

Primary data was gathered directly from key informants (namely, the Thai-Mons in Ban Pong) by using different data collecting techniques. Four techniques had been applied in this study. The main tool was standardised questionnaire. Moreover, reconnaissance survey, in-dept interview, and field observation were also used for supplementary information. The fieldwork lasted for around one month, from late June to the end of July 2006. The questionnaire was conducted with the Thai-Mon people with the total amount of 103 individuals in Kung Phayom, Ban Muang, and Nakhorn Chum communities, Ban Pong, Ratchaburi, Thailand. The focus groups were divided into two major sections: the young generation (under the age of 20) in comparison with the other older generations (20-29, 30-39, 40-49, 50-59, 60-69, and 70+). The findings were measured in calculating the percentage, presented in single table with the analysis of the data.

Secondary data was gathered from various sources. For instance, facts and figures about the study area were collected primarily from Ban Pong Administrative Office. An overview of the situation was given through former researches on Mons in Ban Pong and in Mae Klong River, for example, researches by Oshima (1993); Boobpha (1996); and Sirirath, Sathian & Nipa (1999). Supplementary information was collected from the Mon periodicals (*The Sound of Raman*), internet websites, the Mon language textbooks, and so on.

In terms of data processing and analysis, quantitative analysis through the application of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) was employed. Descriptive statistics specifically for percentage were used to describe the respondents' answers in each topic. Moreover, qualitative statement technique was applied for the analytical description of the findings.

### **The Ethnic Myth of the Mon Nation**

Narrating the ethnic myth is one of the ultimate missions of the ethnic or nationalist movements. In order to claim for the real existence of their community, the very first and important task of the nationalists is to trace their community's origin, and hence locate it in time and in relation to other relevant communities. Since the ethnic Mons are claimed to be one of the oldest indigenous groups in Southeast Asia, history is a very fundamental source that the Mon nationalists have applied to fulfil their nationalist aspirations. In this respect, the Mon history could be characterised as 'myth-history'. To some extent, its history lesson is not to be taken as an accurate account of the past but rather as an exercise of legitimation where (ethnic) identity and values are celebrated.<sup>3</sup>

Based on the Mon Historical Record (translated and edited by Phra Maha Chuang Oucharoen, n.d), the myth-history of the Mon ethnicity began during the occupation of the Mons in South India. The Mon glorious cities included "Sudhammavati" or "Thaton", and "Pegu" or "Hamsawati". In this respect, it should

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<sup>3</sup> The concept of 'myth-history' has been applied from David Mc Crone. (1998). "Chapter 2: Tribe, Place and Identity: Ethnicity and Nationalism", in *The Sociology of Nationalism*. London: Routledge, 51.

be noted that the Mon myth-history always includes supernatural and heroic figures, and with the link to Buddhism as a way to romanticise its ethnic myth.

The other important element of the ethnic myth that the nationalists have applied is **the myth of decline**. The myth of decline explains “how the community lost its anchor in a living tradition, how the old values became ossified and meaningless, and how, as a result, common sentiments and beliefs faded to give way to rampant individualism and the triumph of partisan interests over collective ideals and communal solidarity” (Smith, 1999: 67). Coincided with the myth of decline is **the myth of location and migration**. The myth of location and migration helps to clarify where an ethnic group came from and the reasons why its collective people have relocated to the present place. As mentioned by Smith (1999), space gives a necessary framework of self-identification, and assumes special importance where claims to ‘territory’ are being pressed. The myth of migration thus gives reference to the myth of ancestry where there is “the symbolic kinship link between all members of the present generation of the community, and between this generation and all its forebears, down to the common ancestor” (Smith, 1999: 64).

The Mon nationalists highlight their myth of decline as the major reason for the stateless situation of contemporary Mon people. Moreover, the Mon nationalists strongly emphasise their constant immigrations in the past mainly as a result of the Burmese invasion. Thus, it is the task of the contemporary Mon people to reunite the fragments of their brotherhood and re-establish the “Monland”. In this context, it is also important to note that these immigrations of Mons into Siamese territory coincided with the active intercourse between the two countries, namely Burma and Siam. The wartime between these two countries consequently brought large amount of Mons to flee to Siam for refuge (Halliday, 1917/1986: 8).

The other aspect of historical ethno-symbolism that the Mon nationalists have applied is **demarcating the territory of a nation**. It is among the most effective ways that a national identity is strengthened and sustained. Every single map reveals the nation’s ‘property space’ or sovereignty in which the power order is implicit but unsurprisingly clear (Mc Crone, 1998). Thus, a map is the most concrete, and the seemingly natural and stable feature of a nation (Thongchai, 1994). It is highlighted that territorial boundary tends to shift with the political context of which among the most important features are the size and significance of the boundary that helps to shape the level of group identity that emerges as most salient (Horowitz, 1985).

In history, the “Monland” covered three regions stretching over the whole of lower Burma, namely Tenasserim, Pegu and Irrawaddy. Today the “Monland” (or the Mon State) is a figment of ambiguity. It does not exist on any official maps, but only in patches where the New Mon State Party (NMSP) and its military wing the Mon National Liberation Army (MNLA) are located. The present day Mon State was established in 1974. It covers an area of 12,000 square kilometres, extending from the Gulf of Martaban to the Thai border, and including many small islands along 566 kilometres of coastline.<sup>4</sup> It is divided into three regions: Northern, Central and

<sup>4</sup> Unrepresented Nations and Peoples Organization (UNPO). (1996). *Mon*. ([http://www.unpo.org/member\\_profile.php?id=39](http://www.unpo.org/member_profile.php?id=39)). [Downloaded on April 22, 2007] & Ashley South. (2003). *Mon Nationalism and Civil War in Burma*. New York: Routledge, 7.

Southern regions. With regards to the contemporary Thai-Mons in Thailand, they are descendants of political refugees and others who entered Thailand from their homeland in the South of Burma. According to the study of Bauer, the size of the Mon populations in both Burma and Thailand seems to be a debatable figure. The estimated number of the contemporary Mon population in Thailand ranges between 60,000-200,000 people, depending partly on whether language use is considered a key criterion. Bauer calculates that the number of Mon speakers is unlikely to exceed 60-80,000 people (Christian Bauer, quoted in South, 2003: 20). In fact, no one knows exactly how many Mons live in Thailand today, because the Mon descendents are all Thai citizens and are not distinguished legally from the Thais in any possible way. Moreover, since much assimilation has occurred, it would be difficult to decide who is Mon and who is not (Foster, 1986). As commented by Seidenfaden, "It seems therefore sure that one day the Mon will be completely absorbed by the Thai" (1958: 116-7, quoted in Smithies, 1986: 34).

**The Findings of the Study Area:** As proposed by the ethno-symbolists, one of the major elements that gives nationalism its power are the myths and memories of ethnic origins which can be rediscovered and reinterpreted by modern nationalist intelligentsias and presented to the participants (Smith, 1999). The assumption for this study is that a sense of ethnic identity tends to increase when members of the ethnic groups have significant shares of their *ethno-history*. On the contrary, the sense of ethnic identity tends to decrease when *ethno-history* is seen as less important. In this context, *ethno-history* refers to "the ethnic members' memories and understanding of their communal past or pasts, rather than any more *objective* and dispassionate analysis by professional historians" (Smith, 1998: 16).

According to the study, the Thai-Mon people tended to have no clue about the number of their population, and have superficial knowledge about their *ethno-history*. The historical evidences they provided varied, but were generally of what has been written by both the Thai and Mon sides. This implies that the myth-history of an ethnic group is not to be taken as a history lesson in the sense that it is an accurate story of the past, but is rather the way to celebrate ethnic identity and values, and therefore integrate members of the group (applied from Mc Crone's theory, 1998). Similarly, territoriality plays a significant role in integrating people of the nation. In this context, territoriality seems to be weakened when it lacks a clear picture of its own territory (or an official map). This proves that the myth-history and the territoriality of the nation are always multi-stranded and contested, which requires the continuous process of reinterpretation of national identities (applied from Smith's theory, 1998). With this reason, there is the possibility for changes in perceptions of ethnic identity of the group members in certain places and in different periods of time.<sup>5</sup>

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<sup>5</sup> Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan's *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

### **The Invention of the Mon National Symbols**

**Mon Language:** Even though language use is not the sole criterion of ethnic identification, it is one of the important cultural aspects which help to construct and sustain an ethnic community. Bash (1979) suggests that language is of great importance for the maintenance, the coherence, and especially the integrity of any given social construction of reality.

Language is very fundamental to the definition of the Mon ethnic identity. As proposed by Guillion (1999: 3), the term "Mon" itself represents the "Mon culture". Guillion (1999) further explains that in spoken Mon, the elegant expression in writing and literature for "the Mon language" is *bhāsā man*. This expression, derived in part from the Pali *bhāsaka*, "speech," also means "Mon culture". The Mon language itself asserts that Mon culture and Mon language are inseparable. With this reason, when speaking of Mons, one of the primary key identifications is the Mon language.

All dialects of Mon, whether in Thailand or Burma, are mutually intelligible. Nonetheless, some vocabularies and the expressions of the Mon language used in Thailand are distinct from those used by the Mon language in Burma. Since the Thai-Mon people have had extensive interactions with the Thai, Chinese, Lao and Khmer people, they have adopted some words and expressions from these ethnic groups. On the contrary, the Mon language in Burma might possibly be influenced by Burmese, Indian, English and other ethnic groups in Burma. However, the Mons from both sides of the countries can communicate and understand each other (Boobpha, 1996: 98). The other issue concerning the language use of the Mon people is bilingualism, which has been widespread in both Thailand and Burma for a long time. In Thailand during Halliday's research time (1922: 78, quoted in Foster, 1982), the Mon language had already absorbed significant Thai vocabulary through a process that possibly required a long period of bilingualism. According to Foster (1982), in the modern times, the restricted use of the ancient Mon tongue has had an important effect on the amount of people identifying themselves as 'Mon'. This includes an estimate number of one-and-a-half million people, of which around five percent are in Thailand. The figure corresponds approximately with the number of Mon descendants who do not speak the language. The lack of the promotion of a written language could affect the spoken language, since people generally seem to think a language that is not written as a second-class language. In Thailand, the Mon written language is scarcely taught, and seemingly in the effort to teach the alphabet which makes Mon as a written language virtually dead (Foster, 1982).

**Buddhism as the Major and Only Religion:** According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, religion has provided the most intense energy for many pre-modern ethnic communities or *ethnies*. This is particularly significant in those *ethnies* which have evolved a myth of ethnic election (Hutchinson & Smith (eds.), 1996: 187). As suggested by Smith (1996), "To be chosen is to be placed under moral obligations. One is chosen on condition that one observes certain moral, ritual and legal codes, and for only as long as one continues to do so. The privilege of election is accorded only to those who are sanctified, whose life-style is an expression of sacred values" (190). In this respect, religion strengthens the sense of ethnic identity by making ethnicity seen as a primordial phenomenon which is ineffable and obligatory.

The link between religion and ethnic myth of election is applicable to the case of ethnic Mons. The Mon myth-history tends to make close connection between Buddhism and the Mon people. As mentioned in the Mon myth-history, the ancient Mon city of Pegu was believed to be built due to the Buddha's prediction. There are also the records of the important Mon Buddhists in history. For example, the Mon merchants, Sumala and Wimala, brought eight hairs of the Buddha to keep in Mutao Stupa in Burma. There was also a narrative of the Mon monks, Sona Thera and Uttara Thera, who were the disciples of the Buddha. Moreover, Shwedagon Stupa (in Rangoon) has been claimed to be built by the Mons. In Thailand, the Mons have long gained a reputation for their religious ritual purity. This could possibly be since the Buddhist reforms in Siam in the 1820s and 1830s by the future King Monkut (King Rama IV) later became the basis of Thammayutnikai which has been praised for its strict monastic discipline and ordination procedure (Prince Dhani, 1965: 30-32, quoted in Foster, 1982). Moreover, the migration of the Mon people also brought a large number of Mon monks and novices. The Mon migrants built many Mon temples which are not only the places to teach Buddhism and perform religious rituals, but also the great place for the Mon Studies. There are various resources such as the Mon scripts, paintings on the walls, and so on. These are regarded as valuable heritages, especially for the Mon activists and nationalists, to search for the national resources.

**The Symbolism of the Mon Nationhood:** According to Thongchai (1994), the symbolism of nationhood has its own power. It is generally the conjugation of several discourses, each of which is effective in itself, and hence "makes the symbol of nationhood a rich and potent icon" (Thongchai, 1994: 171). However, "A code or a symbol, like the word "border" or the map of a nation, does not necessarily signify the original signified. It can be generative, producing many more related meanings" (Thongchai, 1994: 170-171). This argument is supported by the findings of Anthony Cohen (1996, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998). According to his theory, flags and other national symbols have the power to provide the members of the nation with the means by which to perceive. The assumption that under normal circumstances they can make people think in specifiable ways is nevertheless flawed. Despite its potential to guide misleading perception, the hegemony of the symbolism of nationhood considerably strengthens and unites the people of the nation.

The Mon national flag, national anthem, and national day are relatively new inventions. They are invented as to support the Mon Nationalist Movement which is based mainly in Burma yet influences a certain amount of Thai-Mons in Thailand. Even though these aspects seem not to be relevant for the case of Thai-Mons in Thailand, it shows how the Mon people apply the uses of symbols to create the sense of ethnic identity which not only unites the people of the same ethnic origin but also strengthens their ethnic identity by differentiating themselves from other ethnic groups.

It is notable that religion and history play significant roles in the creation of the Mon national symbols. For instance, the present day Mon national flag can trace its origin since 1958 when the New Mon State Party (NMSP) was established by Nai Shwe Kyin. The flag has a red colour, with the picture of a yellow sacred Sheldrake (this relates to the legend of the Mon Kingdom, symbolising the two swans that the Buddha saw when he reached the Pegu or Hamsawati) flying towards a light-blue star. The red colour refers to courage and bravery; the yellow colour refers to glory and

nobility; and the blue colour refers to truth. The light-blue star signifies the guiding Pole Star or the symbol of the Mon conviction. The Mon national anthem was created by the Mons in Burma in 1948, which marks the beginning of the rebellion against the Burmese government. Several years later, the Mon national anthem was recorded in Thailand by the Thai-Raman Association who lived near Bangkok. The last aspect of the Mon national symbol – The Mon National Day – is celebrated once every year during the period of the waning moon of the third lunar month (or in February). This was in commemoration of King Samala and King Wimala, the founders of “Hamsawati” or “Pegu”. The Mon national Day was first adopted by the United Mon Association (UMA) founded by U Po Cho. It was celebrated in Moulmein in 1948, after Burma gained independence. The Mon National Day was first performed in Thailand at Ramkhamhang University in 1993. Nowadays, it has been celebrated by the Mon descendants from all over the world, such as Britain, Canada, Norway, Sri Lanka, Australia and Malaysia.<sup>6</sup>

**The Findings of the Study Area:** According to the historical ethno-symbolic approach, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depends largely on history and culture. There is a relationship between history and culture which “forms integral parts of the fabric of popular visions, and of the social structures and processes in which the designated populations are embedded and through which their elites must forge their strategies” (Kedourie, 1971: Introduction; Hobsbawm & Ranger, 1983: Introduction & ch. 7, quoted in Smith, 1998: 9). Throughout the times, historical and cultural heritages have been rediscovered, recreated and presented as symbols of nationhood, which not only help to integrate people of its community but also differentiate themselves from the outsiders. Here, the effectiveness of symbolism signifies the power and durability of ethnic or nationalist movements.

The questionnaire attempted to investigate the cultural aspects in which the activists and nationalists have applied for the invention of the national symbols. The major stereotypes of ethnic symbols (language, religion, and the symbolism of nationhood) are used as a key to measure ethnic identity of the Thai-Mon people. According the findings, my study seems to indicate that the sense of ethnic belonging of the Thai-Mon people in the three communities has declined. This can be seen clearly by the seemingly ineffectiveness of the symbolic uses of ethnic identity (such as shared language and history) among the Thai-Mon people, particularly the young generation (under 20 years of age). The changes in the people’s perception of ethnic identity are tragically compatible with the danger of loss of some cultural heritages (such as the Mon language). This supports the historical ethno-symbolic theory that culture is among the most important aspects for the defence and maintenance of ethnicity.<sup>7</sup>

<sup>6</sup> Juajan Wongpolgan. (3-6 April 2005). “The Impact of Thai-Burma Border Politics on Indigenous People: The Case of a Mon Sanctuary in Thailand’s Westernmost District of Sangkhlaburi”, in *9<sup>th</sup> International Conference on Thai Studies (Vol. 2)*. Illinois: Northern Illinois University, 3-4 & Sukanya Baoner. (3 May-June 2007). “The Mon National Day: In the Conception of Nation and Nationalism”, in *The Sound of Raman (Sieng Raman)*.

[http://www.monstudies.com/show\\_content.php?topic\\_id=131&main\\_menu\\_id=11](http://www.monstudies.com/show_content.php?topic_id=131&main_menu_id=11) [downloaded on May, 20 2007].

<sup>7</sup> Please refer to the table presentation of the questionnaire results in Patise Chuaykunoopakan’s *Historical Ethno-Symbolism and the Study of the Mon Ethnicity in Thailand*, a dissertation submitted to



### **Final Analysis**

According to the findings, it seems that manner in which Thai-Mon people have responded to the nationalist agenda is unclear. In this context, the meaning and the level of ethnic belonging of people varies individually. For example, the persons claiming to be Mon may have some knowledge about the Mon history, or superficial awareness of the Mon culture and traditions. Moreover, many people claiming to be Mons either know a few words of Mon, or could understand but could neither speak nor write Mon. However, it is obvious that the Thai-Mon people tend to view ethnicity as of primordialism which is 'given' and 'unaccountable'. The study of ethnic Mons through the application of historical ethno-symbolism provides the overall understanding of ethnicity as follows.

