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Local Traditions as Guardians of Malay Identity among Pattani Muslims in Thailand

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Abstract

Pattani as a region in southern Thailand is often plagued by conflict. This conflict can be traced back to the Anglo-Siamese treaty of 1909 which declared Pattani incorporated into Thailand. Since then, until now, the Pattani community, which is predominantly Muslim, has been at odds with the Thai government. The Muslim community living in Pattani has a different culture from the majority Thai-Buddhist community. The purpose of this paper is to write down the cultures of Pattani Muslims as a form of maintaining identity amidst the pressure of the Thai government. The method used is qualitative with data collection techniques by literature study, reviewing reading sources related to the theme, conducting interviews with 8 Muslims of Thai nationality, and watching YouTube channels that match the theme. The result is that the Pattani Muslim community maintains its traditions during a feud with the Thai government by continuing to use the Malay language, the Islamic education system, Islamic law still applies, marriage dowries, making pitue gates, doing rayo 6, serving special foods such as Ashura porridge, kerabu rice and ketupat, and wearing baju kurung as a symbol of identity. The research contribution is expected to provide insight into the Pattani Muslim community as a minority that maintains traditions as a sign of their identity under the pressure of the Thai government.

Keyword: Culture, Identity, Local Tradition, Muslim, Pattani, Thailand

Abstrak

Pattani sebagai wilayah yang masuk Thailand bagian selatan sering dilanda konflik. Konflik ini dapat ditelusuri sejak perjanjian Anglo-Siam tahun 1909 yang menyatakan Pattani tergabung ke negara Thailand. Sejak saat itu hingga masa kini masyarakat Pattani yang mayoritas beragama Islam berseteru dengan pemerintah Thailand. Masyarakat Muslim yang tinggal di Pattani memiliki kebudayaan yang berbeda dengan mayoritas masyarakat Thai-Buddha. Tujuan tulisan ini adalah untuk menuliskan budaya-budaya yang dimiliki Muslim Pattani sebagai bentuk mempertahankan identitas di tengah tekanan pemerintah Thailand. Metode yang digunakan adalah kualitatif dengan teknik pengumpulan data dengan studi pustaka, menelaah sumber bacaan yang berkaitan dengan tema, melakukan wawancara dengan 8 Muslim berkebangsaan Thailand dan melihat channel YouTube yang

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sesuai dengan tema. Hasilnya masyarakat Muslim Pattani mempertahankan tradisi yang dimiliki di tengah perseteruan dengan pemerintah Thailand dengan tetap menggunakan bahasa Melayu, sistem pendidikan Islam, hukum Islam tetap berlaku, mahar pernikahan, membuat pitue gerbang, melakukan rayo 6, menghadirkan makanan khas seperti bubur asyura, nasi kerabu dan ketupat, serta mengenakan baju kurung sebagai simbol penunjuk identitas. Kontribusi penelitian diharapkan memberi wawasan tentang masyarakat Muslim Pattani sebagai minoritas yang tetap mempertahankan tradisi sebagai penunjuk identitas mereka di bawah tekanan pemerintah Thailand.

Kata Kunci: Identitas, Muslim, Pattani, Thailand, Tradisi Lokal.

Introduction

Thailand is a country located in the Southeast Asian region with the capital named Bangkok. Thailand is a member of ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) or the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and became a pioneer country in the establishment of this organization with 10 other countries. Most religions practiced by the Thai people are Buddhism followed by Islam and Confucianism. Thailand has the nickname as the White Elephant Country and the Land of a Thousand Pagodas. The official language used is Thai which is used officially in education, government, media (newspapers, television, and radio) and in the daily life of the people. Thailand is divided into 77 provinces and is crowned as a country in Southeast Asia that has never been colonized by another nation. The country covers an area of 510,000 square kilometers (Nuereng, 2017).

Thailand is in such a strategic position. Thailand's mainland connects uninterruptedly to the European region, so many travelers from abroad travel overland from Europe to Asia through Thailand. The north and south are bordered by Laos, the north and west by Myanmar, the southeast by Cambodia, and the south by Malaysia. Having a strategic area makes Thailand famous as a center of international activities such as trade, industry, and agriculture. Thailand is also called the granary of Southeast Asia. The Chao Praya and Mekong rivers are water destinations that contribute to Thailand's economy.

In ancient times Thailand was known as "Siam" and changed to "Thai" which means freedom (Sanurdi, 2018). The origin of the name Thailand is often associated with the name of a kingdom that only had a short life, Sukhothai (1238-1438) led by the king of Ayutthaya who was concerned with the process of trade with outside areas, especially Arabia. So, Islam has been in Thailand since the 13th century.

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During his leadership period King Ayutthaya made several Arabs who were Muslims to become ministers (Tajuddin dkk., 2022).

