly, *Tadika's* teachers are among *pondok's* or Islamic private school's students or the graduates from *pondoks* or Islamic private schools.^{๑๑} The most important institution for Malay-Muslim is *pondoks*. Having systematically accepted, the educational reform policy of government, *pondoks* had been

^{๑๑} *Loc. cit.* p.132.

changed into Islamic private schools proceeded to teach Islamic or Arabic subjects in the morning and secular subjects in the afternoon. *Pondoks* have been advanced by *Tok gurus* who are the school master. For Malay-Muslims, *pondoks* were only not an educational institution for youths but for all regardless of genders and ages. Here, Charan Malureem confirms that faith in religion has been the main force behind the founding of *pondoks* and *Tok guru* was the key person who determined *pondok's* directions.^{๑๒}

So far as the current in the South is concerned, whether *pondoks* might shake in the stream of globalization for gaining wide respect or not, but they have motionless been able to conserve their Malay-Muslim identity. One main reason that parents prefer sending their children to a *pondok* rather than to public schools which are more standardized, is because that the students in public schools might be influenced by Buddhism which might shake their Islamic faith in education system offered by the government schools, was in temple areas.^{๑๓} On one side, the educational administration of *pondoks* was negatively considered by the Thai governments to standardize the modern knowledge of secular courses.

The government had not assessed the standardization of *pondok* education system. Thus, some students who have graduated their *pondok* education mostly might choose to study further in the Arabian countries of the Middle East or some countries of Muslims and some ones assist the teaching affairs at *Tadikas*. Consequently, Muslim student in the South, who have a long time neglected by the governments and not granted any budget or training, were not qualified by the educational status, could not excess to job markets and due to that their poverties and backwards. Their solutions are misused by businessmen who offer them some money and then drag them into violence.

3.3 The Language Identity of Malay-Muslims

The idol of the market place is classified with the language we are familiar with. The role of language leads to change in our own process of thinking. However, the languages in the world have many obstacles and they

^{๑๒} Charan Malureem, et al, **Thai and Muslim World** (Bangkok: Chulalongkorn University, 1995) p. 98.

^{๑๓} Chalermkiat Khunthongpet, **Haji Sulong Abdul kadir**. (Bangkok: Matichon Publishing House, 2004) p. 30.

direct to speak and communicate the mutual understanding. It is summarily the window of the qualification of human mind. In the region of southernmost tri-provinces, the Malay-Muslims have their own language identity. The acquaintance with Malay language or dialect Yawi had been grown together with their childhood. The Malay language is more implying for daily communication, but is symbolized to be able to preserve the real identity of Malay-Muslims.

Most interestingly, the Malay-Muslims in the South are the Islamic Sunni sectarianism, like most of the Muslim world. This means what the Muslim world impacted is bound to the fate together with the Muslim faithfulness in the South, and *vice versa*. Moreover, to be a part of Malay cultural world, Malay-Muslim has closely networked with spanning the northern Malay peninsula to the Indonesian island of Sumatra and the southern Philippines. The Malay language is, thus the mediation of showing allegiance for their ethno-religious identity.

4. Conclusion

The current conflict in the southernmost provinces of Thailand is philosophically rooted into the ethno-religious identity politics. It is the self-consciousness of Malay-Muslim nationalism that has been emerged in more two hundred years evolving the history of turbulent struggle against the Thai governments. The Malays-Muslims feel to the Thai state to be antagonistic and often hostile. They claim the self-justification based upon the radical fundamentalism; the religious and ethnic distinctiveness of the region consisting of Islamic Sunni sectarianism, the educational system, the Malay language and especially their history of Patani sultanate is crucial in any attempt to motivate the southernmost population to join with the perpetrators to acquire the territory of Patani Darussalam. All is proceeded by the newly insurgency militants named “the BRN-Coordinate” to interpret the ethno-religious justifications to legitimize the use of violence for the pursuit of their own objective by the name of Malay-Muslim identity.



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