As suggested by the historical ethno-symbolists, the survival and destiny of collective identities of an ethnic group depend largely on history and culture. In order to strengthen and maintain a group's ethnic identity, the transformation and reconstruction of the constitutive myths as well as the symbols of nationhood are fundamentally required. These elements, however, have changed over time, which make the borders between ethnic and national identities move" (Tønnesson & Antlöv, 1996 & Smith, 1999). What is interesting here is of how the members of the ethnic group perceive themselves as belonging to the group which can help to sustain the ethnic community. Thus, "for nationalism to do its work, ordinary people need to see themselves as the bearers of an identity centred elsewhere, imagine themselves as an abstract community (Eley & Suny, 1996:22, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998: 41). This means the nationalists have to adopt the primordial views of ethnicity for to fulfil its nationalist inspiration. Furthermore, it is also important to consider the relational concept of ethnicity. Ethnicity, or at least the awareness of it, is seen as situational and reciprocal, because it is likely to figure in various ways, with different social costs and benefits attached, and in a certain place and time (Jenkins, 1997 & Stephan, 2000). Hence, what it means to be a group member is continuously contested and transformed through collective debates about group culture and identity. To some extent, the perception of individual agency towards the assertion of the ethnic identity is constrained and influenced by the politics of recognition and authenticity practiced within minority group. (Song, 2003a). Also, ethnic identity is produced and reproduced through social interactions with the other ethnic groups, and interaction is always situated in context (Jenkins, 1997). These could help to explain why ethnicity, as of the political and social construction, has always been contested, reproduced, and transformed over the periods of time under certain circumstances.

Ultimately, this study reminds the hegemony or the 'hidden power' of ethnicity. Ethnicity, in itself, is powerful. To some extent, people tend to assume that it is already there. Historical ethno-symbolism is a sound theory to deal with the problems regarding ethnicity. Even though historical ethno-symbolism does not deny the possibility of pre-existing ethnic community, it helps to trace the root of ethnic origin, to see how and why the ethnic and national elements have been reinterpreted and reconstructed by the nationalist intelligentsias. I would therefore like to conclude by applying Hall's perception of ethnicity (1990, quoted in Mc Crone, 1998).

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the University of Bristol in accordance with the requirements of the degree of Master of Science in the Faculty of Social Sciences and Law, Department of Sociology (May 2007).

Ethnicity is genuinely a contestable phenomenon. It has never been an “already accomplished fact”, but rather a “production” that is never complete, always in process, and always constituted within representation.

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**MAHIDOL-UKM 3**  
**DEFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:  
COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND  
INTERPRETATIONS**  
**The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference  
on Southeast Asian Studies**



29 November – 1 December 2007

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**SESSION 4**  
**POLICIES AND POLITICS**

**Chairperson: Dr. Matthew Copeland**

1. Students' **Movement and** Political Participation: Research on the Associations of Islamic Students in Indonesia.- *Ismail Suardi Wekke & Sidratahta Mukhtar*
2. Inequitable **Land Usage** in East Java (1971-2005): Impact on the Socio-Cultural Livelihood of Farmers. - *Ratnawati Yuni Suryandari & Suprajaka*
3. **Southeast Asia in the New Cold War**: A Socialist Analysis. - *Eugene Jones*

**Paper 1      Students' Movement and Political Participation: Research on the Association of Islamic Student in Indonesia**

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**Abstract**

Indonesian student movement engages in political participation since Budi Oetomo declared *Kebangkitan Nasional* (national awakening) in 1908 to nowadays called reformation era. It proves that student activities in Indonesia a part of political process as "an extra parlement". One of the student movements is *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI - The Association of Islamic University Students), a student movement shaped by Islamic value system. This paper tries to examine the practices of HMI in order to realize Islam as a way of life and a universal value relating to politics performance. This study was conducted in *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam*, data were collected purposively in Jakarta. Interview with *Pengurus Besar* (National Board), non-participant observation and documentation study were arranged. The research shows that HMI (sixty years involvement) since 1947 is an instrumental part on Indonesian educational and political activities progress in enhancing and developing the potency of youth generation. Furthermore, this paper will give an example of activities that were designed not only to develop the students' skills of knowledge but also to raise awareness of political activities and how this relates to Islamic belief. Through involvement in wide range activity is one way to increase awareness among students of the possibilities to learn about and practice management and leadership skills. After graduation from the universities many students chair political party activities and appoint in various positions within government institutions. As a result, those activities allow them participate in Indonesia development and contribute to national progress that direct by Islamic belief, value and culture.

**INTRODUCTION**

*Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI, The Association of Islamic University Students) is one of the oldest and the biggest university students' organization in Indonesia. It was founded on the 5 February 1947 in Yogyakarta, two years after the Independence Day of Republic Indonesia. HMI always play strategic roles in every challenge that must be faced by ummah (Islamic society) and this nation. Whereas, Victor Tanja (1982) proposed that, "history of HMI closely tied with Indonesian modern history perfectly." This condition caused that HMI get many notice from intellectual communities both inside and outside of this country. There are many works and studies dealing with HMI, such as, Agussalim Sitompul written the book entitled *Sejarah HMI dan Pemikiran Keislaman HMI (History and Islamic Thought of HMI)* (1975, 1995, 2002), Muhammad Kemal Hassan written dealing with *Peran HMI Dalam Modernisasi Indonesia (Role of HMI in Indonesian Modernization)* (1987), Victor Tanja written about *Kedudukan HMI Sebagai Kekuatan Pembaharu (The Position of HMI as New Strength)* (1983), Greg Barton written dealing with idea

of *Islam Liberal di Indonesia (Islamic Liberal in Indonesia)* (1999). Prior to Hasanuddin M. Saleh worked on research dealing with *HMI dan Rekayasa Asas Tunggal Pancasila (HMI and Changes to The Only Fundamental Organization of Pancasila)* (1996), and Masykur Hakim conducted a research as his dissertation dealing with *HMI Dalam Pergolakan Reformasi Dan Strategi HMI (HMI in The Turbulence of Reformation and The Strategy of HMI)* (2001).

This research eager to testify once again how far the role of HMI in creating opportunities for Islamic student to participate in political activities. Victor Tanja research findings stated that HMI has played very important role in the Republic of Indonesia's journey which is full of challenges from time to times. The phenomena of HMI moment is really interesting, especially dealing with its success to create national political cadres, so they always ready for filling the recruitment of national leadership since Old Order Period, New Order Period and even in this Reformation Period.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

There are several books which are reviewed in this writing, the book was written by Victor Tanja (1982), dissertation was written by Syaifullah S.A. dealing with *Nationalism of HMI* (1994), Hasanuddin M. Saleh, one of founder HMI MPO, written about *HMI and Changes to The Only Fundamental Organization of Pancasila* (1996), and dissertation which discussed about *Reformation Movement and Strategy of HMI* written by Masykur Hakim (2001). Hasanuddin stated that HMI face the deep and long internal challenges or internal conflicts as impact of New Order Period's pressure to accept The Only Fundamental Organization of Pancasila systematically. Although at Congress XV, in Medan 1983, HMI still accept The Only Fundamental Organization of Pancasila explicitly. However, through many alumni of HMI in the circle of power has intervened to accept the Only Fundamental Organization of Pancasila.

Meanwhile, Hakim stated that HMI still be determined to involve with New Order Period and see the needs to take a part in political activities by coming to economic and political institutions. KAHMI (Korps Alumni HMI / Corps of Alumni HMI) has served many government institutions. Several of them chair on second technocrat strata, such as, Cokroamijoyo, Deliar Noer, Marli Halim, Madjib Ibrahim, Zainul Asni, Omar Tusin, Bustanul Arifin and Hariry Hady. In fact, some of them sit on ministry position, such as, Abdul Gafur, Akbar Tandjung, Mar'ie Muhammad, Minteredjo, etc. In its history, Indonesian Islamic ummah have used political party and mass organization as political media. But HMI never made affiliated with political party formally, because accordance with its principal which is independence principal.

In studying result of Victor Tanja's research, Hasanuddin, Masykur Hakim, and the others, the writer uses some of theory dealing with political education and political participation. The concept that developed by Samuel P. Huntington and Kartini Kartono are still relevance become as analysis tool to measure the HMI tendency's on forming cadre and political participation in the circle of power in long

time. In fact, the role of HMI cause problem. Anas Urbaningrum, for example, can not deny the tendency of HMI to political orientation.

"Although the struggle of HMI is the struggle of truth, but as organization which has developed, including it has contact with the dynamic of nation political, then every attitude and behavior of HMI will still have the political values and resonance. In the beginning, the posture of HMI as moral force, like or dislike also counted as political force." (See Formulate The Political Position of HMI, Media Indonesia, 5 February 1996).

In the book which is published from dissertation of Hakim in Jamia Millia Islamia, India, entitled "*The Response of Muslim Youth Organization to Social-Political Change: A Case of HMI Role in Indonesia*", the questions that will answered to explain the role and the contributions of HMI in the social political change in 1985's, post The Only Fundament Organization of Pancasila was conducted until the fall of Soeharto power in 21 May 1998.

Masykur Hakim stated that HMI was founded in 1947 has the aims to defend the Unity of Republic Indonesia and to make prosperous of people, to maintain and to widen Islamic wisdom. The aims of HMI indicated of nationalism. Hakim stated that HMI declared Indonesianization. Hasanuddin also stated that HMI have made training to mobilize and to move in many cities for many other students' organizations in 1960-1970's. It means that HMI play significant role.

## POLITICAL PARTICIPATION

The term of political participation have defined by many political experts. Samuel P. Huntington and Joan M. Nelson in their book entitled *Political Participation in the Developing Countries* (1984) given the definition of political participation as personals' behavior, attitude and perception dealing with the relevance of personals' interest to influence the government decisions and action. The real political participation behavior is racial disturbance, the strike of workers etc. Considering to its aims are to influence government decision making, then Huntington and Nelson have written two important aspects. *Firstly*, political knowledge, political interest, feeling dealing with competition, and political effectiveness and relevance. *Secondly*, political participation of professional which has a job in politics or in governmental level. *Thirdly*, focused on public official because having authority to making decision in society.

According to Huntington and Nelson stated that, political participation in developing countries is how to change public official decisions, to change or maintain political organization system which becomes its rule player. The research of Huntington and Nelson has found two political participation categories are; mobilized participation and autonomous participation. The first model of participation based on the fact that many people give their vote, making demonstration, or another action seems not act by personal willing to influence governmental decisions. There is a unique thing in this research result that percentage of voters who use their vote right are high in Turkey. Turkey voters are traditional ones. In fact that most of voters in

Turkey are farmers who are mobilized by land lord to use their vote right. Whereas, autonomous participation was defined as participation activity based on volunteering, without pressure from other side. Autonomous participation is truly based on the effort to influence the government decision. Although both of autonomous and mobilized participation are one spectrum but not absolutely. In democratic country tends to participate autonomous.

In another society, according to Huntington and Nelson stated that participation is based on groups' belief. Most of participation involve collaboration and benefit for collectiveness, there are some common fundamentals: (a) Class, personal with social status, similar wage and job; (b) Group, personal from racial, religion, language and ethnic; (c) Environment, personals who live close each other geographical location; (d) Party, personal who try to come to formal organization for controlling both in executive and legislative fields; and (e) Group, personal who are united by constant interaction which is realized in patron-client grouping form. By comparing with United State of America, the citizens' political participation there reflected on liberal development model. Huntington and Nelson stated that high autonomous participation can implemented by raising economical wealth as a whole, distribution of wealth as a fair, improving political stability, and setting up the fundament for broader participation with democratic governmental system.

Furthermore, Huntington and Nelson stated that the attitude of political elites toward political participation in every society is the most determined influence of political participation character in that society. Mobilized participation only happen if political elites making effort to involve mass of people into political activity. According to Huntington and Nelson, they stated that autonomous participation can be happen with not to higher sacrifice, if political elites do not oppress people. In traditional society, political participation less appreciate both elite and common people, because they still consider for respectful attitude and hierarchy formation.

On the contrary, Huntington and Nelson also found the basic difference with participation pattern in democratic political system. Participation in election is influenced by intensity and character than competition of voters and parties in society. For example, it has change drastically decline on social power that causes competition among parties after 1896 in USA. Because of both south and north tends to become single party power. In multiparty, every party tends to mobilize their supporters than making competition with other party by limitation intensity of political party competition.

In developing countries cases, broadening political participation are very rare. This is the main goal of political elite in developing countries. Broadening political participation is influenced by initiatives of political leaders who want to defend its power. People who hold the political power can be influence political participation; they prefer to strengthen their power and to strengthen political stability by limitation of broadening political participation. The effort to develop economic wealthy, equal distribution and stability in politic can be create requirement to broaden political participation.

Huntington stated that people who become member of organization and take a part in organization actively, they have big possibility to take a part in politic. In fact,



the involvement in organization maybe more important than social-economical status in political participation. The argumentation of this two American political scholars are supported by Almond-Verba data dealing with USA, England, Germany, Italy and Mexico. The data showed that social-economical status can be explained about 10 percent from differences in political participation; meanwhile the involvement can be explained about 25 percent in organization. Another study also has the same conclusion. One of function of economical development is the increasing of personal participation in group. In many countries, there is preference in educated community that better salary and occupation tends to involve in organization higher. The involvement of people who less status in organization is the impact of consciousness in unique group, class, communal group or environment. Meanwhile, individual intensity can identified as increasing of individual involvement in group. The possibility that individual will involve in organization and take a part in politic.

Elite group who control to government has more ability to broaden participation than elite group who not doing controlling function. To mobilized new group into politic is effective way. Huntington and Nelson considered that the effort to shift dominated power and to take over governmental controlling is one of effective way to broken the status quo. Meanwhile, ruling elite still try to limit their political participation. It is rare for the ruling power to broaden participation except, Firstly, if elite have no fundament for power or establish constituent, it is easy to overthrow by military, so that power must engage new power to keep their power; Secondly, ruling elite who dominated maybe will be forced to take action to mobilized other group into politic to support that ruling elite. Sometimes they found the reality that political elite participation is influenced by ideological background, especially their commitment to eliminate social class.

Dealing with this political participation, Huntington and Nelson written the fact that individual in a developing society has found that there is normal possibility order. That are, non-political individual action, individual political action, non-political collective action, and collective political action. The choice has done by elite, group, and individual between political participation and another ways to achieve the goal can be change. The changes of goal is depends on certain target. The temporary secular developing process is more extensive participation and more variety.

## THE SUBJECT OF RESEARCH

In relation to the process and role of HMI cadre-forming in occupying power structure in Indonesia, the subjects are going to discuss in this paper are on the cadre-forming system of HMI. Cadre-forming process in 1960's and 1970's had produced high quality alumni occupying various positions in both social and political and power structure in the decade 1990's.

Though cadre-forming process in HMI is relatively short on about five to seven years, but the cadres produced have a high quality and are pluralistic oriented in term of thought. Creating these high and pluralistic oriented cadres is not an easy job to carry out for they have been grown and educated in primordial environment, Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam (HMI).

HMI cadre-forming that emphasizes on the discourse and political thought supported by social and political condition influences political participation of HMI cadres in the power structure of the state. It is clearly that the case of HMI is engaged in political discourse and interest on politics, competition etc will influence political participation of politicians to engage in the power structure.

## THE HISTORY OF FOUNDATION AND STRUGGLE OF HMI

The history of HMI was founded on 5 February 1947 in Yogyakarta. At that time, the condition of Indonesian political was still marked by the struggle for liberation in revolution period against to Dutch aggression. The idea to found HMI was inspired by idea was formulated by Jong Islamieten Bond (JIB) with its Islamic Studie Club to utter religious-intellectual and intellectual-religious. At that time, according to Victor Tanja, there was emptiness role of Islamic Youth intellectual because of JIB have been not exist again. There are several important figures in JIB such as Samsurizal and Natsir were not young anymore and became members of Masyumi political party. Lafran Pane with his friends, Kartono, Dahlan Husein, and Misroh Hilal, were students Sekolah Tinggi Islam (STI) (School of Islamic Studies), now become Universitas Islam Indonesia (UII) (Indonesian Islamic University) in Yogyakarta. They discussed to found HMI in their classroom. Tanja stated that the decision to found HMI because of the urgent needs for Youth Moslem Intellectual to take part in the struggle for national freedom. As an independence organization, HMI has expectation to be able to more its integrity toward duty of guarding in the interest of the state.

For Indonesian Moslem Community, the presence of HMI is very relevance to improve the quality of socio-educational and political in organizations. According to Tanja, the reason efforts of this new circle society's, is for completeness Islamis society toward modern teaching method. Moreover, pesantren (Indonesian Islamic boarding school) have played its role in spreading of Islamic literature and liberation religion thought. Dutch language was also used as introduction of teaching in pesantren. Beside HMI, Muhammadiyah movement is viewed as resurrection of Islamic spirit toward new age in Indonesia. Victor Tanja was viewed that the change of Muhammadiyah vision from socio-education organization, which was tied strong with religion, to political struggle. In West Sumatra, Muhammadiyah tends to political interest was strong in past time. Afterwards, Muhammadiyah develop its neutral role in politic, give the political decision for members personally. Tanja stated that, although not focused on political directly, but Muhammadiyah develop political consciousness toward it members.

Meanwhile, Hasanuddin stated that history of HMI have been written by many writers earlier both alumni and not alumni of HMI. Agussalim Sitompul written, "*Sejarah HMI dan Pemikiran HMI dan Relevansinya dengan Sejarah Perjuangan Bangsa*" (*History and Thought of HMI and its Relevance with the History of Indonesian Nation Struggle*). Sulastomo in 1989 written "*Hari-Hari Panjang: 1963-1966*" (*Long Days: 1963-1966*) was told his witness in process of shift power from Old Order Period to New Order Period and the position of HMI at that time. Victor Tanja also has written dealing with HMI and its position in the middle of new movement in Indonesian Moslem.

In 1975, HMI conducted seminar to reformulate the motivation and background toward the foundation of HMI. The foundation of HMI was based on to develop Islam in Indonesia by preparing cadres who have high perception and commitment for Islam. Beside that, the foundation of HMI based on the wish to increase the Islamic quality of students' in performing the Indonesian nation history duty. Considering that sovereignty of country is important. From the historian aspect, Hasanuddin stated that the system of power for HMI is system of power which can support the development of Islam in Indonesia and this mainstream which is taken up by HMI in making interaction with social and political system. There were two important moments for HMI; first, was the physically struggle to face Dutch Military Action I, and second was the struggle to face the communist rebellion. The involvement of HMI in physical revolution to defend the freedom that made impressed the Indonesian leader. General Soedirman, the leader of Indonesian physical struggle for defending the freedom, said that the abbreviation of HMI is Harapan Masyarakat Indonesia (The Hope of Indonesian People). He supposed that HMI is not become separate from Islamic community. General Soedirman stated that when giving the speech in first anniversary of HMI in Yogyakarta (1948).