The majority of the Thai population belongs to the Indochinese ethnicity and adheres to Buddhism which has been going on for generations (Hidayat, 2022). Most Thai people who are Treveda Buddhists practice patterns of life and ways of thinking according to what Buddha taught. Thai people believe that life in the world is a journey of cycles and only they themselves can stop rebirth or at least be reborn into someone who is higher than the previous life by keeping the lust of the world. If they are free from reincarnation then they enter into the eternal life of Nirvana (Yuliani & Purwanto, 2022). Islam has the second largest following after Buddhism. Islam is an immigrant religion in Thailand because previously the Thai people already had beliefs in animism and dynamism. The history of the entry of Islam in Thailand has several versions, namely first, it is estimated that in the 10th or 11th century Islam entered Thailand through trade routes. The spread of Islam was carried out by Sufi teachers and traders who came from Arabia and coastal India. Second, in 1028 AD Islam came to Thailand through contact from the Kingdom of Samudra Pasai in Aceh. This idea is reinforced by evidence of the discovery of tombstones inscribed with Arabic letters near Kampung Teluk Cik Munah, Pekan Pahang (Yuliani & Purwanto, 2022).

Muslims living in Thailand are more focused in the southern part of Thailand in Yala, Narattiwat and Pattani. Nowadays, Muslims have also settled in other areas besides these three provinces. Muslims living in northern Thailand are called Thai Muslims and Muslims living in the south are called Malay Muslims. Thai Muslims are classified as Muslims of Iranian, Champa, Indonesian, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and Malay descent Bangkok Muslims reside around Bangkok or in cities such as Ayutthaya, Chachoengsao, Nakhon Pathom, Pathumthani and Samut Prakan (Susetyo, 2009). Bangkok as the capital of Thailand has approximately 300,000 Muslims and has several mosques scattered in the Bangkok area.

Pattani is in the southern part of Thailand. Pattani comes from the word al-Fattani which means wisdom or astute. The Pattani region has given birth to many famous Muslim scholars and scholars. Geographically, Pattani province has beautiful nature such as waterfalls and charming white sand beaches. Pattani people make their living as farmers such as cultivating rubber plantations, fruits, and fishermen.

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Pattani province is famous as a maker of salted fish, headscarves, Muslim clothing, and batik art. The distance between Pattani and Bangkok is about 1,055 km.

The entry of Islam in the Pattani region is related to the entry of Islam in Southeast Asia. Some opinions state that Islam entered Pattani not only from one region but from various regions. Asep Ahmad Hidayat quoting from A. Bangnara explained that Islam came from Arabia, China, Persia and India around the 10th century AD (Rahman & Muliati, 2020). The process of spreading Islam was carried out by trade routes. Apart from these countries, Islam is thought to have come from Aceh through Samudera Pasai. Most of the religion practiced by the people of Pattani is Islam. When viewed from a historical perspective, the Pattani region was not originally incorporated into Thailand as it is today but was incorporated into the Pattani Muslim Kingdom. In 1808 the Kingdom of Siam colonized Pattani and made it its territory (Kabakoran dkk., 2017). The Pattani region is a fertile area for natural resources. Physically, the people of Pattani are more like the Malays than the ethnic Thais.

The southern region of Thailand is quite fertile and rich in natural resources. Various types of wood grow in the forests of southern Thailand. Mining produces metals and tin. In agricultural production, southern Thailand produces sap and rice. Although southern Thailand has such abundant wealth, the economy of its people tends to be quite low compared to other regions. The income of the Pattani people is around Rp. 2,863,000 (Fikri, 2020). This condition is caused by the abundance of natural resources that have not been matched by the adequate quality of local human resources to manage them optimally.

Pattani, which is part of southern Thailand, is a conflict-prone area. Conflict in southern Thailand can be traced back to the Anglo-Siamese agreement of 1909. This agreement contains the separation of the Malay tribe into two communities, namely the Pattani region joining the Kingdom of Siam (Thailand) and other areas joining the Malay community under the British colony and now incorporated into Malaysia (Helmiati, 2016). The tension of the conflict began when the Kingdom of Siam adopted modern Thai nationalism by using the Constitutional Kingdom system. The Thai government forced the majority Muslim community in the southern region to implement the policies initiated by the Kingdom of Siam. This was perceived by

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Pattani Muslims as a way for the Thai government to erode the Malay culture of the Muslim community.

The Thai government implemented the Thaification program. Thaification is a process by which people from different cultures and ethnicities living in the country assimilate into the dominant culture of central Thailand. Thailand is divided into three regions: northern Thailand, central Thailand, and southern Thailand. Northern Thailand and central Thailand are predominantly inhabited by people of Siamese ethnicity and Buddhism while southern Thailand is predominantly inhabited by people of Malay ethnicity and Islam. The establishment of the Thaification program began with a ban on the use of the Malay language and all people living in Thailand must have a sense of nationalism towards the Thai state through the use of the Thai language and customs (Fakhri, 2023).

The Pattani Muslim community was given an unflattering nickname by ethnic Thais, namely the nickname “Khaek” which means immigrant or incoming person in Thai. In general, “Khaek” refers to people who have brown skin such as people from India, Pakistan, and Asia. “Khaek” is then connected to the words lazy, selfish, poor, untrustworthy, stupid, cruel, unfriendly, and fanatic (Arismunandar dkk., 2019). The southern region of Thailand has often experienced turmoil between the Thai government and the Muslim community. In 2004 approximately 200 Muslims were killed by gunfire and bomb explosions from unknown people. Then in April 2004 as many as 30 Muslims were shot by Thai soldiers at the Krue Ze Mosque. After a few months, to be precise in October of the same year, a terrible incident occurred again, namely a total of 74 Muslims were killed during a trip after they protested to the government (Ramadhan, 2021).

As a minority community, Pattani Muslims maintain their cultures as a form of maintaining their existence even though the Thai government is trying to erode the old culture of Pattani Muslims. Muslim communities living in the southern part of Thailand have a diversity of cultures that have many similarities such as those in Malay. The Pattani border area is often nicknamed Changwad Chaiden Pak Thai where this area is inhabited by people who are Muslim. Malay culture and Islam are two very important intensities for the Pattani Muslim community. For the Pattani people, being a Muslim is not enough if it is not accompanied by being a Malay (Ekawati, 2020). The assimilation that is formed forms a Pattani Muslim identity to

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this day. The character and culture possessed by Pattani Muslims are used as a distinction between Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims.

Previous research written by Novia Isti Setiarini (Setiarini, 2021) entitled *Muslim Minorities and Muslim Culture Pattani South Thailand* wrote that the Pattani Muslim community has diversity in the fields of education, references to Muslims and the language used in daily conversation. Then the journal of Rini Rahman and Indah Muliati (Rahman & Muliati, 2020) wrote about education in Pattani Thailand. The education system starts from kindergarten, elementary school, junior high school, and high school. Thus, this journal aims to contribute knowledge about aspects of culture that have not been widely discussed and are an important part of the heritage of the Pattani Muslim community.

So, this journal explains what Pattani's distinctive cultures are as an effort by Pattani Muslims to maintain their identity. This paper is important to show how Pattani Muslims maintain their culture to become a tribal identity and discuss cultures in Pattani that have not been widely discussed in previous journals. As a Muslim minority, the Pattani Muslim community seeks to preserve their culture to maintain their identity amidst pressure from the Thai government that seeks to distance Pattani Muslims from their cultural roots.

Methods

This research uses a qualitative method with a type of library research or literature study. The data source of this research consists of two kinds, namely primary data, and secondary data. Primary data sources are obtained directly from the first source, namely by interview. Data analysis using qualitative data analysis. Data collection techniques in this study by reviewing written sources related to themes such as books, journals and articles and using the interview method. Determination of interview research subjects is carried out by sampling technique procedures, namely how to take part of the population in such a way that even though the sample can generalize or represent the population (Sumargo, 2020). This journal uses a non-probability sampling technique, namely purposive sampling. The use of purposive sampling is intended because researchers can select sample members from the population. Taking part of the population is done by determining the criteria that can answer the theme being studied as much as possible. In this study, the research subjects were eight Muslims of Thai nationality. Secondary data

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was obtained from viewing 2 Youtube channels related to the theme. This research focuses on showing the cultures of Pattani Muslims in southern Thailand.

Result and Discussion

The Thai government and the Pattani Muslim community often experience feuds that cause various damages in several locations and cause the Pattani Muslim community to experience fear of the threat of the Thai government. The conflict experienced by the two camps is inseparable from religious elements (Ramadhan, 2021) Thailand is a country where the majority of the population is Treveda Buddhist and Islam is a minority religion. The Thai government tried to erase the Malay culture in Pattani Muslims by prohibiting the use of Muslim names, languages, and cultures in daily life. These restrictions prompted Pattani Muslims to rebel because for them, Malay identity and Islam are inseparable parts of their lives.

Although the Thai government has imposed various restrictions on Pattani Muslims, they continue to preserve their ancestral culture. These preservation efforts are a way to show their identity that is different from the majority Thai Buddhist population. The ongoing conflict with the government has not been able to dampen the spirit of Pattani Muslims in maintaining and defending their culture. By preserving these cultures, Pattani Muslims not only preserve their ancestral heritage, but also strengthen their identity amidst the challenges of conflict and globalization. This effort symbolizes resistance to cultural assimilation that threatens their existence as a unique community in Thailand. These cultures are as follows:

Use of Malay Language

Pattani people are citizens who live in Thailand but in their daily lives they use Malay more often. Besides Pattani, there are five other provinces that use Malay as the language of communication. Pattani people from adults to the elderly generally use Pattani Malay or Kecek Nanyu more often. As seen in a video on Nana Supaphorn Channel's YouTube channel (Nana Supaphorn Channel, 2021) which includes interviews with several Muslims in Pattani. The first informant interviewed was Bahari who said that he usually uses Malay and at home also uses Malay. The second interviewee, Omar, usually communicates using Kecek Nanyu at home. But

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sometimes he also uses Siamese as his job as a trader makes him interact with many people.