In 1950's, headquarter of HMI move from Yogyakarta to Jakarta. Since that time, HMI be able to formulate its position in the middle of Indonesian nation, HMI has functioned as Islamic Youth Organization, which have responsibility as agent of change toward nation and state. As the university students' organization, HMI have responsibility in university students' milieu, especially in college, and also as the supporter to the basic of Islam, responsible to how Islamic values can be operated in the society and state life. In the time of parliamentary democracy, HMI give the freedom to its members to choose one Islamic party. Although that decision above destroy the agreement among Islamic organization in 1949. In the subsequent developments, Hasanuddin see that HMI still consistent, for example, when HMI made the demeanor for all of Islamic fraction members in Konstituante (Constituent Assembly) by sent the letter, which was noted:

"To all of members in Konstituante as the owner of Indonesian Islamic ummah mandate's, we wish that you still struggle for that mandate and always maintain solidarity action among Islamic fraction as only one of the best weapon."

In 1961, when Soekarno announced NASAKOM (Nasionalis, Sosialis, Agama dan Komunis / Nationalist, Socialist, Religion and Communist), HMI made the moderate demeanor. This moderation demeanor was not like other big political organizations' attitude. HMI showed itself as accommodating organization and even embrace with another organization which has accommodating tradition, which was NU (Nahdlatul Ulama / Revival of Islamic Scholars). HMI also has dropped sanction to its members which made demonstration dealing with the power of NU in IAIN (Institut Agama Islam Negeri / State Institute of Islamic Studies) Yogyakarta. According to Hasanuddin, this step to save HMI from influence of PKI (Partai Komunis Indonesia / Indonesian Communist Party) in regime Soekarno. HMI got many protections from Islamic organization which was being able to cooperate with Soekarno, which was NU. The unwillingness of HMI was in confrontation with Soekarno directly because he still has very strong power. The big revolution leader, Soekarno, face big wave which willing to shift the power. But, actually the many

members of HMI who involve to crash down the regime of Soekarno which was known as exponent '66.

The policy of New Order Period, to spay Islamic political power systematically by making coalition with ABRI (Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia / The Army of Republic Indonesia), bureaucrat, and Golkar (Golongan Karya / The Group of Functionaries). For youth field, government to form KNPI (Komite Nasional Pemuda Indonesia / National Committee of Indonesian Youth) as an umbrella for all youth organization. Although HMI take part to be at the forefront of counter power, this was Cipayung Group. HMI also support Malari Movement in 15 January 1974. However, according to Hasanuddin, HMI did not react when government implemented NKK/BKK in 1978. Hasanuddin consider HMI as ambivalent demeanor. In one side, members of HMI as demonstration person, but in other side HMI, as organization, did not have courage to make pressure for government. The writer noted this as uniquely of HMI in its effort to safe itself.

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF HMI POLITICAL THOUGHT**

HMI was known as a cadre forming organization that greatly emphasized on a political orientation especially as a main source of political recruitment of state institutions like the People Representatives and civil servants, but HMI has various kinds of discourses, thoughts and ideas developed through cadre forming activities. Many discourses that HMI cadres had learned especially in the decades of 1960 and 1970's had developed fast into political thoughts, which is beneficial for the actualization of HMI cadres in occupying power structures in Indonesia.

### **The Development of HMI Thoughts**

In the process of HMI, the study on Islam is put on priority. The basic reason of HMI founding, as known, was resulted in the Muslim restlessness on seeing the discontinuity of Muslim reform in Indonesia. This was proved in the time when a Islamic Youth Movement called Jong Islaminten Bond (JIB), in the time of Dutch and Japan colonization, only existed for one generation (1924-1945).

Syafi'i Ma'arif (former chairperson of Muhammadiyah) stated that, Jong Islaminten Bond, founded in 1925 by a genius Muslim intellectual KH Agus Salim. It had delivered some outstanding political cadres like Muhammad Roem (one of the founding fathers of Republic Indonesia), Muhammad Natsir (an intellectual and political figure becoming the symbol of nation morality). Syafi'i Ma'arif ultimately concluded that Jong Islaminten Bond was an intellectual and visionary generation and also the wisest generation in political field (Syafi'i Ma'arif, 1997). In the time of Jong Islaminten Bon generation, they were facing the ethical political system applied by the colonials, but this enabled them to have a high nationalist consciousness. In addition, the frictions among Islam, Nationalists and communists, at that time, had not risen yet. But HMI that was founded following Indonesian Independence was faced with internal conflicts among Indonesians. In the domain of Indonesian political superstructure, the enforcement of ideology and state constitution was the main reason for the existing conflicts. As Bactiar Effendy noted that the difference was presented

in the form of polarization based on two ideological groups -- Nationalist and Religious groups. The first group emphasized on that Indonesia should not be based on the nationalist principle. This group was under coordination of Soekarno, Muhammad Yamin, Supomo and Muhammad Hatta. Moreover, this group proposed Pancasila to be used as the Indonesian principle in the reason that it would be widely accepted by all Indonesian existing groups. While the second group emphasized on the idea that Indonesia should be based on the religious principle. This group, led by Natsir, Wahid Hasyim, Ki Bagus, and Sukiman, proposed Islam as the Indonesian principle. They based on their ideas for some reasons. *First*, Islam is the religion, which provides guidelines for all aspects of life. *Second*, Islam is the religion of the majority of people in Indonesia. In June, 1945s, the solution had been found by adopting Jakarta Charter, a charter obliging Muslims to carry out Islamic teachings, which accommodated all interests of Islamic groups. But a day after Indonesian Independence, the Jakarta charter was cancelled and it was represented by the word "Believe in God" included in the first point of Pancasila. This historical fact inevitably has caused endless conflicts among the next generation for both nationalist and religious oriented groups failed to create a negotiated consensus on the political life.

HMI, in the ideological context, represented Muslims, especially modernist Muslims, and this emerged an accusation over HMI, in the guided democracy under Soekarno, that it was contra-revolution. This issue was also manipulated by Indonesian Communist Party to dismiss HMI from its existence for the party found that HMI and Islam was on the similar ideology and meant similar contender as well. The development of HMI thoughts on Islamic affairs found widely public sphere to contextually re-develop Islamic discourse when the New Order Regime was in power following the failed rebellion of the Indonesian Communist Party. In this time, it seemed that HMI found a momentum to express the hidden thoughts on the Islamic affairs. The roles of HMI in the beginning of the New Order Regime as an ideological response toward modernization process. In this very beginning process, the New Order Regime faced a great responsibility to carry out economical and political recovery under the economic crisis and a high inflation that were inherited by Old Order Regime in term of global strategy to build a new order. The Regime, in this early process, emphasized on the economical development and political stability as its first priority. It is argued that the regime proposed the concept of modernization for social and political life in implementing its developmental policy. The clash of different points of view on the modernization concept emerged in the time when all political entities, including HMI, agreed that modernization should be the means to solve all problems Indonesian faced.

The reason HMI accepted the developmental approach carried out by the New Order Regime was in relation to the re-interpretation on Islamic human values through a social and transformative school in the effort on creating harmonic and integral relation between Islam and the state concerning on some main points. *First*, the developmental process for egalitarian and participatory society. On the basis of complexity in the national affairs, an accommodative strategy or approach was, therefore, significantly in need for accommodating Muslims aspiration. *Second*, under New Order Regime, it was predicted that the state was getting stronger. Based on the point of view, Muslims, according to Bactiar Effendy (1990), needed to be directed toward understanding the wide meaning of politic covering programs, strategies and



the area of struggle. HMI was also interested in formulating substantial and significant relations among the state, Islamic politics and other existing social and political institutions, which had similar visions. Moreover, HMI was interested in reformulating the inclusive end of Islamic politics.

Islamic reform movements in Indonesia, in fact, was influenced profoundly by other movements in the Islamic countries through long term trading contacts and thought dynamics with, for example, Middle East countries. Fazlur Rahman, an outstanding Muslim scholar who currently has become a source of inspiration for HMI activists, introduced four models of development. First, Pre-modern revivalism movement or early revivalism, this movement was a reaction over the moral decadence of Muslims saturated by the rigidity of the reforming thoughts. In addition, this movement was directed to create fundamental transformation to overcome social and moral decadences over Muslims. Second, classical modernism movement, this movement was carried out through reforming educational institutions. The consequence of this model, especially in many Islamic and ex-colonized countries, was the adoption of the Western paradigm to measure the development achieved. Moreover, the Koran and Hadith were, consistently, used to justify western thoughts. Third, post-modern revivalism, in this phases the western thoughts, especially on politic, social and economic, provided equal meanings with the Islamic terms. In other words, these social and political movements were the basic accentuation of this well and modernly organized movements (Awad Bahasoan, 1984:110-112).

This movement appeared in the modern phases, which was long experienced by Islamic countries through enlightenment process from XVI to XX century. While Indonesian reforming process was marked by the awakening of Islamic nationalism in the world in attempt of confronting western colonials and becoming prosperous and advanced Muslim society (Awad Bahasoan, 1984:110-112). Based political thoughts of Islam, Dien Syamsuddin (2001) argues that the relation between the ruling Islam and the ruled Islam had become an important issue in appearing the new theories concerning on both the relation between the two sides and the ideal society that would appear from the relation. The political thoughts of Islam actually express the long and sustainable intellectual process concerning on the nature of government roles as inseparable means to solve the religious and worldly affairs. As it is common in the intellectual tradition, political thoughts of Islam also present two points of view on the relation between the ruling Islam and the ruled Islam.

In this context, there is profound contradiction among political ulama toward the power, especially in the pre-modern era, which was influenced by geographic, social, political and cultural factors, thus in common the history of Muslim civilization put the ruling sides (Khalifah, Amir and sultan) in the superior position with absolute or divine power and sovereignty. It is mostly reflected for example in the title of sultan with *Allah fi al-ardh* (the representative of Allah in the earth) or *zil Allah fil ardh* (the shadow of Allah in the earth). The weak position of religious ulama in social sectors has motivated political ulama to legitimate the ruling party with religious reasons.



## **HMI and Political Thoughts**

To explore and study the political thoughts of HMI was not an easy job, though when we mention the word "HMI", people will automatically related it with political field. For the image of HMI was rooted from strong political orientation. According to Nurcholish Madjid that in attempt to enforce Islamic and political mission of HMI, the thoughts on HMI politics develop in accordance with the growth of HMI thoughts. In every stage of process, HMI is urged to actualize itself as part of the whole Indonesian Muslims. Nurcholish Madjid argued that the conscience as part of Indonesian Muslims would create pluralist and independent behavior in the thoughts and culture of HMI.

The pattern of HMI participation is based on the ideological conscience of HMI as a political cadre with certain understanding on reality and ideology toward nationality affairs; and HMI hope on the ends and target, which need to be achieved by Indonesia as a plural nation. In addition, the hope and nationality vision are also adapted with political ideals of HMI since it was first founded, that is intellectual participation and participation to defend this state physically. The model of HMI participation in national and political life is active, this participation is reflected in the attitude and the roles of HMI in criticizing and confronting the process of national development (Nurcholish Madjid, 1999:16-17). According to Nurcholish Madjid, this participation has to be based on an independent participation both to internal and external Muslims like in relation to the political groups in national and political life. But HMI has to see the criticized developmental problems objectively whether it has been appropriate with developmental agenda that are needed by the people.

As an independent organization, HMI often has to confront with other Muslim resistance especially Mashumi. Greg Barton found that there is an implicit conflict between HMI and Mashumi (an Islamic political party) though it seems that their platforms are almost same. Barton argues that there is fundamental difference between HMI and other organizations especially political ones for HMI is an independent and established organization though in the past Indonesian Communist Party (PKI) had accused HMI as an inseparable part of Mashumi. To show its independence, HMI rejects to join in any existing political parties for HMI was critical to any existing political parties including Mashumi. In term of political development, in the Renville conference between Indonesia and Dutch, HMI was clash of ideas with Mashumi in which HMI totally supported to the conference. In addition, HMI supported secular ideology (Pancasila) for Indonesia while Mashumi supported Islamic constitution that had become ideals of the people at that time and the relation between HMI and Mashumi was at the worst time when HMI decided to support four Islamic political parties (Mashumi, Nahdatul Ulama' (NU), Partai Syarikat Islam Indonesia (PSII), and Perti (Barton, 1999:58-61).

In the guided democracy era (1950-1963), the political sphere especially in the internal Muslims was experiencing conflicts and was in fragile. In addition, between Islamic group and communist and nationalist group was in clash of interests and thoughts. Communist and nationalist groups accused HMI as reformer group, contra revolution and anti Pancasila. Nevertheless, this accusation strengthened the internal solidarity of HMI that it was able to formulate some useful thoughts for Islamic communities and for national affairs.

As organization with developmental oriented, HMI continually tried to achieve its interests by producing modern discourses on nationality affairs. There were at least five fundamental aspects that had become important discourse for HMI at that time – politics, education, religion, economy, and culture. Before, HMI generally had futuristic thoughts on nationality affairs. Endang Saifuddin Anshari outlined that there three important dimensions to note in discussing commitment of nationality (HMI called it Indonesian values); Indonesia as a country, Indonesia as a nation and Indonesia as state. In term of Indonesian as a country, Endang explained the strategic position of Indonesia that is surrounded by two oceans – Pacific and Hindia – and tens of islands, big and small, located in the equator lines, therefore Indonesia is strategic both economically, politically, socially and culturally. In term of Indonesian as nation, Indonesia is pluralism in form of races, religions, traditions, local languages and many more, therefore HMI as an Islamic organization pays much attention to the pluralism. In this context, HMI should play an important role to implement national integration (Ade Komaruddin and M. Fauzie, 1990).

In relation to the political thoughts of HMI, the relation between religion and political aspects will be discussed in details. From the religious perspective, the interpretation of the HMI principle shows that the truth of Islam is perfect in which it will enable human beings to be happy both in the world and hereafter. In addition, HMI will participate to implement Muslim's sacred missions to invite human being into truth. Agus Salim Sitompul and Greg Barton agree that since first time HMI supported Pancasila as an ideology. In this context, Muslims are required to keep struggle for the future and HMI, as nation cadre and future generation, is required to formulate humanity agenda because Islamic university students are considered as Ummah cadres to continue Muslim ideals. Ismail Hasan (HMI chairperson in 1958) argued that NDP had to be HMI zeal to achieve its final targets. Further he insisted that HMI should have moral belief, high intellectuality and creativity.

HMI is a moderate organization, which can adapt with any existing political reality. In this context, HMI tried to overcome marginalization process by government and to eliminate political decay in Muslim community. Even, HMI tried to solve any problems concerning on the nationality basis. Nevertheless, the state tried to hinder and limit the growth of political ideology of Islam. In the weakening of Islamic politics, HMI continually conducted wide cadre process to create Muslim cadre that could be recruited into the political structure in the future. In the guided democracy era, when Soekarno was to establish Kabinet Gotong Royong that would include Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), HMI demanded that Piagam Jakarta be applied in which Islam was the state was based on Islamic principles. In the fifth congress of HMI in Medan (1957), it decided that Islamic state had to be established in Indonesia. In fact, this demand was in relation with constitution committee (Konstituante) that was discussing in attempt to replace the temporary constitution of 1950.

Agussalim Sitompul stated there were two important factors that formed the background of the political thoughts of HMI. First, that our independence from colonial domination was an absolute achievement for colonial domination brought great disadvantages for our nation and our people. HMI suggested that if Indonesia was still dominated by colonials, people sovereignty should be enforced to achieve people independence. In 1950s, it seemed that Dutch's influence was still strong for the domination was not merely physically but also spiritually (for example, the arrival

of Jending mission to Indonesia). According to HMI, Indonesia should be equal with other nations in the world. Second, the political thoughts of HMI were explained in the First Anniversary of HMI in Bangsal kepatihan Yogyakarta in February 6, 1948. Ahmad Tirtosudiro, the vice-chairperson of HMI, in his speech stated:

“Based on the sociological perspective, the form of Indonesian state should be appropriate with characters and condition of our society, therefore the western dogma and theories should be observed before they were adopted. For it would change the social structure of Indonesian people”

In the end of his speech, he stated that Indonesian students had to pay attention to their social functions and had to engage in the social reality. They had to keep in mind the statement that says “a politician that does not know sociology like a ship man that does not know the course of the wave and the line of sea reef mountains, and he would be collapse in the middle of the ocean”.

When HMI was faced with Indonesian Communist Party (PKI), HMI under Soelastomo tried to be accommodative with political manifesto of Soekarno known as Nasakom. Dahlan Ranuwihardjo who knew directly all PKI's efforts to dismiss HMI thought to meet Soekarno to explain HMI position and asked not to dismiss HMI and suggested Soekarno to bring HMI into his revolutionary politics. To implement his thought to meet Soekarno, he applied hidden strategy. Most of his seniors did not agree with his steps and suggested that HMI, like Mashumi and GPII, to reject Pancasila and other political manifestations as an organization ideology. Dahlan finally could meet Soekarno and discussed in details on the HMI position. In the meeting, Dahlan applied Breed front strategy and produced Gunung Puyuh Agreement. This strategy stated that if Soekarno dismissed HMI, it could be predicted that HMI would engage in the separatist movements like DII/TII.

According to Dahlan Ranuwihardjo, his meeting with Soekarno was a form of political deal and a way to clean HMI from ex-GPII members. In addition, this meeting was intended to make HMI a supporting force for our state principles – Pancasila and Nasakom. Soekarno also would free HMI to conduct cadre-forming process and political education for its members generally called Kursus Kader Revolusi and he issued president's decree that would control HMI. This lobby was considered as an indication that HMI would win the competition against its political contenders, and it was proved that HMI was the winner in the competition. In addition, HMI was also able to face any attacks to dismiss it. This was not only caused by political deals between Soekarno and Dahlan Ranuwihardjo but because all elements within HMI from Local to central organization plus LDMI and LAPMI were consistent to defend the existence of HMI.