Figure 1. Interviews on Malay language usage with Pattani People (Channel YouTube Nana Supaphorn Channel)

Indonesians listening to their conversations may find it a little difficult but if they speak slowly then there are some similarities between Malaysian Malay or Indonesian (Susetyo, 2009). There are four distinct dialects in the Pattani region namely Yala, Menara, Pattani and parts of Songkla (Kengmalaphi & Muallimin, 2022). The use of Malay in Thailand is a minority category because the Thai government requires its citizens to use Thai (Jehwae, 2018). Nowadays, the Malay language is heavily influenced by the Thai language. The place where Pattani Muslims live also influences their Malay language. When they are in urban areas Pattani Muslims use a mixture of Thai and Malay. As explained by informant CD:

“People who live in the city area use a lot of Thai, Malay but they are few. In the village areas, many uses Malay. As for the young people, they use a mixture of languages because in elementary and junior high schools many teachers teach children to speak Thai.”

Although young people use a mixture of Thai and Malay due to the influence of the surrounding environment and school environment, their grandparents still use Malay. As described by informant SU

“Yes ... if in the village it is still Malay or like the elderly. But now they can speak Thai too”.

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Islamic Education

The Pattani region has many huts that teach the Islamic education system. There are three main points of pondok education in Pattani, namely instilling firmness of faith, dissemination of knowledge and actions to realize Islamic teachings in society. The subject matter in the pondok is based on the reading and understanding of classical books both in Arabic and Jawi. The huts in Pattani are still quite traditional in this modern era, the Thai government has taken part in incorporating general lessons into the huts so that students can carry out broader knowledge. Informant CD provided information regarding education in Pattani as follows

“Children aged 5-12 elementary school Monday-Friday regular school, Saturday-Sunday religious school called TADIKA here they learn tawhid, fiqh, history of the prophet, Arabic language, rumi language how to write, read in Malay and Jawi writing. Usually, one village has one TADIKA. So, it depends on the parents if they want their children to study religion at school but all the children go to TADIKA.”

Informant PP gave an explanation about education in Pattani such as *“Religious schools use Malay”*. Information related to Islamic education in Pattani was added by informant RZ as follows

“Islamic schools in Pattani are usually far from the village and most parents work in the rubber plantation since morning so they cannot take their children, besides that the cost is a little expensive while public schools are close by using a bicycle and the cost is cheap. But nowadays Islamic schools have shuttle services for students so it depends on where parents want to send their children.”

The huts that have changed are called madrasas. The education level is divided into three levels, namely Ibtidaiyah, Mutawassithah, and Tsanawiyah (Rahman & Muliati, 2020). Students who want to continue to higher education based on Islam in Thailand there are Islamic colleges such as the College of Islamic Studies Prine of Songkla University which was established in 1989.

Islamic Law

Islam entered the Pattani region around the 10th or 11th century and Islamic politics became stronger. When the Pattani Sultanate was still in power, Islamic law was enforced, not only in the field of civil law (family) but also in the criminal field. In the 19th century the Pattani Kingdom began to slowly incorporate Siamese law to be enforced in the Islamic-based areas of Thailand. After the Pattani

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region was controlled by Siam, the applicable law still used Islamic law. As described by informant HD

“Of course, Thai law applies to everyone. However, in the three southern border provinces there are special Islamic laws that are applied, namely laws related to marriage and inheritance distribution laws and only for Muslims”.

The law used by Pattani Muslims comes from the fiqh book of Imam Shafi'i. In resolving cases, Pattani Muslims use methods such as oaths, mediation by traditional elders, and formal jurisdiction by local leaders (Sodiqin, 2016). The entry of Siamese law did not have a significant influence in the Islamic region because Muslim communities prefer to settle cases traditionally and in a family manner.

Wedding Dowry

Humans are encouraged to marry and from marriage humans get offspring who will inherit the civilization of the world. A Muslim man who wants to marry a Muslim woman is obliged to give a dowry. Islamic law states that the best prospective wife is the woman with the lightest dowry. The value of the dowry can be agreed upon by each of the two parties, on the one hand not burdening the prospective husband and on the other hand not demeaning the prospective wife's dignity (appropriate). In Pattani marriages, the groom gives a dowry to his bride-to-be. The dowry is seen from the social status of the prospective wife, the more she has a high position/title, the greater the value of the dowry that must be given. Even if the prospective wife wants to accept any dowry given, sometimes the parents of the prospective wife do not want to accept the dowry of the prospective husband. So that the prospective husband must try to fulfill the dowry request from the parents of the prospective wife. So in this case the Pattani Muslim community considers more environmental (cultural) factors (Maha dkk., 2017). As described by informant NJ

“Mostly it is from the bride's parents who want the dowry to be adjusted to their child's education, such as if the girl goes to college to graduate level, the dowry is high. In addition, the groom's parents will feel uncomfortable if they give a small dowry while the bride's education is high because in Thailand there is a standard for giving dowry.”