Since 1970s and 1980s, we have seen new intellectual processes that have been pioneered by HMI. According to Bachtiar Effendy, there were at least three fields of thoughts that played a significant role in changing old Islamic activism and intellectualism; reformation of Islamic thoughts, political and bureaucratic reformation and social transformation. The three sectors carried out reformation movement collectively. For example, reformation of Islamic thoughts emphasized on the dynamic of the changing world. Bureaucratic and political reformation emphasized on the Muslim involvement in the bureaucratic and political life of the

state and cultural groups (social transformation) conducted people empowerment in the grass roots. All this were intended to empower Muslim community in the economic and political fields. Therefore, in the future they would be able to support the construction Muslim community that focused on the values of justice, equality, discussion, and Pancasila (Bahtiar Effendy, 2001:91-93).

It seemed that transformation of HMI political thoughts was well responded by New Order Regime, therefore since 1980s New Order Regime had accommodated significantly the political aspiration of the Muslims. R William Liddle (Kompas, 1990) stated that Nurcholish Madjid's statement Islam Yes, Islamic Party No is an appropriate political slogan to express the roles of Muslims in democratic, stabile and effective Indonesian government. Indonesian Muslims in the New Order Regime did not struggle through political parties as in the Old Regime, but they struggled through social organizations (HMI) that to achieve their interests and visions in the political arena including executive and legislative member.

## CONCLUSION

HMI is not political organization, but it puts concern on the political issues that make HMI accused as pressure group. HMI though is only intense in the issues of intellectuality, Indonesianism and Islamism but sometimes it also engages in political roles that can ultimately create new problems for it. This paper described how the political participation of HMI. The former adopted authoritarian and the later adopts a democratic political system. This research is, finally, explained the influences of HMI domination on the power. This is conducted in relation to the decline of the cadre quality and strategic roles of HMI in reformation movement. In this context, HMI should function as critic and power controller. This study is not, of course, intended at merely producing descriptive and phenomenological knowledge on HMI as sources of political recruitment in the power structure but also intended to provide values added toward the development of political science, especially the theory of political participation.

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**Paper 2      Inequitable Land Usage in East Java: Impact on the Socio-Cultural Livelihood of Farmers**

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**Abstract**

There has been a dramatic change in the agricultural sector during the last 34 years (1971-2005) in Indonesia. The contribution of the agricultural sector to the Gross National Product (GNP) has decreased drastically. Conversely, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP significantly increased. In 1971, the agricultural sector's contribution to the GNP was 44.8% which constituted almost half of the GNP. In that year, the industrial sector only contributed 8.4% to the GNP. In contrast, in 2005, there has been a drastic reduction in the agricultural sector's contribution to the GNP to 13.4% of the GNP. On the other hand, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP increased to 29.0%. So, it could be argued that during the past 34 years, the Indonesian government's development policies gave more favor to the industrial sector and marginalized the agricultural sector. This was caused by an annual decrease in the allocation of land for agricultural purposes and an increase in the rate of agricultural land conversion to estates and industrial areas. The process of land conversion increased instability in the agricultural sector, which was the main source of farmers' bread and butter. The result of this was that farmers were marginalized since they had lost most of or all their land, which was their means to earn money to support their families. This dramatically increased instability in the agriculture sector and violated the harmony of farmers' lives. Therefore the main objective of this paper is to examine how this has led to a decrease in the living standard of farmers and how all of this has affected the farmers' pattern of employment, their values, traditions and resultant social structures.

**INTRODUCTION**

Generally, the agricultural land conversion refers to the land usage which proposed to plant the plantations and make farm animals. The allocation of land in the world is about 1.4 million hectares. According to Buringh and Dudal (1978), it consists of 1.4 million hectares of ice, 13.9 million hectares of agriculture, forest, and non-agricultural land.

The conversion of land usage in agricultural sector closely relates to the human being activity to alter the agricultural land to be non agricultural one for certain purposes. In short, non-agricultural land is used to build other sectors such as estates, urban services and facilities (churches, hospitals), industries (factories, storages), mines, irrigation, waste disposal, communication and transportation (street, train railway, airports), and recreation activities (gardens, sport) (Buringh and Dudal 1987).



The fact shows that it is difficult to change the agricultural land conversion because it becomes sustainable (Economic Research Service 2002). Indeed, it takes a long time even in a century to change the land conversion becomes land agriculture. This phenomenon is caused by the macro structure factors and processes such as demography, urban management and the transformation of agriculture to the industrial sector (Kustiwan 1997).

## THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

According to Kustiawan (1997) in macro perspective, the phenomenon of agricultural land usage in developing countries is caused by the transformation of demography and economic structures. It means that if it is seen from the economic transformation, it closely relates to the change of agricultural usage become industrial sector. While, if it is viewed from demographical one, it will imply that the high growth of population in the urban area will impact on the changes of land usage to become non-agricultural one. It is true that the rate of agricultural land conversion to establish urban areas in developing countries like Latin America, Africa, India, Pakistan, Bangladesh is high comparing with developed nations. Statistically, the growth is about 476 000 annually. The example of this growth happened in Sao Paulo Brazil which has the growth about 180 kilometers in 1930 while 1988 it was more than 900 kilometers. It will be caused by the changes of natural forest, agricultural land and botanical garden become non-agricultural one (World Resources Institute 1997).

However, the rate of inequitable agricultural land conversion can be seen in most developing countries such as East Asia and South-East Asia like South Korea, Taiwan, Malaysia, Thailand, Philippine, and Indonesia.

The growth of economic sector after 2<sup>nd</sup> world war in East Asia has caused the increase in the rate of agricultural land conversion to estates and industrial sectors. In Taiwan as an example, the development of industrial sectors and urban areas in the bay has damaged the agricultural areas around it (UNEP 2000). In 2000, the amount of agricultural land will reduce to 851 000 hectares in Taiwan (FAO 2000). Similarly, in South Korea, it is predicted that 1016 kilometers will converse to be non-agricultural land in the 10 years.

It can not be denied the fact that most of developing countries in South-East Asia such as Malaysia, Thailand, Philippine, and Indonesia have experienced with the agricultural land conversion rapidly; moreover, they become the fast growth among the countries in the world. In 1985, 48% of the land in Malaysia became agricultural area, 38% is for forest, and 9% is for estate. In 9 years period or in 1994, the estate areas had increased 17% and the agricultural and forest areas have decreased 28% (SARCS without date). Based on GNP (Gross National Product) from 1960 to 1980, there has been a drastic reduction in the agricultural sector's contribution every five year. It was 38% (1960), 32% (1965), 31% (1970), 28% (1975), and 22% (1980). It proves that Malaysia has encountered with the inequitable land usage.

Thailand also experienced with this inequitable land usage particularly around Bangkok. It happens because Bangkok is the center of economic and culture. The impact of the drastic growth of Bangkok citizens who build their houses, and buy cars has made traffic jam. Thus, there are many citizens who move to rural areas and it will cause the agricultural land conversion about 46 640, 80 505, and 110 000 hectares in 1974, 1984, and 1988 or the percentage is about 13%, 22%, and 30% from the number of agricultural areas (Dowall 1992).

In Calabarzon, Philippine, the inequitable land usage is 11 600 hectares and 44% is for industrial areas, 34% for estates. 50% of land conversion is for farming fields. On December 1996, 48 468 hectares of agricultural land have conversed because they had an agreement from agricultural and law ministries. Additionally, 85% of this land has become non-agricultural area (Hemedez without date).

### THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN INDONESIA

In the 34 year period, from 1971 to 2005, there has been a drastic change of agricultural sector in Indonesia. The fact shows that the GNP and human resources who manage the land reduced. In 1971, the contribution of agricultural sector (including animal farms, forests, and fishery) is 44,8% which constituted almost half of the GNP. In that year, the industrial sector contributed only 8.4 %. The agricultural sector uses about 64% of sources while industrial one is about 6.5%. It proves that agriculture become the most important sector in Indonesia. In contrast, this condition has been changed drastically since 34 years. In 2005, the use of it did not contribute significantly. It only contributed 13.4% to the GNP. On the other hand, the industrial sector's contribution to the GNP is 29% and use the sources 15% .(See table 1 and 2). So it could be argued that during the past 34 years, the Indonesian government's development policies gave more favor to the industrial sector and marginalized the agricultural sector. The marginalization of agriculture in the 34 years has made the farmers spoil. The impact of agricultural marginalization made the farmers had lost most of or all their land, the transaction cost had become expensive one, there had been many economic institutions which did not consider the farmer lives (Yustika 2003).

Table 1. The type of occupation based on sectors (%), 1971 - 2005

Sector	1971	1980	1990	2001	2005
Agriculture, Forest, Fishery	64	54,7	50,1	43,8	40.8
Mines	0.2	0.8	1.0	0.0	0.0
Manufactures	6.5	8.6	11.6	13.3	15.0
Electric, Gas, and Water Supplies	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.0
Building Construction	1.7	3.1	4.0	4.2	4.2
Business and Restaurant	10.4	12.9	15.0	19.2	20.3
Transportation and Communication	2.4	2.9	3.8	4.9	6.2
Finance, Insurance, Estates, and Service	0.2	0.4	0.7	1.2	1.3
Public Service	9.9	15	13.7	12.1	11.1
Other sectors	4.6	1.4	0.0	1.2	1.3
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Original source: Yustika 2003 and statistic data 2005

Table 2. The Gross National Product based on sectors (%), 1971 - 2005

Sector	1971	1980	1990	2001	2005
Agriculture, Forest, Fishery	44.8	24.8	21.5	17.0	13.4
Mines	8.0	25.7	13.4	13.2	13.0
Manufactures	8.4	11.6	19.9	25.0	29.0
Electric, Gas, and Water Supplies	0.5	0.5	0.6	1.5	1.5
Building Construction	3.5	5.6	5.5	5.9	6.2
Business, Hotel and Restaurant	16.1	14.1	16.9	16.2	16.0
Transportation and Communication	4.4	4.3	5.6	5.2	5.1
Finance, Insurance, Estates, and Service	3.5	4.3	6.7	6.3	6.0
Public Service	10.8	9.1	9.8	9.8	9.8
Total	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0	100.0

Original source: Yustika 2003 and statistic data 2005

In Indonesia, the agriculture areas which often being scarification of inequitable land usage are mostly arable farming fields with good irrigation system (Anwar & Pakpahan 1989). From 1984 to 1996, the number of agricultural areas decreased from 99 249 to 52 213 hectares. It was caused the improvement of industrial areas from 34 376 to 85 444 hectares. It also happened in bush areas from 14 000 to 33 000 hectares (SARCS without date).

The conversion of arable agricultural areas in Indonesia along the period 1991 – 1993 gained 106 424 hectares or more than 53 000 hectares annually which became 54%, 16%, and 4.9% as estates, industries, and government offices. It is true that 51% of inequitable land usage happened in Java because the development of industries and estates drastically. The land agricultural conversion from 1981 to 1986 was 37 300 hectares annually, and 16 500 or 44.23% became estates, industries, and infrastructure. It can be concluded that the amount of inequitable of land usage from 1983 to 1994 decreased 104 581 hectares and mostly it happened in north beach of Java (Kustiwan 1997).

Based on the statistical agricultural census 1983 and 1993, the reduction of agricultural areas from 0.58 to 0.41 hectares in Java. The result of drastic reduction of agricultural land has also influenced 56% on the national rice supply. The fact showed that 48.4% of agricultural workers do not pass the elementary school, 40.5% graduated from elementary school, and 11.1% graduated from high school.

The result of this was that the reduction of agricultural products. In the 1984, Indonesia had become the source of rice. In contrast, the production of rice has dramatically decreased. Unfortunately, it should import rice from other countries such as Philippine and Thailand. In 1994, The East Java which could produce 700 000 tons but in 1995, it only could produce 250 000 tons.

## THE PHENOMENON OF LAND CONVERSION IN EAST JAVA

Until recently, agricultural wetland including rice farm and *tambak* (fishponds made by damming) in Indonesia, at large, and in the province of East Java, in particular, is still popular in terms of economic usage. However, the phenomena of wetland conversion are increasing causing concern and fear that the wetland ecosystem will end in extinction. The width of East Javas's wetland makes up 33.68% of this province's overall land taking the fourth place after Riau, Jambi, and South Kalimantan.

Pakpahan *et al.* (1993), after conducting studies in four provinces in Java Island in different period of time, found out that there had been 23 140 ha per year (table 3) of agricultural land converted into non-agricultural purposes. East Java held the record as 43 947 hectare (8798 ha/year) of its agricultural land had been converted. Central Java was in the second place with 40 327 hectare of land has been converted (6721.2 ha/year). West Java was in the third place with 37 033 hectare of land had been converted (7406.6 ha/year). Yogyakarta was the last in the list with 2910 hectare of land had been converted (223.8 ha/year). East Java held the record because it has the widest agricultural land in Java on the contrary to that of Yogyakarta. The function of agricultural land was changed into non agricultural purposes like settlement, industry, infrastructure and the usage of dryland.

Tabel 3. The conversion of agricultural land usage into non-agricultural usage in four provinces of Java Island

Propinice	Year	The cumulative width (ha)	The average width of land conversion (ha/year)
West Java	1981 – 1991	37 033	7406.6
Center Java	1981 – 1986	40 327	6721.2
Yogyakarta	<i>Pelita</i> III - IV	2910	223.8
East Java	1987 - 1991	43 947	8798.0
Java		124 217	23 141.0

Source: Pakpahan *et al.* (1993)

According to Anwar (1994) most of Indonesian big cities including Surabaya have what so called as agricultural hinterland (including land for fishery or fishponds) which has good access to the city area. The availability of this land is permanent in nature however the demand keeps increasing especially in the city area. Population growth, better income, economic activities and migration from other areas and the city's hinterland (urbanization) were considered as responsible to this condition. The high demand for land was the main reason explaining the rapid conversion of agricultural land into other purposes beside the decline of agricultural business and economic problems caused by the increasing of living cost.

The economic growth of the province of East Java is considered as rapidly developing as its capital city Surabaya was pointed as the Central Business District (CBD) with Gresik, Sidoarjo, and Pasuruan as its hinterland. During the period of five years (1995-2000) the availability of land for fishery had been declined up to 40% in

the Province of East Java (Table 4). It indicates a big scale of land conversion into non fishery purposes had taken place.

Table 4. The development of land for fishery's width and its changes in the Province of East Java

District	Land for fishery's width (ha)						Change	
	1995	1996	1997	1998	1999	2000	ha	%
Tuban	423	423	423	423	423	340	-83	-0.20
Lamongan	130	100	133	133	193	125	-5	-0.04
Gresik	5 428	5 442	5 443	5 443	5 450	3 292	-2136	-0.39
Surabaya	1 621	1 651	1 651	1 651	722	355	-1266	-0.78
Bangkalan	1 719	1 719	1 593	1 567	1 567	1 447	-272	-0.16
Sampang	1 938	1 938	1 942	1 942	1 942	1 253	-685	-0.35
Pamekasan	346	263	268	329	329	280	-66	-0.19
Sumenep	607	643	646	646	653	490	-117	-0.19
Sidoarjo	2 911	1 297	1 242	1 242	1,242	1 100	-1811	-0.62
Pasuruan	1 243	1 243	1 381	1 381	1,381	1 030	-213	-0.17
Kota Pasuruan	450	421	393	363	393	350	-100	-0.22
Probolinggo	494	530	536	536	538	280	-214	-0.43
Kota Probolinggo	121	121	80	80	80	97	-24	-0.20
Situbondo	187	187	187	187	187	127	-60	-0.32
Banyuwangi	40	36	36	36	32	26	-14	-0.35
Muncar	78	72	72	72	72	52	-26	-0.33
Jember	8	8	7	7	7	5	-3	-0.38
Lumajang	3	3	3	3	5	2	-1	-0.33
Malang	14	14	14	14	12	11	-3	-0.21
Blitar	2	3	3	3	3	1	-1	-0.50
Tulungagung	2	2	2	3	3	1	-1	-0.50
Jumlah (ha)	17 765	16 116	16 055	16 061	15 234	10 664	-7101	-0.40

Source: The Annual Book of the Province of East Java's Statistics for Fishery 1995-2000

The rapid development of industry in East Java was responsible for the blooming of new settlements in the region. These new settlements had occupied productive agricultural land. The actors behind this land conversion are ordinary peoples, private companies and the government. It can be easily predicted that the development of these new settlements had triggered the rapid and uncontrollable conversion of agricultural and fishery land. The wetland's ecosystem was seen as *terra incognita* and underdeveloped and neglected. Worse, the government shared this view and assumed wetland as potential land for production interest by way of land conversion. In short, the regulation related to the ecosystem of the wetland does not exist.

Agricultural sectors still have great importance in the economic growth of the Province of East Java. However, this business is dominated by small scale practitioners as 72 % of the peasant families own less than 0.50 hectare of land. Despite small average of land ownership, East Java is one of the nation's rice

providers with 18.3 % of contribution. In 1999 the production of rice was around 9 million tons gathered from 1.76 million hectare of agricultural land with the productivity of 51.25 kw/ha. The productivity is higher compared to what is recorded 10 years earlier which is 51.06 kw/ha.

## **THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC IMPACTS OF AGRICULTURAL LAND CONVERSION TOWARDS THE PEASANTS OF EAST JAVA**

The increasing of physical development in East Java such as infrastructural development, industrial development, housing development, had a great deal in marginalizing the existence and the position of the farmers. The fund of these projects was derived from APBN (National Budget) or various foreign aids. Local companies with local and foreign capital or the combination of both were also involved in these developmental projects.

All the projects definitely need land. Facts in the field showed that most of the land used for the developmental purposes was previously owned by the farmers. To add to our sadness and concern, most of the converted land was strategic in terms of location, extremely fertile and productive.

Actually, the agricultural land conversion will less probelamatical if the life of the farmers whose land has been converted get better. Yet, facts show another story. The price paid for the land was usually lower than what they get in the free market. As the result, they were not able to buy another patch of land with the same condition (withdh, fertility and location) in another place. In other words, the farmers and the agricultural activities were pushed into less fertile soil. In short, this condition had deemed the farmers into series of economic problems.

Worse, some of the 'rouge element' of the government officers had misused their power in searching for the right land to satisfy the need of domestic and foreign investors. Using the government projects as the pretext of this land take over to get minimum price was not unknown. It became a new venue for the blooming practice of CCN (Corruption, Collusion, Nepotisme). Therefore, it had speed up the marginalization process of the farmers.

The process of land conversion had created the instability in the agricultural activities which is the main source of the farmers' earning. The farmers lost some or all of their agricultural land which is their bread and butter. In 1980s Hayami and Kikuchi reported the average of landownership in East Java was less than 0.5 hectare. Recently, the average has dropped into 0.25 hectare only.

This meager ownership or no ownership at all are in line with the small income of the farmers which is not sufficient if they want to enjoy a merely modest living, especially, if they only count on the earning from agricultural activities. According to Mustafa (2005) the 0.25 hectare of fertile land will produce 1 ton of dry rice. If the price of the rice is Rp 2000 per kilogram, the total sales will be Rp 2000 000. If the production cost is Rp 650 000, the benefit will be Rp 1350 000. This earning is gained in four months periods so that the monthly average of income will be Rp 337 500.



If during the dry season the land is planted with corn, within three months the farm will produce 1 ton of corn. If one kilogram of corn is valued Rp 1000, it means 1 ton of corn will worth Rp 1000 000. Assuming the production cost is Rp 300 000, the total benefit will be Rp 700 000 which means the farmer only earn Rp 233 000 monthly. In the break time after planting rice of corn, the farmers plant another crops if the land's condition permit to do so. However, the available land is not always suitable for the intended crops. Considering the gross calculation above and assuming there is no disturbance to the crops such as pests or plague the earning from agricultural activities on the 0.25 hectare of land does not meet the minimum regional wage standard which is Rp 600 000 per month. In other words, the earning of farmers who own only 0.25 hectare of land is already below the minimum regional wage standard meanwhile there are plenty more farmers who own land less that 0.25 hectare.

Meagre income on-farm causes the farmers to look for another living off-farm. This step is a common strategy conducted by farmers to deal with the subsisten life. New studies show the farmer's earning considerably varies recently. Meaning, the off-farm income is bigger compared to the on farm earning. A study conducted by Yustika (2003) in Malang East Java found that 80 % of the farmers' earning is derived from their off-farm activities. The off-farm activities the farmers do are construction workers, *ojek* drivers (a motorcycle taxi), and little sundry shop owners. Therefore, their formal job is as farmer yet factually they do not live on farming anymore. In this context there is a solid ground to formulate that there is no more 'peasant society', a society who live on farming and their needs are fulfilled by farming.

The losing of their land had caused the farmer to change their occupation. The cultural value which constitutes land as the source of living has therefore has faded. The farmer's social structure had also changed from land owners to low income city dwellers.

The poverty that grips the farmers makes the children dare not to dream to become farmers like their parents. Interviews with some respondents' children directed to some reasons why they do not want to profess as farmer. First, farming is perceived as under class profession so that they will gain no respect from others. Second, farming is considered as seasonal job that will not guarantee they will earn handsomely. Third, their land is not fertile that they only able to plant rice once a year during the wet season. For those who have no wet land but own *tegalan* (dry field near the rice farm) and *kebun* (small farm or garden planted to make a living) thing is not better for this land's low productivity. Fourth, they live in the urban fringe which gives them a great deal of exposure to the life style of the city dwellers.

Most of the farmers' descendants move to big cities like Surabaya to work for informal sectors. Meaning, villages have lost their potential man power in agricultural activities. Furthermore, the migration of people from villages to cities to work for informal sectors or so-called as premature urbanization creates the problem of big population in the cities which generates various social problems like the emerging of slump areas, high rates of crimes and health problems.

## FORMULATION

The conversion of agricultural land into non agricultural purposes has narrowed down the availability of the agricultural land. The impacts of agricultural land conversion which can be formulated are:

1. The change of the farmer's social structure from land owners to *tuna lahan* (peasants)
2. The *tuna lahan* have to seek for other off-farm jobs to make the end meets. Normally, they earn more from working off-farm compared to what they get from on-farm activities.
3. The losing of the land has caused the farmers to quit from agricultural sectors. It transforms them from farmers to non-farmers. Lack of preparation in terms of facing the challenges of the new jobs, lack of skills and education doomed the ex-farmers to work for informal sectors only.

## CONCLUSION

The implications that can be made are the agricultural land conversion into non agricultural purposes pushes farmers out of agricultural sectors and seek for side jobs or completely change their profession. Hence, the agricultural society is indeed in the brink of extinction for farmers are no longer dependent to agricultural activities in fulfilling their needs. Moreover, these ex-farmers can only work for low income informal sectors like being coolie, construction worker, and porter in markets, petty merchant, and *ojek* driver. Thus, agricultural land conversion into non agricultural purposes had not enhanced the living standards of most of the farmers in that area.

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**Paper 3      Southeast Asia in the New Cold War: A Socialist Analysis**

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**Abstract**

Southeast Asia was the battleground for the longest and most sustained conflicts of the first cold war. Vietnam, Laos and Cambodia actually saw American invasions while Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand and Indonesia had active insurgencies. According to Noam Chomsky, this cold war occurred because the USA will not allow any country to succeed in an alternate route to development. Now with the retreat of Communism, the US has gotten afraid of another ideology that might seek another route to development that would prove capitalism inadequate. While many Muslim countries are capitalistic, there are provisions in Islam that prohibit some of the most brutal practices of capitalism; usury, exploitation of labor, profiting without adding value and the use of capital to make money. Because of this and because it needs an enemy, the US, with its client states have created a new cold war against Islam. Using Australia as its client in the region, the Americans are fomenting conflict, insurrection and ethnic liberation to maintain control. Again Southeast Asia is a major battleground.

In addition to doing the bidding of its suzerain, America, Australia has imperialistic intentions of its own. Now with its control of the economy and political system of East Timor, its military control of the Indonesian military, its involvement in the Muslim insurgencies in Thailand and the Philippines, Australia is in a position to gain control of the oil and other resources of Southeast Asia. While this is happening, they are building up their military and gladly accepting the role of regional "sheriff" for the American empire.

In this paper, using a Socialist analysis, I will argue that the real enemy of Southeast Asia is Australia with its American overlord and that the Muslim insurgencies play into the hands of these new imperialists.

A new cold war is raging throughout the world. Like the previous cold war, this one is between the powers of corporate wealth with their political appendages led by the United States and supported by its clients Britain, Japan, Australia and Israel on the one side and those states and societies which follow a different path to development on the other. The corporate capitalists and the governments they possess can never permit the world to know that capitalism is not the only way to economic development.<sup>1</sup> Just as in the first cold war when these corporate states sought to punish and destroy socialism and communism, in this cold war, they seek to punish and destroy Islam, a religion that forbids some of the practices of capitalism such as usury, the exploitation of the labor of others for undeserved profit and the buying and selling of commodities for profit without adding value. The sins of Islam are the virtues of capitalism. This new cold war, like the previous one is being fought primarily in developing countries and once again Southeast Asia is a major battleground. Just as before this region has the right combination of conditions for a proxy in long standing mistrust between Muslims and other religious groups. It is for this reason, along with the fact that much of Southeast Asia possesses natural wealth, particularly oil, that Australia is committed to gaining economic and political control of as much of this region as possible and exploiting the entire area for the benefit of itself and its supporter the USA.<sup>2</sup>

Already in the name of regional security and democracy, Australia has taken charge of the economy of East Timor, a country that, because of the agitation and propaganda of Australia along with the USA, Canada, Britain and Portugal has broken away from Indonesia. A leaked Australian Defense Force document has revealed that Australia's "first objective" in East Timor is to "seek access" for the Australian military so that it can exercise "influence over East Timor's decision-making."<sup>3</sup> This is the language of Australian diplomats for what Socialists would call "imperialism" and "aggression." Now Australia is agitating for the further break up of the country in hopes that it may soon control the wealth of Aceh.<sup>4</sup> Along with the other powers who would gain hegemony over the world's political and economic systems, Australia is fomenting conflict and destabilization throughout the region.<sup>5</sup> In the name of a "war on terror" the Bush regime, the Blair regime and the Howard regime have decimated civil rights and individual liberties within their own countries and put in power others who will obey their commands and decimate the rights of people in states they've been given to rule.<sup>6</sup> (For example, Gloria Aroyo, an American, who was put in control of the Philippines after a US encouraged impeachment of the elected president.) Under the propaganda of regional security and stability, these same states are fueling conflict between government

<sup>1</sup> Noam Chomsky, *Rogue States*, South End Press, (Cambridge, MA), 2000, 206-7 Most of the general ideas in this introduction come from Chomsky and other anti Neo-liberals and are applied to the situation of Amero-Australian hegemony in Southeast Asia.

<sup>2</sup> Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region*, Issue 18, III-IV, <http://www.dsp.org.au/links/node/116#I> (Visited, 23 October, 2007)

<sup>3</sup> John Pilger, *Australia Builds its Empire*, *New Statesman*, 26 June, 2006, 23

<sup>4</sup> Terry Townsend, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific*, *The Activist*, 11, 3, February, 11, 2001

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> For a overview of this see Human Rights Watch, Counterterrorism, <http://www.hrw.org/doc/?t=ct&c=austra> (visited 10 November, 2007)

supporters and Muslims in Thailand, between political parties in Malaysia and are taking advantage of the oppression in Myanmar in order to put in charge, in those states, governments that will imitate their Western consumer capitalist societies and turn over the majority of wealth and resources to their Australian sponsors<sup>7</sup> as has already happened in East Timor.

To understand Australia's paradoxical position as both a client state of the USA and an empire builder in the area of Southeast Asia, it is important to analyze the situation from a dialectical perspective. To a large extent that dialectical analysis has already been done by Terry Townsend. He explains that the foreign policy position of Australia has three aspects which coincide with its own sphere of influence and its sycophantic support of American imperialist interest. In the area of the Middle East and most of Asia, the Australian ruling class falls in line with American military and economic policies because the interests of its rulers are largely in line with those of the American ruling class. In the region of Australia's sphere of influence including Melanesia, Papua New Guinea, Fiji and parts of Indonesia, where the USA has little immediate concern, Australia is pursuing its own aggressive imperialism, with, of course the consent of its sponsor state willing to allow that piece of the global pie to its deputy sheriff, a role John Howard seems willing, even proud, to accept from his superior, George W. Bush. The third area, which includes Southeast Asia, is the one in which Australia is in an apparent contradiction. It is pursuing its own aggressive policies while, at the same time, acting as American's deputy sheriff and enforcing American policy. This is working because Australia's ruling class is determined to enforce its need for maintaining and increasing an order favorable to global consumerism even though that order favors the American commercial class even more than it does Australia's.<sup>8</sup> Problems only occasionally arise when the economic needs of the Australian and American ruling classes, which emphasize stability and order, conflict with the aggressive intentions of the political and military rulers of both countries. Those intentions stress the need to foment division and conflict that they can exploit to their own advantage in building<sup>9</sup>, under the guise of democratization, an Anglo-American-Australian global empire.<sup>10</sup> The structure of this empire is already unfolding. The USA has overall hegemony over a global political and economic block in which it uses financial blackmail and propaganda to put in place governments in the various states that will obey its commands and carry out its policies. This can be done because the United States has no regard for international law and standards except when they can be used

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<sup>7</sup> Australia is caught in one of the contradictions of international capitalism, it needs stability for its economic interests while needing conflict in order to divide and conquer in the region. It seems to be pursuing both sides of the contradiction at the same time. For a good explanation of how this is being done see Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region*, cited above.

<sup>8</sup> This explanation is given by Townsend in the same article cited above.

<sup>9</sup> "Building" rather than "conquering" in that these countries have already put in place in most of Southeast Asia governments that accept there hegemony.

<sup>10</sup> For one representative example of how American imperialist policy can coincide with that of its client, Australia, in Southeast Asia, see Chalmers Johnson, *Blowback*, Time Warner, (London), 2000, 87



against those states which will not obey the American masters.<sup>11</sup> The American empire is enforced by various client states in the divers regions of the world. Britain enforces American hegemony in Europe, Japan does the same in Northeast Asia, although fortunately China somewhat alleviates that. Israel tries to be the enforcer in the Middle East. Ethiopia and Brazil seem to have been given that role in North Africa and Latin America respectively, while Australia is the American deputy in Southeast Asia and parts of the Pacific.

It has so far been easy for Australia to maintain it's hypocritical position as to its intentions in Southeast Asia without attracting too much attention. There are, however, two obvious exceptions where the insincerity is graphic. The first of these is Myanmar or Burma where Australian officials talk in impeccably liberal and moralistic tones about human rights and democracy while maintaining relations with the military dictatorship.<sup>12</sup> They support programs for the opposition forces and for refugees while encouraging them to be passive, patient and peaceful. At the same time, they seek negotiations and compromise between the oppressor and the oppressed. This will put them in a good position to exert their control no matter who emerges the victor in the struggle.<sup>13</sup> Undoubtedly the Australian ruling class needs a measure of stability in Burma so as not to affect their other imperialistic interests in Southeast Asia but are also making ready to go in at the earliest possible time to exploit cheap labor and a developing consumerist market.

The other exception to Australia's ability to hide its imperialism while pretending to promote stability, democracy and human rights is Indonesia where the Howard regime encourages conflict and supports independence movements for disgruntled regions while, at the same time, supplying arms and military training to the Indonesian military. This again is an attempt to gain control over whatever political situation emerges. When independence movements do succeed, Australia will no doubt incorporate those regions into its empire as it has East Timor.<sup>14</sup>

Consider some of Australia's other hypocritical positions. These should make it crystal clear how the Howard regime is using conflict to gain influence in other countries of the region. It has condemned one party rule and what it calls human rights abuses in Vietnam<sup>15</sup> while remaining silent on the same two issues as applied to Singapore. Yet Singapore also has one party rule and has been cited by a number of human rights

<sup>11</sup> This tendency of the USA is explained and documented well by Noam Chomsky in his book, *Hegemony or Survival: America's Quest for Global Dominance*, A&U (Cambridge, MA), 2003, 20-1

<sup>12</sup> Craig Skehan, *Downer Soft on Burma's Hard Men*, SMH, April 11, 2002, at <http://www.smh.com.au/articles/2002/04/11/1018333380016.html> (Visited, 16 November 2007)

<sup>13</sup> This policy is discussed but soft pedaled in an article by the Asian Human Rights Commission, *BURMA: Torture, military dictatorship, political accountability*, at <http://www.ahrchk.net/ua/mainfile.php/2003/463/> (Visited 10 November, 2007)

<sup>14</sup> See Australian Democratic Socialist Party, *The Role of Australian Imperialism in the Asia Pacific Region*, cited above.

<sup>15</sup> Human Rights Watch – Asia, *World Report*, at <http://www.hrw.org/wr2k3/asia9.html> (Visited 16 November, 2007) and Alan Cadman, MP (Australia) *Human Rights Vietnam*, at <http://www.thienlybuutoa.org/Misc/HumanRights-Vietnam.htm> (Visited, 16 November, 2007)

organizations for its dismal practices<sup>16</sup>. At the same time that the Australian government claims to advocate Democracy and representative government in Burma<sup>17</sup>, it does not apply the same standard to the even more autocratic and authoritarian regime in Brunei.<sup>18</sup> Of course Brunei is the Iraq of Southeast Asia and Australia no doubts wants its oil.

Just as coming down on both sides of a conflict in such places as Indonesia demonstrates the contradiction in interest in Australia's ruling class, the dichotomy between the military and economic interests is also indicated by Australia's selective condemnations in the Southeast Asian region. In Vietnam and Myanmar their economic interests are weak so they can pursue their aggressive imperialism by fomenting conflict in the societies. On the other hand, Australia has strong economic interests in Singapore and Brunei so stability is needed in those countries in order to enable the Australian business sub-class to continue their consumerist exploitation in those countries which already have friendly governments. The interests of the ruling classes in those two countries coincide with those of the elite class in Australia. However, eventually the contradictions in the interests of the Australian military and business sub-classes will lead to major divisions in the country itself as well as conflicts for control of its foreign policy.

In a working paper dealing with these contradictions with more sympathy for the position of the Australian government than is given here, Mark Beeson claims that even the regime of John Howard is aware of the incompatibility between its strategic and cultural ties or in the words of John Howard himself, as quoted by Beeson, "between our history and our geography." Beeson goes on to admit that "it is hard to imagine the Howard government doing anything other than dutifully following the tradition of Australian foreign policy that has seen Australia fight alongside the US..."<sup>19</sup>

Right now this incompatibility is quite visible in Australian attitudes and policies toward the religious conflict in Thailand. In December of 2002, Howard announced his support for and willingness to use the Bush neo-con first strike policy in the region to respond to terrorist threats. In the statement, Howard also denounced Muslim insurgencies in the region.<sup>20</sup> This gave the Shinawatra regime encouragement to pursue a failed policy of heavy handed oppression in the South of the country. This very policy

<sup>16</sup> For example, see Human Rights Watch - Asia, Singapore, at <http://www.thienlybuutoa.org/Misc/HumanRights-Vietnam.htm> (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

<sup>17</sup> CNN story, Europe Urges China to Pressure Myanmar, at <http://www.cnn.com/2007/WORLD/asiapcf/09/27/myanmar.reax.ap/index.html?iref=newssearch> (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

<sup>18</sup> Amnesty International Report 2004, Brunei Darussalam, at <http://web.amnesty.org/report2004/brn-summary-eng>, (Visited, 16 November, 2007) Even the US State Department has a negative report on democracy and human rights in Brunei, see US State Department, *Brunei: Country Report on Human Rights*, at <http://www.state.gov/g/drl/rls/hrrpt/2005/61602.htm> (Visited, 17 November, 2007)

<sup>19</sup> Mark Beeson, *Living with Leviathan: Australia, Asia and American Hegemony*, Unpublished working paper, (Asia Research Centre), Murdoch University, Perth, 2005, 13

<sup>20</sup> Mike Head and Peter Symonds, *Australian government invokes first-strike doctrine in Asia*, World Socialist Website, December 7, 2002, at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2002/dec2002/howa-d07.shtml> (visited 19 November, 2007)

was then denounced by the right-wing Heritage Foundation which is a policy advising body to George W. Bush. In their statement, Heritage Foundation accused Shinawatra of using "Thai security forces [to] create an international terrorist problem where there had been none before."<sup>21</sup> This, of course, left Howard, who did not directly denounce these heavy handed tactics, looking like a fool. Australia's reaction was to then send a delegation of Australian Muslims to Thailand and invite Thai Muslims to Australia for an "interfaith dialogue."<sup>22</sup> It is unclear whether or not Howard considered this to be a first strike. What it does do is to again demonstrate plainly that Australia is both encouraging the government of Thailand to use all available methods to fight Muslim insurgents and, at the same time, encourage those very Muslim insurgents. It also demonstrates the contradiction in Howard's policy of unconditional obedience to the Bush regime and pursuit of an independent policy of imperialism.