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Then informant CD added information related to the dowry that the groom must give to the bride

“Some dowries are high and some dowries are not high. I think the dowry used to be less than 100,000 baths but now 100,000 baths is just the standard for a wedding dowry. Maybe the high dowry is because many women now go to university, have jobs, compared to women in the past who did not go to university.”

Pitu Gerbae

Ramadan is a month that Muslims are eagerly awaiting. This month Muslims are required to fast and there are other worship services such as tarawih prayers. The people of Pattani do not forget to welcome the arrival of Ramadan by making a Gate or Pitu Gerbae, according to the Pattani Malay dialect, is a distinctive arch made from a combination of rafters and dozens of bamboo sticks split into small sizes. There are poles that can reach a height of 10 meters on the right and left sides. At first glance, it resembles the gates in Indonesia and is only distinguished by the material from which it is made. Pitu Gerbae is usually placed at the mouth of the road or in front of the entrance to the village. As explained by informant HD

“Maybe every village but not all like my village does not exist. Maybe almost in every sub-district. Pitu Gerbae is a tradition passed down from generation to generation and has long been practiced to show the identity and cultural arts of the region and celebrate the festival of Eid al-Fitr together. Pitu Gerbae is still seen being made every year”

The top of the Pitu Gerbae, which has a frame like a connector between the poles, is usually shaped like the silhouette of the dome of a mosque and some have designed it like an open Qur'an. Pitu Gerbae work is carried out before the fasting month arrives so as not to disturb worship activities during Ramadan. Final work such as colorful painting, writing happy holidays, and decorated with twinkling lights is done in the early days of fasting. The residents were enthusiastic to immortalize Pitu Gerbae by taking pictures and uploading them on social media. As told by informant CD,

“During Ramadan in the three regions there is a tradition of making pitu gates, not all villages used to make them but 3-4 years ago there was support from local authorities and there was an assessment and selection of which gates could win 1, 2, 3. Each village has a different concept and design every year”.

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Like the one on Che Firdaus Che's YouTube channel (Che Firdaus Che, 2024) which shows a video about the Nasa Mayo Pattani Gate on April 12, 2024. The video shows the majesty of the Nasa Mayo Gate which attracts the attention of the public to witness it firsthand. The making process took about two months. The predominance of black and yellow colors gives the structure an epic touch. Each section is decorated with carvings that enhance the beauty of the gate. In one part of the Gate, there is a drum that is protected by a building with roof tiles to protect from direct sunlight or rain. In the center of the gate, there is beautifully carved Arabic calligraphy. The creation of this gate was a collaboration of villagers who divided their tasks.



Figure 2. Appearance of the Gate (Channel YouTube Che Firdaus Che)

Rayo 6

The tradition of homecoming is practiced by people in many parts of the world. Countries such as China, Korea, Malaysia, Russia, Indonesia and not to forget the country that has the nickname of the White Elephant Country. According to Kuntowijoyo, the tradition of homecoming provides a literal lesson as a process of returning to the silence of the heart, peace, practice, and social care (Iriyanto, 2012). Thai Muslims as a minority are still enthusiastic about celebrating Eid al-Fitr. After the Eid prayer, people shake hands with parents, neighbors, or relatives to wash away sins. The excitement is not during Eid but after Rayo 6 or after the six-day Shawwal fast. It is in Rayo 6 that Thai Muslims celebrate the festivities of Eid al-Fitr by eating special holiday foods, making grave pilgrimages, and going home to their hometowns. As explained by informant RZ

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“Rayo 6 is not used as a holiday in Thailand but for school children who go to public schools, parents can ask permission if their children go to boarding school, usually a week off. Rayo 6 is held by fasting the sunnah of Shawwal then returning to the village to attend events or pilgrimage to the graves of ancestors. After that there must be a meal together”

Then informant HD added information related to Rayo 6 carried out by Muslims in Pattani:

“Rayo 6 is not a public holiday in Thailand, it is only allowed for the three regions of the three provinces on the southern border to stop working for 1 day but there are still some government work units that continue to operate. For other regions, it is still working but there are some work units that allow their Muslim employees to attend Eid prayers and then return to work or give 1 day permission to go home.”

Kerabu Rice

Pattani as the southern region of Thailand has abundant wealth and natural resources. Pattani's specialties are the creations of the people in processing their natural resources. Pattani's traditional Muslim food is similar to that of the Malay people in Kelantan such as nasi kerabu, kasi dagang, ayam golek, satay, pulut sambal, ketupat dakap, and tepung apam (Verlag, 1995). Every Muslim must be selective in choosing a food or beverage menu because Islam has several restrictions regarding this matter, especially in areas that are predominantly inhabited by non-Muslims. Pattani is known as the origin of kerabu rice or khao yam in Thai.