In the primarily Muslim state of Malaysia, there is now little ethnic conflict for the Australian military sub class to exploit. It has therefore turned its attention to political differences. Throughout the 1980s and 1990s, the Australian government fought a recurring battle with the Malaysian Prime Minister, Mahatir Muhammad. Taking advantage especially of the political crisis that developed over the imprisonment of Anwar Ibrahim in 2000. Ibrahim had turned from support of Muhammad to being his staunchest critic. The Australian government involved itself in this domestic political conflict to try to install a government in Malaysia that would be less outspoken about Australia's aggressive intentions in the region. At the same time, both the Hawke-Keating and the Howard regimes continued to train and equip the Malaysian military through the Malaysia-Australia Joint Defense Program (MAJDPP). Australia has also maintains a military presence at the Royal Malaysian Air Force Base in Butterworth.<sup>23</sup> To be fair it must be admitted that this situation indicates hypocrisy and contradiction on the parts of both Australia and Malaysia. Yet, as has been pointed out a number of times it is Australia that is to be feared.

It must be reiterated that this paper is a Socialist interpretation of recent Australian foreign policy towards Southeast Asia. Probably consumer capitalists in any region of the world will disagree with the thesis. It has been the purpose here to demonstrate that the real threat and danger to the Southeast Asian region is not internal conflict, not so-called terrorism, but rather the imperialistic intentions of Australia both in its role as George W. Bush's deputy sheriff and in its role as a would be regional military superpower. There are those who might agree that Australia intends to gain hegemony over the region but attribute that intention to fears of China's rising influence rather than to the needs of Australia's own internal bourgeoisie and the contradictions within that ruling class between the business and military interests. The November elections in Australia will probably not change much except perhaps bring in a more independent and

<sup>21</sup> John Roberts, *Violence in Southern Thailand Escalates*, World Socialist Website, April 15, 2005, at <http://www.wsws.org/articles/2005/apr2005/thai-a15.shtml> (Visited 16 November, 2007)

<sup>22</sup> Alexander Downer, MP (Australia's Foreign Minister), *Australian Muslims to Visit Thailand*, Media Release FA80, Government of Australia, 22 June, 2005

<sup>23</sup> See, Craig G. Snyder, *Southeast Asian Perceptions of Australia's Foreign Policy*, *Contemporary Southeast Asia*, 28, 2 (2002), 333

intelligent Prime Minister to replace Howard. There could also be a slight shift in policy. This would be because the Labor Party will be more favorable to the interests of the business sub class while the Howard regime has leaned more towards the military sub class along with its links to the aggressive regime in Washington and in support of protecting and expanding the American empire.

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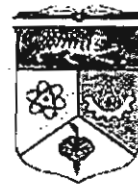
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**MAHIDOL-UKM 3**  
**DEFINING HARMONY IN SOUTHEAST ASIA:  
COMPETING DISCOURSES, CHALLENGES AND  
INTERPRETATIONS**  
**The Third International Malaysia-Thailand Conference  
on Southeast Asian Studies**



29 November – 1 December 2007

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**SESSION 5**  
**LANGUAGE IN ASEAN**  
**SEMINAR ROOM 1**

**Chairperson: Dr. Saran Kaur Gill**

1. Searching Harmony in Asean Relationship with Civil Society. - *Yuyun Wahyuningrum*
2. Language and Ethnic Relations –A Case study on Reverse Situations: Thais, a Minority in Kedah Malaysia and Malays a Minority in Pathum Thani in Thailand. - *Umayyah binti Haji Umar*
3. Maintaining Harmony: The Role of the Judge in the Malaysian Courtroom.  
- *Noraini Ibrahim*



**Paper 2      Language and Ethnic Relations – A Case Study on Reverse Situations: Thais, a Minority in Kedah, Malaysia and Malays a Minority in Pathum Thani, Thailand**

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**Abstract**

The author developed an understanding of the Kedah-Thai communities during her research on Thai Kedah dialects spoken in Kedah, Malaysia. How they co-exist as a minority group maintaining religious and cultural practices within the dominant Malay and Muslim society.

Several years later, the author undertook a reverse study on the Bangkok-Melayu communities living in and around greater Bangkok and reporting on their assimilation.

This paper attempts to relate how a minority, the Thai and Malay communities, lives alongside the dominant group from the perspective of language and ethnic relations.

**Introduction**

In undertaking my research on the classification of Thai-Kedah dialects, Umaiya (2003) under a study leave grant from the University of Malaya, I came across Thai Buddhists who regard themselves as Malaysians, a minority group living in small communities in Kedah, Malaysia. These small communities are scattered in the state of Kedah, centred on Buddhist temples living peacefully with the predominantly majority Malay community. Of interest in this paper is the community living in Naka, Kedah.

In the course of conducting my study on the assimilation of Bangkok-Melayu communities in the Bangkok metropolis and surrounding areas under a grant from the Asian Fellows Scholarship, Umaiya (2003), I came across Melayu people who regard themselves as Thais, a minority group living peacefully in small communities scattered in and around Bangkok metropolis. Of interest in this paper is the community living in Khlong Bang Pho, Prathum Thani.

This brought new challenges to my study, opportunity to extend the scope into language and ethnic relations; a study on reverse situations in line with the focus of the Asian Fellows Scholarship for cohorts to conduct multidisciplinary research.

For a better understanding on ethnic relations between majority and minority communities, an appreciation on the background of the two communities to be studied would be useful.

### Thais in Malaysia

In my research, Umaiyah (2003) on speakers of Thai dialects in Kedah, Malaysia, I came across many small communities of Malaysians who speak a Thai dialect as their first language. The communities can be Muslims or Buddhist. The Buddhist community can be easily identified as it is centred on Buddhist temples. The Muslims are sometimes referred to as Samsam.

Kobkua (1996) focussed on the origin and ethnicity of the Samsam. There is scant explanation of the people's ancestry or why these Thai-speaking Malaysians are in Malaysia. Kobkua, herself, believes that the Samsam were originally Siamese who converted to Islam in their original settlements in Siam by the tenth and eleventh centuries. They migrated to Kedah due to socio-religious, other socio-economic and political factors. In note number 3 of her paper, she admits of a continuous flow of Muslims and Buddhist labour migration which could be due to floods and scarcity of foodstuff.

Findings from the classification of Thai-Kedah dialect, Umaiyah (2003) suggest that Buddhist Thai dialect speakers in Kedah belong to the Sukhothai people. Specifically, the people of Baling (in South-East Kedah) and Naka (in Central-East Kedah) could be migrants from Satun area as Kobkua says; or they could be descendants of Sukhothai families, at par with the people of Satun, who moved to the interior of Kedah hundreds of years ago. Those in Kubang Cenok (North Kedah) appear to be recent migrants from Songkhla.

### Malays in Bangkok

Existence of Malays in Bangkok was reported by Tadmor (1992, 1995), Jitmoud (1988), Damrileert (2002) and Umaiyah (2003). The first group of Malays were brought to Bangkok as prisoners in 1786 after Pattani was defeated by forces from Bangkok, Jitmoud (1988:108). The Thais took some 4,000 Pattani Malays in ships to Bangkok as slave and other prisoners were marched 1,200 kilometres to Bangkok.

Raids took place in 1791, 1808 and 1832 to crush efforts for self rule in Pattani. Kedah was raided in 1838 after declaring self rule. The objective of these exercises was to weaken Pattani and Kedah; and to provide slave labour used for the building of Bangkok that was rising to replace the devastated Ayuthaya.

The Pattani prisoners upon arrival to Bangkok were 'processed' and sent for resettlement in different locations in and around Bangkok. They were provided with land to develop and settle. It is observed that the Malay Muslims were settled along the Khlong (canals), probably for ease of transportation and abundance of land (forest at the time). Today, descendants of the communities can be detected starting from Khlong Banglampoo (within the greater compound of the old palace), travelling to the east until some 74 kilometres away at Bang Pakong River. The areas are dotted with mosques, Islamic schools and Muslim graveyards.

Malay Muslims from Kedah, Perlis, Kelantan and Penang were placed at Thanon Tok. Later they were moved to Khlong Saen Saep near Sai Kong Din in

Minburi. The descendants were moved to new khlong such as Khlong 17, 20, 21 and 22. Some were also moved to Tha-It and from Tha-It moved to Bang Bua Thong, Umaiya (2003: 21 – 22).

The extent of Bangkok-Melayu assimilation and subsequent dilution of language and cultural practices was found to be relatively high in all sites visited, Umaiya (2003). Malay is still spoken, albeit mostly by people aged 50 and above in Bang Bua Thong, Nonthaburi and in the villages of Khlong Bang Pho and Khlong Neng in Prathum Thani. The Malay dialect spoken in Bang Bua Thong has a distinct dialect and has been a subject of further research, Umaiya (2005).

### Related Literature

According to Bealey (1999: 123) ethnicity can be defined as 'the characteristic of belonging to an ethnic group,' involving identification 'with people one sees as similar to one's self.' Eriksen (1993) examined a number of approaches to ethnicity and said that, 'All of the approaches agree that ethnicity has something to do with the *classification of people and group relations*'. The word ethnicity still has a ring of 'minority issues' and 'race relations', but in anthropology it refers to aspects of relationships between group which consider themselves and regarded by others, as being culturally distinctive.

Macdonald (1998:327) defines a racial or ethnic minority is a category of people, distinguished by physical or cultural traits, who are socially disadvantaged. Distinct from the dominant 'majority', in other words minority are set apart and subordinated. The breadth of the term 'minority' has expanded in recent years beyond people with particular racial and ethnic traits.

Eriksen (1993) argues that in the contemporary world, virtually everybody is forced to take on an identity as a citizen. Since some form of cultural and ethnic variation must be 'matter out of place' to nationalists, ethnic variation is frequently defined by dominant groups as a problem, as something one has to 'cope with'. Downright genocide and enforced displacement are the most brutal methods employed by states in their dealings with minorities. There were instances of genocide in the Americas and Australia after colonisation by Europeans; and more recently attempts at 'ethnic cleansing' in Serbian-Bosnia conflict.

Ethnic boundary mechanisms function differently, depending on the social networks in the areas, Sandra Wallman (1986). In her paper, Wallman found interesting differences in majority-minority relationships between two poly-ethnic areas in London with similar background. She reported that in Bow, there is strong polarisation and dichotomisation between traditional residents and immigrants and describing it as a closed homogeneous system. In Battersea, the relationships were much relaxed and socially less important, an open heterogeneous system.

Some interesting local research conducted on anthropology and minority studies includes: Sanitwong Na Ayuthaya Kusuma edited a Conference proceeding entitled 'The crack in Thai society? Integration and National Security Problems' (Sanitwong Na Ayuthaya, 1988), where questions on re-evaluation of national policy on minorities was posed. Jitmond Sawvane book on 'Ethnic Group: Thai Muslim'

(Jitmoud, 1998) covered the history on Thai Muslims and her perspective on Bangkok Malays. Phongsaphit Amara's study on 'Culture, Religion and Ethnic Group: Anthropological Approach to the Analysis of Thai Society' (Phongsapit, 1990) is another useful reference as the title suggests.

Satha Anand Chaiwat's in the article 'Muslim Studies: Radical Social Science and Otherness' (Satha Anand, 1998) advanced the idea of a 'radical social science' which chooses to reposit human as the centre of the study as a critical methodology appropriate for Muslim Studies. Suthawat Arong in the article 'Theory Solving Minority Problem' provides a different dimension in the approach for the study of minority problems – study the majority instead. It provides a comprehensive understanding of the issues facing Malay minority.

Satsaguan Ngampit's several publications are handy reference materials too: textbooks such as 'Principles of Cultural Anthropology' (Satsaguan, 2000) and 'Anthropology Research' (Satsaguan, 1999); and research findings such as 'The Family Institution of Ethnic Group in Bangkok Metropolis: A Case Study of Vietnamese Families' (Satsaguan, 2002), 'The Family Institution of Ethnic Group in Bangkok Metropolis and its vicinity: Case Study on Thai Songdam Families' (Satsaguan, 2001) provides insight on impact of Thai government policies on other minority groups too.

Louis Golomb book on 'Broker of Morality: Thai Ethnic Adaptation in a rural Malaysia Setting' is an interesting account on the Thai minority, Golomb (1978). The articles, 'The Patterns of Social Interaction in Malaysian Society', Abdullah Taib, (1981); and 'Some patterns of Ethnic Relations in Malaysia', Fatimah Daud (1985) provides some insight into this Malaysian plural society.

## **Objective**

The objective of this study is to:-

1. Investigate the relationship between Thai-Buddhist minority in Kedah and mainstream Malay majority in Malaysia; and between Malay minority in Prathum Thani (Bangkok metropolis) and mainstream Thai-Buddhist majority in Thailand
2. Identify and compare key elements determining minority-majority relationships of the groups under study in the two countries.
3. Assess factors (derived from key elements, in item 2 above) affecting harmonious living of the groups under study with its mainstream society.

## **Significance of the study**

The study of ethnic relations between minority and majority can contribute to better understanding on how societies can live together harmoniously and ultimately help develop peaceful living globally.

## **Statement of the Problem and Methodology**

The main problem that concerns this study is the language and ethnic relations between Thai-Buddhist minority in Kedah and mainstream Malay majority in Malaysia; and between Malay minority in Prathum Thani (Bangkok metropolis) and

on mainstream Thai-Buddhist majority in Thailand and the attendant issue of harmonious living of the communities under study.

The problem is approached through a comparison of three key elements impacting the two communities in the respective countries. These are: 1) Policy of the dominant power group (Government) towards their minorities, 2) Ethnicity and group identity and 3) Environment surrounding the community.

### **Site Selection and Data**

The criteria for site selection at the sites in Thailand and Malaysia are: the respective minority communities exist as a group surrounded by the majority group, retained their cultural identity (relatively to a higher degree) and strong internal community network. The Thai Kedah community living in the village of Naka (located 40 kilometres east of Alor Setar, the capital of Kedah; and the Bangkok Malays community living in Khlong Bang Pho, Prathumthani (a general area made up of four tambun namely: Bang Pho Nea and Bang Teay in Sam Khok ampher; Khu Khwang and Khu Bang Luang in Lad Lum Kaew ampher some 20 kilometres from the Prathumthani Provincial Office) are selected for this study.

Data on the respective Thai Kedah and Bangkok Malay communities in the two countries were gathered by the researcher during her previous research in Kedah at Thai Kedah villages in Naka, Baling and Kubang Cenok; in Bangkok and surrounding areas (including Khlong Bang Pho, Prathum Thani) at various Malay villages. Subsequently, the researcher conducted several follow-up research and site visits to these areas.

### **Conceptual Framework**

The framework used in this paper is mainly adopted from the Eriksen's (1993) together with other relevant concepts, broadly outlined below:-

#### **Minority**

The term minority should be treated within a context; the twin concepts minority and majority are relative and relational. An ethnic minority can be defined as a group which is numerically inferior to the rest of the population in a society, which is politically non-dominant and which is being reproduced as an ethnic category (cf. Minority Rights Group, 1990). A minority exist only in relation to a majority and vice versa, and their relationship is contingent on the relevant system boundaries, Eriksen (1993). These systems boundaries are nearly always state boundaries. The majority-minority relationship therefore changes if state boundaries are redrawn. Suthasasana in his article, Nithet (2001: 50), further argues that the minority should exhibit one or more differences, in terms of language, religion, tradition, culture, ancestry, skin colour, ethnicity, or nationality.

Today, states generally use one or several of the three main strategies, Eriksen (1993), in their dealings with minorities.

First, the state may insist on the assimilation of 'entropy-resistant elements'. One example, minorities such as Bretons and Provençals become French; that they shed their parochial languages and boundary markers and gradually come to identify themselves as French people. Although such policies of assimilation are often believed to help their target groups to achieve equal rights and to improve their social standing, they often inflict suffering and loss of dignity on the part of the minorities. Successful policies of assimilation ultimately lead to the disappearance of the minority.

Second, the state may opt for domination, which implies segregation on ethnic grounds. This entails the minority being physically removed from the majority, and this is frequently justified by referring to the presumed cultural inferiority of the former. South African apartheid was a very clear case of ethnic segregation, and many North American cities are also segregated also on ethnic lines.

The third main option for the state consists in transcending ethnic nationalist ideology and adopting an 'ideology' of multiculturalism, where citizenship and full civil rights need not imply a particular cultural identity, or a decentralised federal model providing a high degree of local autonomy.

Eriksen (1993) quoted Hirschmann (1970) that minorities may respond to state domination in three principal way; 'exit, voice or loyalty'. The first response or option is to assimilate; a common process, whether chosen or not. In some cases, it is nevertheless impossible for an ethnic minority to choose assimilation. Blacks in United States, for examples due to the skin colour ('race'). Skin colour, language and religion can become an ethnic characteristic. In minority-majority relations, therefore, we see the limitations of an analytical perspective on ethnicity which one-sidedly stresses the voluntary, strategic aspect. Many people are indeed victims of ethnic classifications which they themselves do not support.

The second response or option for minorities is in acquiescing in their subordination, or in other ways trying to co-exist peacefully with the nation state. Sometimes, they may negotiate for limited autonomy, in say, religious, linguistic or local political matters; some even reproduce their boundaries and identities informally. Some, such as North American Jews, Sino-Mauritians or Freetown Creoles (in Sierra Leone; cf. A Cohen, 1981), can even be considered elites.

The third option for minorities is to exit or secession which is always incompatible with state politics. In Handelman's sense, the group that favours secession and full independence are always ethnic communities.