Kerabu rice looks different from other processed dishes, the difference can be seen from the striking blue color of the rice. The blue color is produced from the petals of the bayang flower which is used as a natural dye. Telang flowers originated in South America and then spread to Southeast Asia in the 19th century. This plant grows wild in yards or planted in gardens. In addition to blue kerabu rice from telang flowers, there are other color variations, namely yellow kerabu rice from turmeric, black kerabu rice from herb leaves. As explained by informant HD

“Kerabu rice is usually blue from telang flowers to give the rice a natural color so that it gives a distinctive and attractive appearance. There is also colorless kerabu rice depending on personal preference.”

Nasi kerabu is served with side dishes such as fried chicken, splash chicken, eggs, and chicken curry. Various vegetables complement the dish such as cabbage, bean sprouts and tomatoes. Nasi kerabu is usually eaten by Pattani Muslims during breakfast time. As explained by informant RZ

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“Eating kerabu rice can be done every day, no need to wait for certain times. Usually, kerabu rice is eaten in the morning and the addition of color to the kerabu rice can increase its price if sold.”

Ashura Porridge

Pattani Muslims celebrate the month of Ashura by holding an Ashura porridge-making competition in each district. The making of shura porridge is not only on the 10th of Muharram but can also be done on other dates while still in the month of Muharram. As said by informant HC

“Yes, every year they make Ashura porridge and distribute it to the community. “. Ashura porridge is cooked together with other neighbors. According to informant RC “they usually cook the Ashura porridge at the mosque, in the field, or at school, usually there is a village that makes the Ashura porridge with the help of Buddhists, but most of them are Muslims depending on the area”.

Ashura porridge is cooked together with other neighbors. To make bubur asyura, ingredients such as rice, coconut milk, lemongrass, galangal, shallots, peanuts, pumpkin, unripe bananas, fried coconut, beef, cassava, sugar, salt, and palm sugar are needed (Panae dkk., 2021). The bubur asyura can be eaten with other dishes such as fried vermicelli or fried coconut mixed with lemongrass, sugar, and shallots. The process of making bubur asyura requires extra time and energy so it is more fun if it is cooked together, besides that it also fosters a sense of brotherhood and cooperation between residents. It takes about 6-7 hours to stir the ashura porridge until it is cooked. The community takes turns in the process of stirring the ashura porridge. While the parents cook the bubur ashura, the children wait by cleaning the coconut shells which will later be used as a container for the bubur ashura. The tradition of making bubur asyura provides a positive value in preserving ancestral culture and becomes a meeting place between residents.

Baju Kurung

Baju kurung is a traditional dress that can be found in countries such as Brunei Darussalam, Indonesia, Malaysia and southern Thailand. Initially, baju kurung was only worn during Malay ceremonial days, as said by informant RC

“In Pattani, we mostly wear baju kurung during Eid al-Fitr, a typical Pattani outfit.”

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But over time baju kurung can now be worn every day such as going to the market or traveling. As informant RZ explained

“Especially for men, wearing baju kurung can be for every day or for praying. If you wear baju kurung that is added with songket or cloth, usually when there is an event. And currently when Eid al-Fitr usually one village wears baju kurung in the same color to show the unity of Pattani Muslims, one Malay, one village. Baju kurung was lost in the past, but thanks to globalization, young people have studied abroad to relearn baju kurung and now it is their daily attire. In fact, women wear baju kurung Teluk Belanga to the market, cafes and lectures.”

The characteristic of baju kurung is the loose form of clothing on the abdomen, arms, and chest (Setiarini, 2021) The loose model of baju kurung aims to make the wearer comfortable and free to move. Usually, the material used comes from silk, chiffon, cotton or songket fabrics. Baju kurung made from songket gives a glamorous look. Baju kurung is one of the clothes that has no buttons on the front and no collar. Wearing baju kurung is an attempt to display the identity of the Pattani Muslims who are often in a volatile region.

Ketupat

Celebrating Eid al-Fitr is incomplete without ketupat. As a Muslim community, Pattani residents cook ketupat to be used as a meal on the feast day. Ketupat is a dish made from rice wrapped in a woven coconut leaf sheath that is either yellow or green (janur). The Pattani Muslim community cooks ketupat like the one in Indonesia but has a slight difference as said by informant RC *“But our ketupat in Pattani is also different from the one in Indonesia, in Pattani we have a triangle instead of a quadrilateral”*.

According to informant RZ in Pattani there are three kinds of ketupat served during the holidays, namely salty ketupat, sweet ketupat and tasteless ketupat as he explained

“It depends on the region how you want to cook ketupat. In my house, I usually eat sweet ketupat so I don't need to add other preparations because I have added coconut milk, there is also salty ketupat which is usually eaten with curry or rendang, there is also plain ketupat and eaten with chili sauce mixed with fried chicken or shrimp and some are added with sweetened condensed milk.”

The research results are presented below in tabular form. This table shows the various aspects of culture and tradition that the Pattani Muslim community maintains to maintain their identity amidst the conflict with the Thai government.

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Table 2. The Various Aspects of Culture and Tradition

Aspect	Description
Language	Using Malay amidst the dominance of Thai
Education	Maintain Islamic-based education to learn
Islamic Law	People still apply Islamic law in their daily lives, especially in matters of marriage and inheritance.
Wedding Dowry	Practicing the Islamic tradition of giving dowry as a condition in marriage.
Pitue Gerbae	A unique tradition carried out to welcome the holy month of Ramadan.
Rayo 6	Celebrating the rayo 6 tradition of visiting relatives, making pilgrimages to graves, and keeping in touch.
Traditional Food	Making typical dishes such as kerabu rice, ketupat and Ashura porridge which symbolize traditional culinary.
Baju Kurung	Wearing baju kurung as daily clothing and on certain occasions to show identity.

The results show that the Pattani Muslim community maintains traditions that serve as an important means of asserting their cultural and religious identity, especially during a long-standing feud between the Pattani Muslim community and the Thai government. Although the intensity of conflict in Pattani today is not as great as in the past, the dynamics of tension are still ongoing, making the preservation of traditions a symbol of resistance and the existence of the Malay-Muslim community in the region.

The Thafication program promoted by the Thai government has an impact on the lives of the Pattani Muslim community. The Thai government requires all people living in the country to speak Thai and be Buddhist. The Thai government's policy of assimilating Thai culture is a real program to erase the Malay culture inherent in Pattani Muslims (Ekawati, 2020) With the enactment of Thafication, local traditions that have been inherited from the ancestors of the Pattani Muslim community are replaced with Thai culture. This policy has caused psychological impact and fear from the Pattani Muslim community.

People who inhabit an area basically cannot be separated from the values of tradition and culture that have been passed down between generations. According to Geertz in (Basyari, 2014) local wisdom is an entity that determines the dignity of its community. If a community's local traditions are replaced by outside traditions, they will lose the identity and identity that has characterized the community. As a result, the community risks forgetting their cultural roots and ancestral origins, which should be an important foundation in shaping their values and lives.

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The traditions of the Pattani Muslim community are diverse, as evidenced by the various cultural practices that are still practiced today, ranging from the Malay language, Islamic education, to religious rituals and celebrations. This diversity reflects the community's persistent efforts to maintain their cultural identity amidst the pressure of assimilation applied by the Thai government. Maintaining these traditions is not just about preserving ancestral heritage, but also a form of symbolic resistance and conveying a clear message that their identity cannot be erased.

Pattani Muslims use Malay language in their daily communication. This is evidence that Malay is used as a marker of the Pattani Malay tribe amidst the dominance of Thai as the national language in the country of Thailand. Malay language is still used in communicating showing a form of resistance to the Thai government which prohibits the use of Malay language. This research is in line with (Setiarini, 2021) which explains that most of the Malay Muslim community uses the Malay language (Kecek Nanyu). However, nowadays the younger generation has started to communicate using a mixed language between Thai and Malay which reflects the improved relationship and more harmonious interaction between the two ethnic groups.

According to informants, the impact of globalization has brought significant changes, especially for those who live in cities. The younger generation of Pattani Muslims use mixed languages in communication, especially in education and work. If this habit continues, it may result in the loss of their ability to speak Malay. Therefore, the role of Islamic-based schools and parents is very important to provide maximum efforts so that the younger generation can still communicate in Malay, as part of preserving their culture and identity.

Islamic-based educational facilities are formed as the initial foundation for a child to understand and strengthen their Islamic identity. Education plays an important role in maintaining morality and forming a smart generation. Islamic education is expected to provide guidance and morals to purify the soul. Achieving the degree of human godliness by paying attention to spiritual, emotional, social and intellectual aspects (Muhaini dkk., 2023). In Pattani, every Muslim child attends TADIKA which focuses on learning Islam. As in other literature (Hilmin dkk., 2023) the learning process involves studying the Qur'an, tafsir, principles of jurisprudence, fiqh, grammar and tawhid. Although many children attend public schools under the

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auspices of the Thai government children in Pattani attend TADIKA classes on weekends, namely Saturday and Sunday. With the provision of Islamic knowledge children are not only able to maintain their faith, but also grow into individuals who respect other religions. Considering that Islam is a minority religion in Thailand.

The younger generation of Pattani Muslims consistently receive Islamic-based education as an effort to strengthen their faith while maintaining the Malay language as the main means of communication. In the era of globalization, more and more Pattani Muslim young men and women are continuing their studies abroad, especially in Indonesia to broaden their horizons and deepen their religious and academic knowledge.