These strategies are ideal types. In reality, both state tactics and minority response will combine strategies of assimilation and segregation (or ethnic incorporation), and minorities may be divided over issues of independence. 'Integration', is a term commonly used to describe combinations between assimilation and integration/incorporation. This implies the minority's simultaneous participation in the shared institution of society and its reproduction of group identity and ethnic boundaries.



## Indigenous peoples

In anthropology, the term 'indigenous people' is used to describe a non-dominant group in a delineated territory, with more or less acknowledged claim to aboriginality, Paine (1992). Indigenous groups are defined as non-state people, and they are always linked with a non-industrial mode of production and may not necessarily be 'first-comers'. Whilst this does not mean indigenous people do not take part in government or work in factories, but rather they represent a way of life which renders them particularly vulnerable to modernisation and the state.

Eriksen made two general points. First, there is no necessary contradiction between modernisation and retention of ethnic identity – on the contrary, Eriksen argues that modernisation are required for identity maintenance to be successful. The chances of survival of minority ethnic minorities depends more on their ability to master changes and utilise new technology and political possibilities for their own ends; and not cultural change in itself.

Second, a minority-majority relationship may involve other agents as well as the two groups. Third party may play an important role. Minority groups, particularly indigenous people generally lack military and political power, thus to a great extent rely on international support. The networks of the minority groups are extremely important in this regard. So is the role of cultural brokers and entrepreneurs: those individual and agencies which mediate between the people and the state. In some cases, there may be doubts as to whose interests these brokers actually represent: in Roosen's (1989) and van den Berghe's (1975) view, they may be career politicians in search of power.

## Boundary process and identity

Sandra Wallman (1986:243) suggested a model on ethnic boundary mechanisms:

When all your resources are in one overlapping local system, the possibilities for adaptation are much more limited, and your social relationships tend to be multiplex, – i.e. the person you work with is also your neighbour etc. – local relations are not linked with domains or systems outside in the same way, and ethnic groups are more likely to remain distinct.

The salience of ethnicity according to Wallman (1986) varies and that this variation can be investigated by looking at 'who does what with whom and for which purposes'.

It is commonly held that second and third generation immigrants in European cities experience identity problems because they 'live in two cultures', Liebkind (1989) and Leman (1987). Minorities too have the same problem, practicing their culture within the community and subscribing to the culture of the majority when 'outside'. Eriksen's (1989: 137-138) observation on identity process and perceptions: A clear 'acculturation' in terms of values and general orientation has taken place. The people in question may switch situationally between identities, at times resulting in

tension between these individuals and their parents. The boundaries preventing full assimilation may be both internally and externally constructed.

#### Public controversies over culture

According to Eriksen (1993), in many countries, there is a general agreement that ethnic distinctiveness is acceptable as long as it remains private – however, it is never easy to draw an unambiguous boundary between the private and public. Occasionally, there are public debates over the different cultural practices of minorities that do not conform to the norm of the (majority) society. It can be on religious, language or other practices of the minority.

#### Scope and limitation

In this paper, 'Culture consists of the values the members of a given group hold, the norms they follow, and the material goods they create.' Giddens (1991:31). Data in this study will revolve mainly around two dominant components of culture that differentiate minority and majority groups under study i.e. religion (Islam and Buddhism) and language (Malay and Thai), while other culture components such as clothing, housing will also be touched on as result of the former. Analysis will be conducted from a synchronic approach and historical data is intended to be for background information.

This paper will cover language of the communities under study as a differentiating factor for examining group identity. It is not the intent of this paper to report on the languages as a subject.

#### Analysis

The data will be analysed and presented within the broad outline of conceptual framework set out in this paper. It will be described, discussed and assessed along the lines of the key elements.

#### Minority

One should be mindful that groups which constitute majority in one area or country may be minorities elsewhere. Thais, for example, form a strong majority in Thailand, but the groups of people who consider themselves as Thais living in Malaysia, are considered by others as Thais living in Malaysia where they are minorities.

The same applies to Malays living in Bangkok, who are minority in face of the majority Thais in Thailand. Malays in Malaysia on one hand form the majority in Kedah and hold political influence in Malaysia. Eriksen (1993) state; a majority group can also become a minority through the inclusion of its territory in a larger system. Had the state boundary be redrawn and say Kedah is included into Thailand, and then Thais in Kedah will become the majority and the Malays in Kedah a minority.

Language and ethnicity of minority groups is dependent on Government policy. For example, in 1916, King Rama VI (1910 – 1925) decreed that all Thais

must have a surname. For Muslims, this meant abandoning their patronymic naming, and in addition they were encouraged to add Thai words onto the name, Jitmoud, (1988:115). Subsequent to the adoption of constitutional monarchy in 1932, the Government continued with nationalist policies; banning all Muslim first names and requirement to use names resembling Thai names; and new policies determined that schools were not allowed to teach Malay language (referred as Jawi). Umaiyah (2003) concluded that these policies contributed to the dilution of language and cultural practices of the Bangkok-Melayu.

The federal constitution of Malaysia provided for all 'residents' at the point of independence from Britain, in 1957, be given citizenship; irrespective of race, religion and origin. No restrictions were imposed on names, religion and education on the multi ethnic groups. It is permissible to establish schools to teach mother tongue language. Chinese and Indians continued with schools where Mandarin and Tamil are the medium of education, different to the national schools where Malay is the medium of education; all within the national education system. Malaysia takes a pluralistic approach towards ethnic relations. Thais in Kedah can choose to attend state sponsored schools or in some cases at Chinese medium schools. Within the community they speak their own Thai-Kedah dialect (Umaiyah, 2003 – A classification of Thai-Kedah dialects) and learn to speak and write Standard Thai from monks (posted to the temples from Bangkok) at the local temples.

Indigenous people, such as the Malays, Dayaks, Kadazans and Thais including and for their concurrence to accept migrants as citizens were given special rights, enshrined in the constitution; implemented under the new economic policy. In the context of the Siamese people practicing Buddhism, or Thais in Kedah, Malaysia, see themselves as Malaysians and do not attempt to be classified as a minority. Politically, these are small communities, insufficient to form a majority from within, such as, to dominate in a particular state or even parliamentary (made up of several state constituencies) constituency. For their support to the ruling party, the Thais are given political representation (one seat) in the unelected Senate of Malaysia.

For Malays in Bangkok, they are practicing Muslims and they too see themselves as part of the mainstream Thai society. Politically, Bangkok Malays are significant in number, sufficient to gain representation at the local council level and parliamentary seats. An interesting point to note is that representation of Bangkok Malays, though based on communal support, is within the framework of existing Thai political structure as part of mainstream political parties.

#### Indigenous people

One can argue that Thais in Kedah and generally in Malaysia can be classified as indigenous people in so far as anthropology definition, though there is no history of slaughter, forceful assimilation or neglect of the community despite centuries of warring between Malay states and Thailand. Within the Malaysian context, Thais has been accorded 'bumiputra status' (son of the soil – a redefinition of the term 'indigenous people') same as Malays and all other 'bumiputra or indigenous people' in Malaysia. They are entitled to the same 'special rights' accorded to 'bumiputra'.

In the case of the Bangkok Malays, it can also be argued that they too can be classified as indigenous people. In an earlier study, Umaiya (2003), it is found that they are a non-dominant group, lives within a delineated territory (as provided to them by the Thai Government) and linked to agricultural way of life vulnerable to modernisation and the state.

Erikson argues that indigenous peoples stand in potentially conflictual relationship with to the nation-state as an institution. In the case of the two communities, they do not express themselves as 'activists in the context of indigenous people' thus do not have a 'main political project' which is often presented as an attempt to survive as a culture bearing group' as envisioned by Erikson.

In the context of Thais in Kedah there are no reported territorial conflicts, the land they own are with valid legal titles. There may have been incidences of compulsory acquisition of such land by the state, undertaken within existing legal processes including avenues for appeal. The communities are located in the rural parts, so land acquisition is mainly for rural development such as road building. As a minority, they do represent a voting bloc and thus becomes an added attraction for political parties and politicians seeking power base.

Respondents during my fieldwork, aware of their position and political 'influence' are guarded in responding, portraying the community as fully supportive of the ruling political party. At the same time, they are also quick to point that the community is receiving the deserved allocations from the state in terms of funding for local development.

Similarly Malays in Bangkok, did not report territorial conflicts but were more concerned on opportunities sell their land, in light with the accelerated urbanisation of areas surrounding Bangkok coupled with sudden increase in land prices. In the earlier study, Umaiya (2003), the same was reported especially in urbanised areas, leading to Malay communities living in urban slums on the remaining pieces of Bangkok Malay owned land surrounding mosques.

From the above discussion, in terms of indigenous status and language, the Thai Kedah community appear to secure more benefit from national (Malaysian Government) policy than the Bangkok Malay – Is this true and if so, is it relevant to the attendant issue that is defining harmony?

Has the Thai Government policy on language, i.e. the imposition of compulsory use of Thai language on names and for education on minorities, affected harmonious living of Bangkok Malays and the Thai mainstream society?

Can one assume that for Khong Bang Pho community, oppression would be when they are required to use Thai language for practicing Islamic? Thus, the Malay minority in Khlong Bang Pho are prepared to comply with the assimilation policy with respect to language imposed by the Thai Government.

The retention of ethnic identity by the minority is dependent upon, in addition to government policy, the ability of the community to adapt and positively response to changes in the environment (within the country and globally). The present people of

Khlong Bang Pho, having settled in the area for some seven generations (over 200 years), consider the place as their homeland; they feel they are as indigenous as the mainstream society, equally entitled to the same benefits as any other Thai citizen; able to retain their ethnicity for example their cultural practices even though assimilated.

There is an active social life within the Thai Kedah community, centred on and around Buddhist temples encouraging social contact within the community. They freely receive television and radio transmission from Thailand and are therefore exposed to mainstream Thai culture. Other findings during site visits as part of my research, Umaiya (2003) showed that Thais in Kedah retained their ethnicity over the generations living along the Malay community.

Way of life of the Malay community in Bangkok has been going through major changes since 1930s, when their lifestyle was encroached upon. They began to interact with the mainstream Thai society and 'forced' to assimilate, Umaiya (2003). Eriksen (1991) argued that 'the form of cultural reflexivity engendered by literacy may be a decisive variable in ethnic revitalisation of indigenous people' and in the case of Bangkok Malays this appeared in the form of Islamic revival, or the makings of Thai Muslims, Umaiya (2004). The Bangkok Malays reaction to the 'forces' of assimilation by strengthening their commitment to retain their culture; this, coupled with a worldwide revival of Islamic fundamentalism made the society easier to accept.

To the Thai communities in Kedah including Naka, the challenge is the changing employment landscape as industrialisation sets in. This minority population, especially the youth, is less insulated from the mainstream society, bringing new challenges. The community and the village is still detached from these development.

Rapid development of Bangkok and surrounding areas resulted in communities of Bangkok Malays, almost overnight finding their neighbourhood changed from padi land into modern society, factories, housing estates, shopping complexes and the like. Suddenly, there are modern highways connecting to Bangkok city and quality roads in the villages, when less than 30 years ago, the transportation to Bangkok was only by boat.

The sudden encroachment of modern society to the previously isolated Bangkok Malay society instantly brought changes. Youths are able to secure work at the new businesses. Many parents lament to me of the sudden change and the inability of the community to cope. They are suddenly closely surrounded by Thai Buddhists who are totally integrated within the capitalist system of business and production; which is to be the new way of life for the Malays in Bangkok, having sold their padi farms.

Encroachment through land purchase, subsequent development and urbanisation of Malay peasantry areas has been a continuing phenomenon since Malays first settled in Bangkok over 200 hundred years ago. Parts of Bangkok such as areas along the Khlong Saen Saab such as the Bo Bae market, Phra Thu Nam, Ramkhamhaeng (Khlong Tan – originally called Khlong Kelantan and Kelantan is the name of the state in Malaysia bordering Narathiwat Province, were previously Malay owned padi land.

The area under study, Khlong Bang Pho is still relatively rural in nature and beginning to witness encroachment from urbanisation as it is slightly away from major roads and highways. From the researchers' own interviews, the people are reasonably aware of the looming challenge of urbanisation their community would face, as a minority, Malays and Muslims.

Taking the Wallman model, I will attempt to classify the Kedah Thais. Generally the community can be described as a closed homogeneous system. They are located within confined areas; the residents are limited to and where only old Kedah Thai Buddhist are considered full members; the social network is dense and close, centred around Buddhist temples; the people are mostly farmers, some, in particular, the younger generation working in factories, enterprises and with Government offices nearby, alongside other races; their homes are typical Kedah conventional and modern finishes.

Kedah Thais speak a distinct dialect, referred to as Naka dialect, Umaiya (2003) within the community. There is a strong tendency for people to dress in the 'typical local' Thai way within the community; changing to a more 'decent' dressing (acceptable to the majority Malay community) outside.

There is little or otherwise no interface with the rest of the society i.e. communication and interaction with other peoples in Kedah; except where required such as when dealing with government matters, education, conducting business or shopping. When interacting with others, they communicate in Malay language and to a very limited extent in Mandarin and other localised Chinese dialects. There is a tendency for the younger generation to find work elsewhere and move out.

In the context of the Malays in Bangkok, and specifically the Khlong Bang Pho Malay community, they too can be described as a closed homogeneous system. The community is located in a confined area (comprising of many padi farmland), whereas urbanised communities are located within a small area (sometimes referred to as slums); the social network is dense and close, centred on mosques; the people are mostly farmers, with some, in particular the younger generation working in factories, enterprises and Government offices, alongside other Thai Buddhists; their homes, externally looking like other houses in the area whilst internally resembling Muslim homes.

The Khlong Bang Pho Malay community, the subject of this paper, communicate within the community in Malay language as opposed to the remainder of this minority group who have abandoned the use of Malay language, Umaiya (2003). This is reinforced through the use of Malay language for delivering Friday sermons in mosques. Sermons in other Bangkok Malay areas have for many years been delivered in Thai language.

People living in Khlong Bang Pho, I observe when within the community, dress in a typical South Thailand Malay style (sarong, males with headgear resembling turbans and females with hijab - headscarf). Outside, and when in contact with the mainstream Thai society, there is a strong tendency to change into the more typical Thai modern dress except for females who prefer to continue using the hijab.



During my field work in the two areas, I did come across tension and even conflicts between individuals and parents. Parents refuse to accept request for inter-marriage with the majority group. Bangkok Malays can accept marriages with Muslims from other ethnic groups; and Kedah Thais accept inter-marriage with Chinese.

One finds these observations on identity pattern to be similar to those exhibited by second and third generation immigrants, Eriksen (1993);

1. It is clear that there is 'acculturation' in the two communities: Kedah Thais residing in Naka and Bangkok Malays residing in Khlong Bang Pho.
2. The two communities under study situationally switch their identity, for example switching languages.
3. There is tension between parents and siblings' arising from the latter's possible non adherence to religious practices.
4. The boundary preventing full assimilation, in both cases, is religion.

There is almost no public controversy over the cultural practices of the Kedah Thais and Buddhists, in general. They can be considered as amongst the least controversial group in the mainstream society (bearing in mind Malaysia is a multi ethnic society). They have successfully kept their presence rather low profile and least imposing.

Malays in Bangkok are not visible too, despite actively participation at local and national level politics. Initially in 1980's when Muslims started to put on the hijab, there was resistance from the mainstream society in Thailand, Umaiyah (2003). There were reported cases of woman being asked to remove the hijab, such as to be photographed for issuance of identity card. Today this type of dressing is quite common in public including worn by tourists from the Muslim countries. Malays in Khlong Bang Pho are low profile and generally 'unseen' by the majority community.

In this situation, the lack of public controversy can be used as a positive indicator on relationship between the majority-minority as being harmonious.

## **Conclusion**

The two minority groups live in harmony with the majority despite diverging Government policy on minorities in the two countries; retain their ethnicity and continue with their respective cultural practices living alongside the majority host community.

The boundary preventing full assimilation is religion. The endangered Malay identity amongst the Bangkok Malays has been revitalised through the global wave of Islamic revival, without conflict with the Thai Government. In Malaysia, the Thai Buddhist community partners with Malays to be accorded the 'bumiputra status' and benefit from 'special rights' for 'bumiputra'.

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**Paper 3      Maintaining Harmony at Work: The Role of the Judge in the Malaysian Courtroom**

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**Abstract**

Courtroom discourse is generally high-stake and the adversarial legal system that is practised in Malaysia (often) results in an atmosphere of hostility between the contesting parties. During cross-examinations for instance, an adversarial counsel will test the accuracy and credibility of the evidence with questions that are designed to discredit the other party's version of narratives while attempting to boost his party's contention. Within certain limits therefore, there will be contestations and struggle as both sides attempt to claim and reclaim control over the discourse. Such instances thus require the presence of an overarching body to regulate the interactions and the climate of the courtroom. In the Malaysian courtroom, this power resides in the most powerful participant in the setting, the judge, as all interactions are directed to him. But how is this power exercised by the judge? This paper, which is based on a prolonged *in-situ* case study of a criminal trial in a High Court Malaysia, employs a discourse analytic approach (Foucault, 1972 and 1978), to identify firstly the locus of power and secondly, the various ways in which judge wields his power through directive and constitutive linguistic practices.

**INTRODUCTION**

Legal discourse (which includes courtroom discourse) views law as a social practice and, like all discourses, legal discourse is situated and practised in specialised institutions. Courtroom discourse is an instantiation of spoken discourse, and this study is concerned with one specific participant in the Malaysian courtroom – the judge – with a focus on how he wields 'his power' to maintain harmony within a site of struggle.

This paper aims to show how law works as a consequence of the role of the judge in particular the power that he wields and the role of language. The traditional view of judicial behaviour involves the application of principles and rational argument is currently being challenged by the belief that the legal system does not only reflect social reality but it also constructs social reality. As such there is a growing interest in how judicial behaviour is manifested.

In Malaysia judicial behaviour is governed by the legal system that is practised. The Malaysian legal system is, to a large extent inspired, influenced and modelled after the British common law adversarial system and has two main characteristics that set it apart from its western counterparts: trial by judge not jury and the absence of court recorders or clerks. The sole judge thus bears a heavy burden to hear and pass judgments and inevitably assumes a pivotal role in the court.