Islamic law is the main guideline for Pattani Muslims in living their social life. This law covers various aspects, such as inheritance distribution, civil cases, criminal cases, and laws related to marriage. As in the journal (Sodiqin, 2016) since the beginning, the Pattani region and its surroundings have followed the rule of law, which is Islamic law. All legal matters are resolved with Islamic legal norms derived from the Shafi'ah fiqh book. In terms of marriage, a man who wants to propose to a woman is required to provide a dowry. The amount of dowry is determined based on the agreement of both parties by considering the position of women in society. This tradition aims to honor women, maintain justice, and strengthen the bond in marriage according to Islamic law. As stated by the informant, the younger generation of Pattani Muslims views that the dowry given in the present and the past has changed. This change is since many Pattani Muslim women are now educated at the university level and this has caused the value of the dowry to be higher than in the past. In addition, the parents of the male party will feel uncomfortable if their son gives a small dowry while the female party is highly educated.

The Pattani people who are predominantly Muslim and live during conflict with the Thai government still show their Malay identity through various cultural and religious traditions. In line with a study by (McCargo, 2015) which shows that in conflict situations religious celebration activities and traditional rituals often become spaces to strengthen solidarity. One such tradition is the making of Pitue Gerbang which is held annually in welcoming the holy month of Ramadan as an effort to pass on ancestral culture. In addition, they also celebrate Rayo 6 which

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takes place on the day a week after Eid. This tradition is an important moment to return to the hometown to stay in touch, gather with family, visit graves, and enjoy special dishes with other family members. For the Pattani Muslim community, the holy month of Ramadan is not only a month of worship, but also a symbol of victory and steadfastness of faith amidst various pressures and terror from the government.

As a young generation that is literate in globalization and proficient in social media, Pattani Muslim youths use platforms such as YouTube to show the festive atmosphere of Eid al-Fitr and display the beauty of Pitue Gerbae. Through social media, they hope that outsiders can see the traditions of Pattani Muslims, especially in celebrating the happiness of Eid al-Fitr and the beauty of the magnificent Pitue Gerbae building as a symbol of celebration to welcome the holy month of Ramadan and Eid al-Fitr. During Rayo 6 celebrations, young people who work or study outside the region take this opportunity to visit parents in their hometowns and attend gatherings as a means of friendship between fellow Muslims.

Pattani Muslims have specialties that reflect their rich culture such as kerabu rice and ketupat. Kerabu rice, which is usually served in the morning, has an attractive appearance with its distinctive blue color. Meanwhile, ketupat is a special dish on Eid al-Fitr with a variety of flavors such as sweet, tasteless, and salty. This culinary diversity not only reflects the distinctive characteristics of the Pattani people, but is also part of a rich and unique cultural heritage. As (M.Th, 2024) when humans choose what to eat, that choice is related to geographical location, history, religion, ethnicity or social status.

The younger generation of Pattani Muslims participate in preserving Islamic celebrations by making bubur asyura, which according to informants is usually made in groups in the neighborhood or school. Although bubur asyura is not native to Pattani, it still symbolizes their identity as Muslims. In addition, the ketupat food that is usually served during Eid al-Fitr celebrations is also an important part of maintaining a rich culinary tradition as a form of celebration and togetherness among the Pattani people.

The identity of a tribe can often be recognized through its traditional dress. Traditional clothing contains cultural values that prevail in society. Traditional clothing is able to convey a message or image to the people who see it (Firliyana dkk., 2023). For Pattani Muslims, baju kurung is a symbol of Malay and Islamic

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culture that was once almost lost due to the Thai government's pressure on Muslims in the southern region. However, globalization has brought positive changes, with the younger generation leaving the region to gain knowledge and relearn their cultural heritage, including baju kurung. Today, Pattani Muslims proudly wear baju kurung in their daily lives to preserve their cultural identity and pride.

The ongoing conflict in Pattani between the Muslim community and the Thai government is not only a political issue but also extends to aspects of cultural and religious identity. Political pressures such as assimilation policies and the dominance of Thai culture encourage Pattani Muslim communities to further strengthen the preservation of traditions as a form of resistance and self-defense against outside cultures. During the conflict, the Pattani people see using the Malay language, receiving Islamic-based education, practicing Islamic law, marriage dowries, traditional rituals such as pitue gerbae or rayo 6, making various kinds of special dishes and wearing baju kurung to maintain their identity. This preservation is not only a tool to strengthen solidarity but also a symbol of peaceful resistance to the homogenization policy imposed by the Thai government.

Conclusion

Thailand as a country located in Southeast Asia has a majority Buddhist society followed by Islam which is focused in the southern region. Islam is the majority religion in the Pattani region which is part of southern Thailand. Despite the conflict, the Pattani Muslim community continues to preserve the culture of their ancestors. The Malay nuanced culture is preserved by the Pattani people as a way to maintain their identity which is often in conflict with the Thai government. The Pattani Muslim community as a minority amidst the onslaught of the Buddhist majority still shows their culture wrapped in typical Islamic traditions such as the use of the Malay language, the Islamic education system, Islamic law that is still enforced, marriage dowries, making pitue garbae, carrying out rayo 6, serving kerabu rice, asyura porridge and ketupat and wearing baju kurung. These cultures are demonstrated by the Pattani people in their daily lives.

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