Despite this heavy judicial responsibility, the absence of recorders makes it necessary for the judge must take his own notes of proceedings by hand.

During a trial, the judge has to listen to the examinations and submissions from counsels and witnesses of both litigating parties. There are three types of examinations where evidence will be adduced: direct or sometimes known as chief examination of a witness by his own counsel, a cross-examination of a witness by the opposing counsels, and finally where necessary, a re-examination of a witness by his own counsel. Literature has shown that cross-examinations are necessarily hostile as counsels will try to present alternative and competing versions of reality (Drew 1994). Needless to say after taking into consideration the weight of evidence adduced against the burden of proof, the judge will have to make the necessary decision.

### WHO CAN BE A JUDGE?

Malaysia observes Montesquieu's doctrine of separation of powers: the legislative, the executive and the judiciary. Hence, where the judiciary is concerned, the courts are supreme because they are independent of control by Parliament, the executive, or anybody else, and secondly, they can pronounce on the legality, or otherwise, of executive acts of government: federal and state.

The judge, therefore, has a very grave duty, as in the words of Socrates, "to hear courteously, to consider soberly, and to decide impartially." The impartial requirement of judges is of paramount importance as stressed by the late Tun Suffian, a former Lord President, who said:

"It is important that the judiciary should be impartial. But more important is that the public should think that the judiciary is impartial. They accept a court's decision only if they think that the judge has decided quite impartially. Judges are paid to listen. Some lawyers are tedious to listen to, but the effort must be made, not only in fairness to counsel, but to his client who has a lot at stake. A judge who is impatient and frequently shuts up counsel is in the wrong profession." (1980:46).

A Malaysian judge is appointed on a fairly democratic system. Recent developments and newspaper reports may want to dispute this. However, procedurally, the process begins with the nomination and in the case of a High Court judge, the name is referred to the Chief Justice who forwards it to the Lord President and then to the Prime Minister. The Prime Minister consults the Conference of Rulers and with the royal assent, the Prime Minister finally submits the name to His Majesty the *Yang di Pertuan Agong* (YDPA) who then appoints.

A candidate for the Malaysian bench however, must also fulfill certain conditions. The late Tun Suffian (1980), who was a prominent jurist, states that anyone (that is, a lower court judge) can nominate himself to a higher court provided he is well versed in the law, has served the judicial service for a number of years and most importantly, performed well. Merit is also considered. In terms of personal traits, a good temperament is important. He must be patient, courteous, and willing to



listen to both sides. It follows, therefore, that a judge must be honest and obviously so. It is also said that a judge must behave properly, in court and out of court, and not be an eccentric. Hence, a judge should earn the confidence, respect and esteem of the public.

But how does a judge listen to both sides in a high-stake activity. How does he deal with the contestations? What can he do will and what will he do in order to ensure that justice is achieved without fear and fervor?

## A BRIEF REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

This section will deal with the concepts of *discourse* and *power* that are crucial as scaffolding for the paper.

### Discourse

Conley and O'Barr (1998) perceive that there are two senses to the term discourse; linguistic and social (p.6). They explain that in its linguistic sense, the term overlaps with language and refers to connected segments of speech and writing. Hence in the context of law, discourse here refers to courtroom testimony, closing arguments lawyer-client interviews, etc.

The second sense of *discourse* however, refers to what is popularly known as the Foucauldian concept of discourse that is more abstract social phenomenon. This concept owes its currency to Michel Foucault (1970 and 1972 in Conley and O'Barr 1998). In his two seminal papers, Foucault shows that the macrodiscourse that he proposes is not simply talk itself but also the way something gets talked about (Conley and O'Barr 1990: 7). He perceives that the way people talk about an issue is closely intertwined with the way they think about it and thus act with respect to it. Hence it is thus fitting to consider discourse is a locus of power (Conley and O'Barr 1990). In the social world, and a courtroom is a social site (world), different discourses do compete for ascendancy. The difference is that within the world of the court, there is an overarching institutional power That delineates the roles and responsibility of the participants. The manifestation of power as provided structures the discourse and inevitably reflects the power structure of society.

To study the power of talk in the Foucauldian sense as we shall in this paper, we must however first, look into discourse at the micro level. At the micro level, discourse is represented by talk. As such we shall see how talk is produced and reproduced, what allows talk to flow and what factors do impede talk. When talk breaks down, who is allowed to repair it and what strategies, if any are used to do so. Inevitably, the issue of power has to be discussed.

### Power

Power in discourse has been described as the ability of people and institutions to control the behavior and lives of others, or as described by Fairclough (1989) as a situation when "powerful participants control and constrain the contributions of non-

powerful participants" (p.46). He further distinguishes three types of constraints: *content, relation, and subject*. Powerful participants he implores can indirectly employ these constraints through the selection of discursal types. His views should be seen in tandem with the findings on judge's ideology by Conley and O'Barr (1990), (1998), and Philips (1998).

Due to such asymmetries of power, Cotterill (2003) alludes that "...perhaps even the *majority*, of research into courtroom discourse has some degree of critical orientation" (p: 7) which parallels other areas of discourse analysis in institutional settings, such as the media, medicine and education (see Fairclough 1989; Caldas-Coulthard and Coulthard 1996; Sarangi and Coulthard 2000).

Earlier works on power show how it exists due to the asymmetrical relationship of members of society in general, we can relate to the reality of those 'haves' and others who are 'have-nots'. Fowler (1985) succinctly states that power does not exist in a vacuum but always resides in relation to another variable which may be gender, ethnicity, and occupation. He further states that power relationships are not natural and objective but artificial, socially constructed intersubjective realities (1985:6). But what is the mechanism that allows for these socially constructed intersubjective realities?

In their seminal 1976 book entitled, *The Social Construction of Reality*, Berger and Luckman (cited in Fowler 1985), assert that language is "a major mechanism in this process of social construction" (p. 61). To them, language has the capacity to manipulate concepts and relationships in the real world, as view shared by other sociolinguists, who were rather disenchanted with the traditional view that language and society are relatively 'divorced' from each other with language not being an instrument of inequality.

Closely related to power is the issue of control. Mead (1985) defined *control* as "the right to take decisions that govern the performance of a particular activity." (p.28) in his work, he cites the example of a counsel exercising control when he examines a witness. Philips (1994) on the other hand, opines that *courtroom control* refers to "the judge's ability to exert command from a distance over the actions of the physical bodies of those in his courtroom without recourse to physical coercion". This study again reiterates the fact that control is exercised through speech and over the speech of others.

As law is language and manifested in the courtroom as talk, and when that talk realizes itself in the form of contestations and argumentations, it becomes relevant to see are how harmony in the courtroom is maintained and the participant responsible for the maintenance of harmony.

This paper thus seeks to show how language is used as an instrument to maintain harmony in the courtroom using Fowler's two types of linguistic practices exercised by the powerful, i.e. directive and constitutive. The former includes explicitly manipulative speech acts e.g. command and requests, proclamations and interpersonal practices e.g. use of pronominal and pronouns (not included in speech acts). Constitutive practices are concerned with the ways in which language (and other semiotic systems like dress, setting arrangement) constructs social reality to

preserve hierarchical structure of society through ideology. This ideology legitimizes or sanctions the institutions of power by the ruling (powerful) class through lexical practices, syntactic structures and transformations, pronunciation and terms of address. Further since this is an analysis on talk, the structure of talk can also be examined. Hence, an analysis of who controls the turns, which has the most turns. Who has the longest turn and who can wrest the floor without opposition will also be relevant?

It must be noted that studies on legal and courtroom discourse in Malaysia are developing but rather slowly (see Mead 1985, Baskaran 1995, Noraini Ibrahim 2003 and 2007). However, there is yet to be a documentation linguistic judicial behavior.

## RESEARCH DESIGN

This paper is based on my doctoral dissertation which examined the testimony of expert witnesses where a qualitative approach was adopted. A single intrinsic case was identified as the unit of analysis, and data collection comprised ethnographic in-situ prolonged observations, the taking of field notes (also by the researcher) and its transcriptions, interviews, and the perusal of documents (statutes, notes of proceedings from the prosecution and witnesses; expert medical and forensic reports from the expert witnesses; and the decision of the case). Legal ethnography was very useful here as the long and extended trial made it necessary that the close observations and continuous of notes became significant not immediately but much later as the case developed.

### Data Collection and Analysis

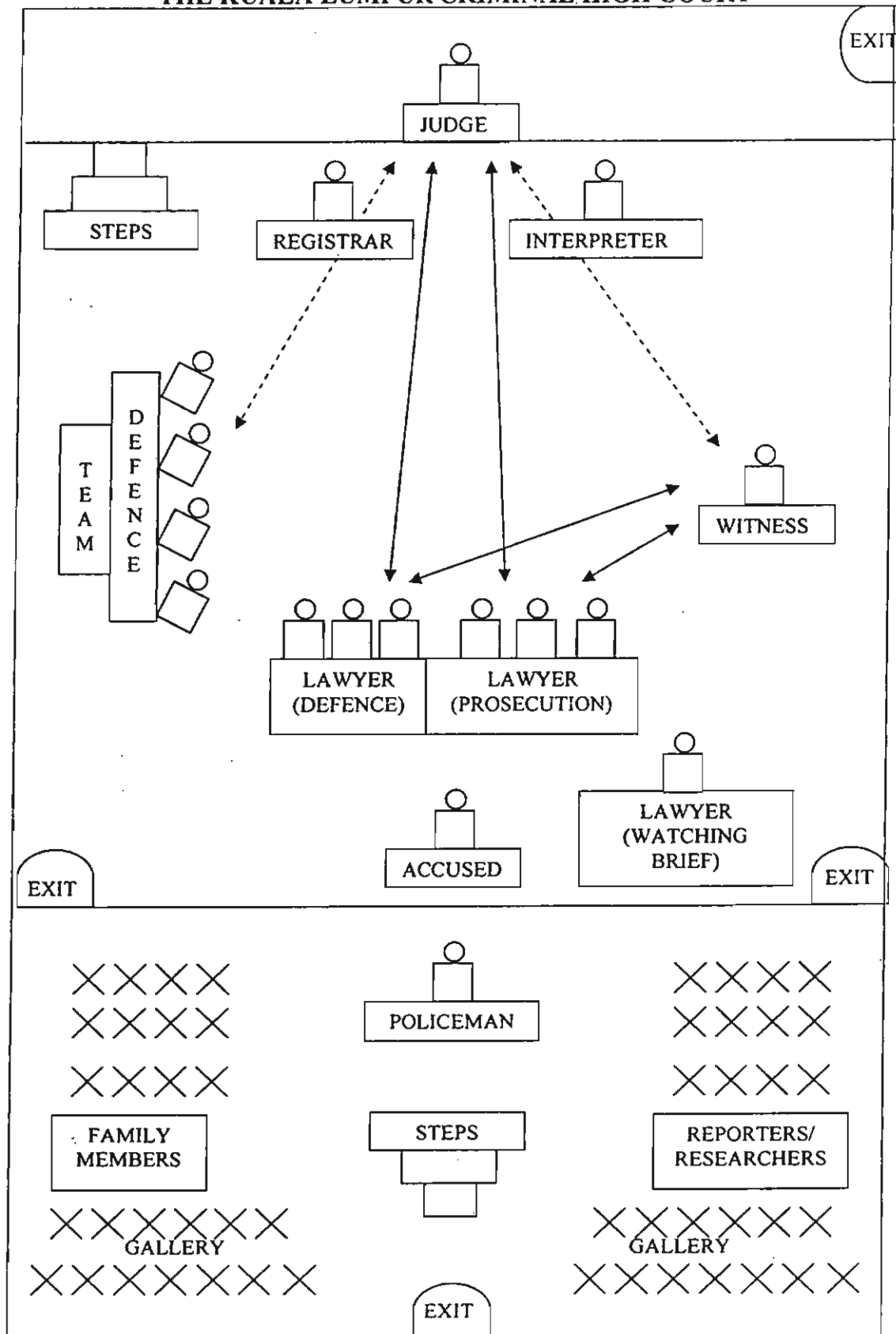
Data collection commenced once permission to observe the proceedings was obtained from the Court Registrar. It was a very challenging exercise due to several factors. Firstly, institutional constraints deemed that no recording, either video or audio was allowed. Hence during the observations carried out over two years, field notes had to be taken down by hand, and duly transcribed by the researcher. Much time was spent on this, but the advantage is that the researcher became very close with the data, facilitating the ensuing process of data analysis, as identifying of the themes that emerged, could be done with the ensuing sensitivity.

Once the entire hearing was transcribed, and the complete notes of proceedings and decision of the case was made available to the researcher the 'real' data analysis began with much reclusiveness in the sense that there was much going back and forth to the counsels, namely the prosecution, when the need arose. The judge however, declined to be interviewed and hence the observations became a crucial part of the data.

Data gathered from the field notes were coded in tandem with observation notes, where applicable. From the coding process, a summary of the trial was developed, and here with particular attention to the interactions from the judge. Such interactions were then coded. From the analysis of the whole trial and examinations of all the witnesses, certain themes began to emerge repeatedly. Such recurrent themes then identified. This paper is based on such recurrent themes.

The following discussion will present the findings of the study. To appreciate the constitutive practices mentioned above, the context of the Malaysian high court will be presented first highlighting the setting, participants and their roles and the courtroom procedures. This will be followed by the discursive practices employed by the judge in exercising his power to maintain harmony in the courtroom.

**Figure 1: The Setting**  
**THE KUALA LUMPUR CRIMINAL HIGH COURT**



## THE CONTEXT OF THE MALAYSIAN HIGH COURT – SETTING, PARTICIPANTS AND PROCEDURES

To begin with, the manifestation of power can be seen from the physical setting of the court as well as the role of the participants. Figure 1 reflects this. The courtroom is demarcated with the active participants on one side, and the overhearing non-active participants on the other. The arrows in Figure 1 indicate the institutionalized spoken interactions.

On the speaking side, the bench (this normally refers to the judge as well as the seat) is elevated, thus demonstrating that the position and hence the power and authority of the judge is over and above anyone else in the courtroom. The directive linguistic practices observed often resulted in the reformulating of questions, and terminating or changing the focus of the questions. In other instances, witnesses may be called, recalled, and exhibits tendered. These directive practices are quite direct.

Immediately below the bench are the court officials: the Registrar and the court interpreters. The counsels or lawyers face the judge. The prosecution is normally on the right, facing the bench, and the defence on the left. Unlike in the American courtroom, lawyers in Malaysia are not allowed to stray from their positions. They cannot approach the bench or the witness as is seen on television courtroom-dramas and movies. When the occasion arises for any documentations or exhibits to be submitted to the bench, or when there are materials, documents or exhibits to be tendered for verification, permission must first be sought and if granted, such materials must be handed to the Interpreter who then approaches the bench or the witness.

In this particular case, the defence team included not only the assistant or junior counsels, but also a medical doctor (in attendance for specific reasons) and they were seated to the left of the defence team. The witness is in the witness box. The accused (confined to the dock) is directed to the middle of the courtroom. This confinement of the accused throughout the trial has come under criticism recently (September 2005) as it was deemed improper for the accused (who technically remains innocent until proven guilty) to be treated so. The matter has yet to be resolved.

Power is also manifest in the code of conduct and attire of the participants. The judge is robed (in black) and so are the lawyers. This is in adherence to the rules of the High Court and a legacy of the English common law system. Female lawyers are not allowed to appear before the court in skirts that are above the knee. Shoes must be black, and for female lawyers, only 'court shoes' are allowed. In fact, until 1982, judges and lawyers appearing in the higher courts had to don wigs. However, this practice has been discontinued, and male judges had to don the Malay headdress or *songkok* during official occasions. The other court officials, interpreters and the registrar have to wear black coats, and this is supplied by the state. Members of the gallery are also subject to a dress code: i.e., to be 'decently' attired, or otherwise, one will be refused entry. During proceedings, members of the gallery would have to sit properly (straight up, legs are not to be crossed, and to observe silence). Silence is strictly observed when the judge is in the court.

The way a trial is conducted and the mode of conduct of the lawyers is another important point. Counsels must stand up when addressing the court and must take turns to speak and refrain from speaking when the judge is addressing the court. Such institutionalized behavior is very apparent before and during sessions as seen in the section that follows.

#### **Ambience in court: Pre- session vs. In-session**

Before the start of a hearing, litigating parties were observed to be exchanging greetings and bantering with each other, sometimes with the interpreters and court registrar participating. In the gallery, pleasantries were also exchanged among the members as the trial did take a long time. On a daily basis, the researcher observed how most of the participants in this trial (speaking as well as non-speaking) with the exception of the judge and the accused, would actually acknowledge each other. Only the victim's sister and the family members of the accused did not exchange greetings with each other throughout the duration of the trial

It was court practice that at about nine o'clock in the morning (or the designated time), the trial judge's assistant, would appear to see whether the court was 'ready' to begin the day's session(s). The Interpreter or the Assistant Registrar would then look around to make sure that the counsels and witnesses were present and ready. If the Interpreter was satisfied, then she would give a signal to the judge's assistant. Meanwhile, the accused would then be led to the dock, and counsels would make sure that they were properly attired in their robes (as this is the High Court), and would get ready at their designated positions. Once the court is ready the judge's assistant would ring a bell, and this would be followed by the entrance of the judge in tandem with the court policeman calling out "*Bangun*" (or "All Rise") and everyone in court would have to so do. This practice is similar in all common law jurisdictions and harkens back to medieval times. Once the judge was seated, everyone would follow suit and the court would officially be in session.

#### **In-session**

Once the court was in session, the atmosphere would immediately change. Silence must be observed and all parties would await the judge's move to begin the day's session. The Interpreter would rise, turn to the judge and with an exchange of glances, and sometimes a nod, or even in the absence of any cue, but after a slight pause, one of the three interpreters present would call for the case or cases to be heard for the day (which have been entered in the court diary). It was observed that proceedings would commence as follows:

#### **Example 1: Calling Out of Cases**

Interpreter: *Kes 45-52-200, PP lawan Kenneth Fook Mun Lee. Kes mula bicara [Case 45-52-2000 PP vs Kenneth Fook Mun Lee. Hearing begins]* ,

Subsequently, during the trial, it was as follows: