Voices and Votes Amid Violence: Power and Electoral Accountability in Thailand's Deep South

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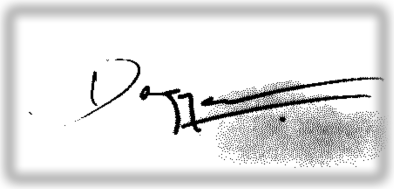
Statement of Originality

I declare that this thesis is my own work, except where otherwise acknowledged.



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Abstract

Given the complex political context of Thailand's Deep South, this thesis asks how and why the people in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat voted as they did. From my interviews with villagers in the Deep South and observations of the region's political culture, I argue that the majority of voters make rational calculations to gain the most from their electoral choices. Villagers base their voting decisions on such considerations as their organizational affiliations, which political candidate provides money for votes, their ability to respond to intimidation from vote-canvassers, political party platforms and candidates' competence and charisma. All these factors contribute significantly to villagers' choices when voting. This thesis distinguishes between two different types of violence: single catastrophic violence or what I shall call 'massive violence', and daily violent incidents or 'chronic daily violence'. 'Massive violence' refers to major clashes between the state authorities and civilians. It impacts heavily upon civilians, both psychologically and physically. By contrast, 'chronic daily violence' happens on a regular but smaller scale, and creates less trauma. The number of casualties in chronic daily violence is less than that with massive violence and is less likely to be widely reported.

This thesis has two central findings in explaining voting behaviour in the Deep South's violent context. First, an occurrence of massive violence has a deeply disruptive effect on politics. It serves to increase voter's participation levels and also heightens opposition to the government. One reason for this is that news of massive violence spreads quickly and shapes public consciousness on the security and political situation. Since people of the same communities share similar grievances, they may also share the same sense of anger and grievance when massive violence occurs. Political candidates and vote-canvassers may have more difficulty persuading and influencing voters because voters already have the direct information that empowers them to make resolute choices in the election. Second, prolonged and chronic violence tends to alter pre-exisiting political and social systems, particularly those based on patron-client relations, without necessarily favouring opposition forces. It makes patrons, many of whom are also political candidates, more vulnerable, because they are wary to visit remote villages and meet directly with electors due to the fear of being attacked. As a result, political candidates have to rely more heavily on their vote-canvassers, which usually lessens candidates' control over on-the-ground campaigning. As long as chronic violence persists in the Deep South, the traditional patron-client system will remain intact and vote-

buying rampant as candidates have less direct contact with their electorates. Thus, violence impacts on political structures and culture in Thailand's Deep South. Massive violence tends to disadvantage ruling parties and incumbent politicians whereas ongoing violence alters the normal balance of patron-client relations.

I also conclude that voters in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat make strategic use of elections to respond to conditions in their region. The ballot box is a relatively safe form for expressing political preferences. In this way, this thesis addresses the previous neglect of electoral behaviour in the context of violence.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

In 2010, Dr Gothom Arya, then the director of the Institute of Human Rights and Peace Studies of Mahidol University, initiated a peace pilgrimage consisting of eight people including Gothom himself. The pilgrimage started from Salaya in Nakhon Pathom province and ended in Pattani province with a total distance of 1,100 kilometres. As the group marched to the south, passing through eleven provinces, passersby and local people joined them from nearby villages. The aim of the peace pilgrimage was (i) to raise awareness among the general Thai public about the conflict and violence in the Deep South of Thailand[1] and (ii) to urge people to seek a peaceful resolution to the conflict.[2] The walk took fifty-five days before reaching Pattani on 1 September 2010.[3] During my fieldwork in 2012, I interviewed Bae Teng (pseudonym), an active insurgent affiliated with the Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN), at a safe house in Yala province. When I mentioned the peace pilgrimage, Teng sarcastically remarked, "Having walked only for a few days and you're already dreaming of an immediate peace? Well, we've been walking for the past ten years…hundred years even." Although it was Gothom's intention to promote the peace initiative for Thailand's Deep South, some insurgents were deeply cynical about his effort. Bae Teng, for instance, perceived the long march as an unnecessary ordeal. In his view, the mission was foolish and meaningless. Since the 2004 violence outbreak detailed below, Barisan Revolusi Nasional (BRN) has been by far the most violently active insurgent group in the region. The walk for peace, therefore, was seen as a rally against BRN's operation in the eyes of some of the active insurgents.

Thailand's Deep South, the common term for the three southern-most provinces, has become the most violent and conflict-ridden area in the country. Over the past decade,

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[1] I use the term 'Thailand's Deep South' to refer only to the provinces Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. These provinces lie the furthest to the south and are closely connected by a variety of ethnic, historical, political, and societal forces. One could use the phrase in a broader fashion, to also include the four southern districts of Songkhla province namely Chana, Thepha, Nathawi and Sabayoi. These districts are ethnically and historically linked to the trio of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. However, the boundary between Pattani to the south and Songkhla to the north provides a natural division, fruitful for inquiry, that I believe serves this research project best.

[2] See Isranews. (7 July, 2010). "Gothom led a 1,100 km Dhammayatra, peace pilgrimage to Pattani." (In Thai - "โคทม"นำเดินธรรมยาตรา 1,100 กม.สู่ปัตตานี รณรงค์ใช้สันติวิธีดับไฟใต้!), at https://isranews.org/south-news/other-news/item/1464-qq-1100.html, accessed 17 March 2017.

[3] See Isranews. (2 September, 2010). "From 1,100 km to Pattani, "Gothom demand the emergency decree to be ended." (In Thai - จาก 1,100 กิโลเมตรถึงปัตตานี "โคทม" จี้ยกเลิก พ.ร.ก.อุกเฉินฯ), at http://www.isranews.org/south-news/Other-news/item/1485-1100.html?pop=1&tmpl=component&print=1, accessed 28 March 2016.

shootings and killings have left thousands of people dead and injured in the provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. Since a raid on the military camp in Narathiwat province on 4 January 2004 up to 24 December 2015, there have been 6,532 deaths and 11,910 people injured.[4] According to the 2015 Global Terrorism Index (GTI), Thailand was ranked tenth among countries most likely to suffer from the impact of terrorism, due to the insurgency in the Deep South.[5] The GTI generates a yearly score for each country based on four factors associated with terrorism incidents: 1) total number of terrorist incidents; 2) total number of fatalities; 3) total number of injuries; and 4) the approximate level of total property damage. Thailand's GTI score ranked after Somalia and Libya. As the conflict continues to escalate, violent incidents in the south have become what Srisompob Jitpiromsri describes as "protracted violence" or violence that occurs daily.[6] Many scholars mark this recent period of violence as beginning on 4 January 2004, when a number of attackers raided an army camp in Narathiwat province. They stole more than 400 weapons and burned down twenty public schools. Never before had the insurgents carried out such a massive attack against the Thai security forces.[7] The insurgents' raid on the army camp in Narathiwat was soon followed by the tragic incidents of Kruesae Mosque[8] and the Takbai massacre.[9] These incidents marked the onset of long-running violence in Thailand's Deep South.

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[4] See Deep South Incident Database, at http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/dsid, accessed 1 August 2016.

[5] See Institute for Economic and Peace (IEP), at http://economicsandpeace.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/11/Global-Terrorism-Index-2015.pdf, accessed 17 October 2016. GTI is the study of the impact of terrorism on 162 countries that is based on data from the Global Terrorism Database (GTD). The database is collected and collated by the National Consortium for the Study of Terrorism and Responses to Terrorism (START), University of Maryland. It has codified over 140,000 terrorist incidents. The top ten countries with the highest terrorist attacks are 1.) Iraq (10). 2.) Afghanistan (9.23). 3.) Nigeria (9.21). 4.) Pakistan (9.06). 5.) Syria (8.10). 6.) India (7.74). 7.) Yemen (7.64). 8.) Somalia (7.6). 9.) Libya (7.29). 10.) Thailand (7.27).

[6] See Srisompob Jitpirmosri. "The Protracted Violence amidst the Unstable Political Situation after 2011 Elections" at http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/node/2343, 5 October 2011, accessed 5 December 2011.

[7] Ian Storey (2007). "Ethnic Separatism in Southern Thailand: Kingdom Fraying at the Edge?" at http://apcss.org/Publications/APSSS/Ethnic%20Separatism%20in%20Southern%20Thailand.Storey.pdf, accessed 12 October 2016.

[8] Mosque Kruesae is located in Pattani. Its construction is believed to have started in 1578 but it was never completed. There was a legend of a young Chinese woman who came from China to ask her brother to return to China. Her brother, a merchant, had converted to Islam because of marrying the princess of Pattani, and he insisted on staying in Pattani. The sister then cursed the mosque before hanging herself from a tree in front of the mosque. Ironically, the sanctuary of the Chinese sister was built across from the mosque. The Thai government promoted the place for tourism since many Chinese-Malay and Chinese-Indonesia view the sanctuary as a sign of their victory over the Malays, while the local Muslims view that as a sign of ethnicity and religious suppression by the Thai government. It became a controversial issue between the government and the Malay Muslims.

[9] On 28 April 2004, the Thai military gunned down 32 suspected militants who were hiding inside the Kruesae Mosque. On the same day, almost 100 militants carried out attacks against police checkpoints throughout the Deep South, resulting in the death of 108 militants. As for the Takbai massacre, on 25 October

In 2005, Thailand held a national election. Voter turnout soared to eighty percent in the Deep South, a thirty-three percent increase from the previous election. The opposition Democrat Party won ten of the eleven seats with Chart Thai Party (Thai Nation Party) securing the other seat. All the incumbents from the ruling coalition were defeated, including legislators from the Wadah faction, the name of a major Muslim electoral group then allied with the government.[10] Since Wadah's establishment in 1986, Wadah members had usually won at least five to six seats.[11] The rout of Wadah in 2005 was a devastating blow to the group.

The sudden change in the election results sparked my research interest. What caused such a dramatic shift in the voting pattern? What factors influenced the voting behaviour of Malay Muslims? In particular, I wanted to find out if the widespread violence in 2004 explained, at least in part, the 2005 election results. Indeed, how do violent contexts shape voter behaviour? If we take a more in-depth look at the three southern-most provinces' election results from 1975 until 2011, the data shows that the outcomes were 'party-based' in some elections and 'candidate-based' in others. Party-based voting is a voting decision made by voters based on their political party affiliation or political party preference. Voters might not even know the candidates, but because the candidates were running for their preferred political party, electors voted for them. Individual-based or candidate-based voting is a voting decision based on their preferred candidates, rather than the party they represent.

Considering the protracted conflict and violence in this region, these election outcomes warrant close study. Högland and Piyarathne, in their study of Sri Lankan politics, concluded that violence has a direct effect on both the voters and political candidates. Not only can violence change the outcome of an election, but it also has more indirect impact on trust in the

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2004, the villagers in Takbai district protested against the police at the Takbai police station to release six local men whom the villagers believe were innocent. The peaceful protest turned into a clash between the villagers and the police. Police shot seven men and arrested 78 men. These men were suffocated in the heat while being detained at the military camp. The Thai military were heavily criticized from their harsh crackdown in both of the incidents.

[10] They are mainly the representatives from the southernmost provinces of Thailand. In 2005, only two MPs of the Wadah faction entered the parliament through the proportional system: Wan Muhammad Nor Mata and Areepen Utarasint.

[11] Wadah was initially formed in 1986 as a political faction of the Democrat Party. They later joined the "January 10" group before the group was transformed into the Prachachon Party in 1988. In 1989, the Wadah group, under the Prachachon Party, merged with other small parties and factions to form the Ekkapap Party. By 1992, Wadah had aligned itself with the New Aspiration Party. After the 2001 national election, the New Aspiration Party was dissolved and absorbed into the Thai Rak Thai party.

political system.[12] Thus, studying voting behaviour and electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South over the past ten years can offer new perspectives on the nexus between violence and voter behaviour in a Southeast Asia context. It can also contribute to broader scholarly discussion on the effects of continuing violence upon communities.

This thesis distinguishes two different types of violence: single catastrophic violence or what I shall call 'massive violence', and daily violent incidents or 'chronic daily violence'. 'Massive violence' refers to a big clash between the state authorities and civilians—violence that is carried out by security officers, whether intentional or unintentional, against civilians. It heavily affects civilians psychologically and physically, and causes deep anger against the state officials. By contrast, 'chronic daily violence' happens on a regular but smaller scale. The number of casualties in chronic daily violence is less than that with massive violence and is less likely to be widely reported.

When it comes to explaining voting behaviour in the midst of violence, the findings of this research led to two conclusions. First, after an occurrence of massive violence, the magnitude of violence increases voter's participation levels and opposition to the government. One explanation is that news of massive violence can quickly reach the general public through the media, by word of mouth or testimonies from witnesses and victims. Since people of the same communities share similar grievances, they may also share the same sense of outrage and condemnation when massive violence occurs in the region. Political candidates and vote-canvassers (also known as brokers or the middlemen) may have more difficulty persuading and influencing voters because voters already have the direct information that empowers them to make choices in the election. Second, when violence is prolonged and becomes chronic, the patron-client system becomes more deeply entrenched in the electoral politics of the region. The chronic violence makes patrons or political candidates in the southernmost provinces of Thailand more vulnerable, because they are less likely to visit remote villages and meet directly with electors due to the fear of being attacked. As a result, political candidates have to rely more heavily on their brokers or vote-canvassers, which usually lessens candidates' control over on-the-ground campaigning. As long as chronic violence persists in the Deep South, the

[12] Kristine Högland and Anton Piyarathne (2009). "Paying the Price for Patronage: Electoral Violence in Sri Lanka". *Commonwealth & Comparative Politics* 47:3: 287–307.

traditional patron-client system will remain intact and vote-buying rampant as candidates have less direct contact with their electorates.

After examining the effect of violence on political participation in Thailand's Deep South, this study found that far from being intimidated by the violence, Malay Muslims in fact become more involved in politics. My research suggests that the Malay Muslims' level of political participation is heightened by violence, although they make up just five percent of the nation's total population. They may be the minority of the country, but the population in the southernmost provinces of Thailand are predominantly Muslims. Muslims comprise eighty-five percent of the Thai population in the Deep South, whereas Buddhists account for about fifteen percent.[13] Hence, this thesis mainly focuses its research on the Malay Muslims voters. The Thai Buddhist voters' voting behaviour are fairly consistent. From my various interviews with the Thai Buddhist voters, they incline to vote for the Democrat Party (similar to most of the voters in the upper southern provinces of Thailand). Moreover, when one observes the election results from 1986 until 2011, candidates from the Democrat Party were most likely to win the seat in the constituency that has dense Buddhist population (For example, the first constituency in Yala province and the first constituency in Pattani province). On the other hand, Malay Muslims appear to be the swing voters.

The voter turnout percentage in the Deep South is higher than many other provinces, including Bangkok. By 'political participation', I mean both the conventional and unconventional kinds. Conventional political participation includes any political activities by citizens who abide by the rule of law, for example, by participating in a direct electoral process like voting, participating in election campaigning, writing an open letter to authorities, and so forth. By contrast, unconventional political participation refers to political activities that do not abide by the rule of law, such as riots, terrorism[14] or insurgency. Since voting is mandatory in Thailand, the electoral process becomes a focus of interaction for *all* political entities, including political parties, national and local politicians, local state officials, vote-canvassers, religious

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[13] See RYT9 news online (3 August, 2004). "Population and Housing Census 2004." (In Thai - การสำรวจข้อมูลสำมะโนประชากรในพื้นที่จังหวัดชายแดนภาคใต้ at: https://www.ryt9.com/s/cabt/146831)%20(22

[14] Terrorism is used in this thesis to refer to a group of unidentified perpetrators that attack security officers, civilians and pubic infrastructures with violence.

leaders, organised crime syndicates, NGOs, businessmen, security forces, voters, and even insurgents.

Given the complex political context of the Deep South, this thesis raises the question of how and why the people in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat voted the way they did. From my interviews with villagers in the Deep South the majority of voters in this part of Thailand make rational calculations to gain the most from their voting choice. Villagers make their voting decisions based on the information available to them: whom they are affiliated with, which political candidate provides money for votes, how to deal with influential and intimidating vote-canvassers, the various political platforms, candidates' competence and charisma, and so forth. All these factors contribute significantly to how villagers make their voting choice.

The case of Thailand's Deep South has shown that voters continue to participate in the electoral process despite chronic daily violence committed by the insurgent groups and massive violence perpetrated by state authorities. By examining and analysing why the people in the Deep South voted the way they did, this thesis makes several important contributions to the current literature on political behaviour. The findings of this thesis also shed light on the relationship between politicians, vote-canvassers and voters during the election process against the background of chronic and massive violence. If we understand the relationship structure of the political actors and the effects of violence on that structure, it can contribute to our ability to predict Deep South's electoral behaviour in future elections.

The next section provides an overview of the origins of the conflict in Thailand's Deep South, followed by a discussion of the concept of violence. The third section elaborates the significance of studying voting behaviour and electoral violence in Thailand's Deep South. The fourth section discusses the research question and theoretical framework. The fifth section presents my research design, methodology, and data collection. The structure of this thesis will be outlined in the final section of this chapter.

Origins of the Conflict

The Malay Muslims may be the majority in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand, but out of seventy-seven provinces of Thailand, they are a small minority, accounting for only three to four percent nationally. This situation becomes a dilemma for Malay Muslim

voters as they have small representation in the national parliament which means they have little influence. Reducing the violence and implementing policies favourable to people in the deep south, therefore, is difficult to achieve because Malay Muslim representatives command few votes in the Thai parliament. Muk Sulaiman, a former MP of Pattani and a member of Wadah group, argues that as minority representatives, they need to always be on the government's side because it is the only way they can influence and implement policies that serve their electorates.[15]

I will trace the origin of conflict and violence that began in this region more than a century ago. It is necessary to examine the roots of the conflict and violence in order to fully understand the connection between electoral participation and violence. This section also provides context for the remaining parts of the thesis.

The kingdom of Patani[16] or Patani Raya (Greater Patani), as it is sometimes known, was an independent state and one of the leading centres of Islam in Southeast Asia until it was annexed by the Siamese kingdom of Ayutthaya in 1786. In 1808, King Rama I of the Chakri dynasty divided the former kingdom of Patani into seven small sultanates of Nong Chik, Pattani, Raman, Rangae, Saiburi, Yala, and Yaring as part of his divide-and-rule policy. Later, in 1902, King Chulalongkorn (King Rama V) imposed a policy of administrative centralisation by placing the sultanates under the control of the governor of *monthon* Nakhon Si Thammarat (*monthon* was an administrative subdivision comprising several provinces) and the tributary system was replaced by a taxation system. The Sultan of Patani, Tengku Abdul Kadir Kamaruddin, was arrested and imprisoned, and the office of the sultanate abolished. In 1932, a group of young bureaucrats and soldiers known as the Promoters overthrew the king and put an end to absolute monarchy in Thailand. The end of the absolute monarchy in 1932 exacerbated the abolition of the legal privileges of persons of aristocratic ranks in the deep

[15] Duncan McCargo (2008). *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand*. Cornell University Press: New York, p. 74.

[16] There are differences when define the word Patani (ปาตานี) with one 't' and Pattani (ปัตตานี) with two 't' in this thesis. Pattani with two 't' refers to the name of the province in the Deep South. The name is spelled by the Thai government officials and it is currently used widely. Whereas Patani with one 't' refers to the name of the old Kingdom of Patani that comprised the whole region of the Deep South (Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat). The Thai state officials considered those who used the word Patani (in Thai) show resistance to the Thai state. Now the Thai officials are more flexible with the word Patani.

south. The *monthon* was subsequently eliminated and Thailand's Deep South was divided into the four provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun.[17]

The ultranationalist policies of Field Marshal Plak Phibun's government from 1938 to 1944 further deepened Malay Muslims' grievances by forcing them to stop wearing Malay dress and using Malay names and language. Field Marshal Phibun attempted to redefine 'Malay Muslims' as 'Thai Muslims'. By 1957, the conflict had reached breaking point. The government of Field Marshall Sarit strengthened the assimilation policies by encouraging ethnic Thais to migrate to the Deep South and asserting control over Islamic schools (*pondok* or *ponoh*). Such harsh assimilation policies generated three major insurgent groups: BNPP (Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani, 1959), BRN (Barisan Revolusi Nasional, 1960), and PULO (Patani United Liberation Organization, 1968).[18] Currently, BRN remains the most active separatist group. During my fieldwork, I was told by BRN members that the organisation's attitude towards the national electoral process was one of absolute indifference because they had no desire to be part of the Thai political and administrative system and only wanted separation. Typically, BRN members either leave their ballots blank (i.e. submit a blank vote), or protest against the Thai state by writing 'Merdeka' (Bahasa Melayu for 'freedom') on their ballot papers. However, some, though not all, BRN members covertly participated in the national election campaign. Many played a vital role as middlemen or vote-canvassers. The BRN neither opposes nor supports their members if they are in favour of any political party or political candidates, but as an organisation, the BRN does not endorse them.

The causes of Malay Muslim hostility towards the Thai state are many. According to Imron Maluleem, the animosity between local state officials and villagers stems from state officials' ignorance, their insincerity in solving villagers' problems, and rampant corruption.[19] Specifically, Imron Maluleem identified six reasons for the conflict between the locals and the state. First, psychologically, many of the Thai-Buddhists and the Thai state officials insult the

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[17] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Michael Montesano & Patrick Jory (ed). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 125.

[18] John Funston (2008). *Southern Thailand: The Dynamic of Conflict*, Policy Studies 50. Washington DC: East–West Center, p. 9.

[19] Imron Maluleem (1995). *Wikhro khwamkhatyaeng rawang rathaban thai kap musalim nai prathet: karani suksa klum musalim nai khet jangwat chaidaen phak tai* [An Analysis of Conflict between State and Thai-Muslim in Thailand: A Case Study of the Southern Part of Thailand]. Bangkok: Islamic Academy Publishing, p. 99.

Malay Muslims by calling them names like 'Kaek' or 'Kaek Melayu'. The word 'Kaek' is considered to be a derogatory term. The Malay Muslims perceived this action as demarcating the Muslim population from the rest of the Thai nation. Second, local villagers are skeptical of receiving justice from the central government because of what happened to the Malay Muslim religious leaders in the past. Third, the language barrier between the Malay Muslims and the local state officials creates difficulties for the central government to understand the problem in southern Thailand. Likewise, the local villagers do not understand the intentions of the central government in implementing several policies towards them. Fourth, Thai state officials do not understand the fundamentals of the Islamic religion and local ethno-cultural identity. Fifth, violent acts by different groups, including separatist movements, criminal gangs, drug addicts, and bandits, have created suspicion among local villagers and between the local state officials and the Malay Muslim villagers. And sixth, the lack of socio-economic development in the area has long created resentment.

Warayuth Sriwarakuel identified three causes of violence in the Deep South: 1) the lack of economic development in the region; 2) the injustices inflicted on the local people by state authorities; and more importantly, 3) the distinctiveness of historical, ethnicity, and religious identities.[20] Warayuth Sriwarakuel also pointed out that one of the most fundamental problems in the three provinces of Southern Thailand is lack of trust. Trust between local people, insurgents, media, and government officials is very rare.[21] Mistrust and misunderstandings caused by cultural and linguistic differences have led to hostility between the Malay Muslims and the state officials. In the eyes of most Malay Muslim villagers, state officials are insensitive, discriminatory and oppressive. State authorities often use the 2005 Emergency Decree against local villagers to coerce them to cooperate. The International Crisis Group interviews with villagers, Thai legal and security experts, human rights advocates and members of the National Reconciliation Commission (NRC)[22] reveal widespread concern about the

[20] Warayuth Sriwarakuel (2006). "Building High-Trust Cultures for Peace in the South of Thailand", in Yusuf, Imtiyaz & Schmidt, Lars Peter (ed). *Understanding Conflict and Approaching Peace in Southern Thailand.* Konrad Adenauer Stiftung: Thailand, p. 79.

[21] Ibid., p. 75.

[22] The National Reconciliation Commission (NRC) is an adhoc committee given the task to examine for Southern Thailand's peace resolution. The chairman of NRC, Anand Panyarachun, a respected former prime minister of Thailand submitted the report to the Thaksin's government in 2006 but it was opposed by Prem Tinsulanonda, the President of Privy Council to King Bhumibol. Prem disagreed with the NRC proposal that "Malay language" should be used as an official language in the South of Thailand. He stated "We have to be proud to be Thai and have the Thai language as the sole national language". See *The Nation* (25 June 2006).

increased potential for abuses under Section 17 of the Emergency Decree, which grants enforcement officers immunity from prosecution for any action committed in the line of duty. The Decree has been renewed every three months since 2005. It is an alternative to Martial Law but less accountable. Police officers, soldiers, and local state officials can go to villages with lists of suspects, who are told to surrender or face arrest. While Martial Law allows state authorities to detain suspects up to seven days, the Emergency Decree empowers the authorities to extend the detention period up to thirty-seven days. While the government denies such lists are being used, village headmen confirm the practice.[23] As pointed out by Anand Panyarachun, the chairman of NRC, having an Emergency Decree along with Martial Law is like granting security officials a "license to kill".[24]

The Significance of This Research

A search of the literature revealed few studies on the electoral politics of Thailand's Deep South. Sirisak-dumkerng categorised previous studies on the Deep South into two groups. The first group provides a general picture of comparative politics from the central Thai perspective. These studies focused on the differences between Malay Muslim, Thai-Buddhist and Thai-Chinese. The second group, on the other hand, comprises studies by local scholars from the regional education institutions, who centred their attention on community understanding by using an anthropological approach. This piece of literature by Sirisak-dumkerng confirms that research on voting behaviour and electoral politics in Southern Thailand has been overlooked for the past three decades.[25] Only a few scholars such as Duncan McCargo (2008), James Ockey (2008), Robert Albritton (1996, 1997, 1999), and Aurel Croissant (2005) have touched upon the subject to a certain degree.

There are a number of published articles and books on conflict and violence in the three southernmost provinces of Thailand. The research to date has tended to focus on socio-

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"Prem disagress with propose used of Malay as official language" at http://nationmultimedia.com/2006/06/25/headlines/headlines_30007268.php, accessed 1 March 2012.

[23] See International Crisis Group (2005). "Thailand's Emergency Decree: No Solution." Asia Report, no. 105 (18 November). http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/asia/south-east-asia/thailand/105_thailand_s_emergency_decree_no_solution_web.pdf

[24] Ibid., p. 5.

[25] Prae Sirisak-dumkerng (2008). "The Knowledge of the Southern Border Provinces under the Context of Thai Society in the Past 26 Years", in Chaiwat Satha-Anand (eds). *Imagined Land: Solving Southern Violence and the State in Thailand*. [In Thai], Bangkok: Matichon Publishing Group.

economic issues (Srisompob and Panyasak 2006), anthropology (Fraser 1960), ethno-religious conflict (Askew 2009; Yusuf 2007; Liow 2009; Dorairajoo 2009), peace studies (Storey 2007, Imtiyaz 2010); history (Ockey 2011, Montesano and Patrick 2008, Thanet Aphornsuvan 2007), and security studies (Abuza 2008, 2011, Askew and Helbardt 2012, Chalk 2008, McCargo 2008, Pathan and Liow 2010, Thomas 1975, Yegar 2002). Although there have been many studies of Thai elections and voting behaviour (Arghiros 1995; Bowie 2008; Callahan & McCargo 1996; Nelson 1998; Hicken 2002; Walker 2008, Suchit Bunbongkarn 1996), specific studies on the unique dynamics of the Malay Muslim provinces in the Deep South are few. Malay Muslims regard elections as opportunities for minorities to preserve their rights while contesting the power of the majority. Hence, a proper understanding of the Deep South's violence requires awareness of electoral politics and voting behaviour. Given that Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat provinces have distinct characteristics from the rest of Thailand—differences in religion, ethnicity, and history—several queries, therefore, arise as to how Malay Muslims, the majority in the constituency of the three southernmost provinces, make their voting decisions. Given their ethno-religious differences and the chronic violence they have to face on a regular basis, do Malay Muslims vote differently to other ethnic groups of Thailand? There has never been a clear-cut answer to this question, thus an empirical study of voting behaviour in the southernmost part of Thailand will provide a new understanding on how people in this region vote, why they vote the way they do, and what is the most influential factor when it comes to voting decisions by local people in this region.

This thesis presents empirical evidence obtained through a qualitative and quantitative methodology. By using voting behaviour and electoral politics to view violence and conflict in the region, the present study fills a gap in the literature and illuminates this dimension of the Deep South conflict that ethno-religious and historical studies cannot fully explain. Instead of trying to understand violence and conflict largely through the lenses of ethno-religious and historical contexts, study of political processes can also help clarify the situation in the Deep South. If we step back and look at the bigger picture, we will discover a new research angle that will enhance our understanding of politics in this region. We will see how the electoral process is functioning in the Deep South of Thailand and also how local people perceive and participate in politics. In Fischer's words, "An electoral process is an alternative to violence as

it is a means of achieving governance",[26] suggesting that in conflict societies, the electoral process can be interlaced with violence.

Voting is a low-stake action and an expressive act, so the primary motivation to vote or not to vote depends on whether the citizen has something to express. In the context of violence in Thailand's Deep South, people are living in constant fear and distrust. Caught between state authorities and the insurgents, local villagers have to tread carefully because one false step could cause suspicion, not to mention retribution, from either side. Rather than engaging in non-electoral political participation such as street demonstrations, boycotts or petitions, it is a lower risk for people living with violence to express their voice quietly behind the ballot box. The Takbai massacre remains a horrific lesson for many Malay Muslims of what would happen if they were to express their grievances in public. Hence, this thesis makes a major contribution to political studies by examining voting behaviour and voting choices in the context of chronic daily violence.

This thesis, therefore, makes an important contribution to the study of electoral politics by showing how voters and candidates in Pattani, Yala and Narathiwat behave politically in the context of violence over the past decades. Although national elections are held in Southern Thailand like other regions the differences in ethnicity, religion, history, culture, and the ongoing violence set this region apart from the rest of the country.

Research Question

People in the southernmost region of Thailand started to express their interest in politics more widely and openly as a result of the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration, the first major mobilization on the streets of Deep South city, which created an awareness that they were entitled to a certain amount of political space and could express their opinion powerfully when they worked together in an alliance. It can be said that this type of political participation is an example of defiant behaviour that can be used as a tool by minorities to oppose unjust treatment by the government. The Malay Muslim minority realised that they cannot contest the strong centralised Thai state if they are fragmented. As a marginalised ethno-religious community,

[26] Jeff Fischer (2002). ''Electoral Conflict and Violence''. International Foundation for Election Systems White Paper. Washington, DC, p. 2.

strong collective action among the Malay Muslims is a necessary mechanism to bargain with the Thai government.

To verify whether there is a correlation between voting behaviour and violence, I focus my investigation on the general elections of 2005, and 2011, particularly the two general elections after the outbreak of violence in 2004. The voting results reveal an intriguing pattern of voting behaviour in the southernmost provinces. Voting behaviour changed following the upsurge of violence. Does violence affect how people vote? Voting turnout is increasing and voting results appear to be volatile from election to another. In the general election years of 2005 and 2011, the outcome showed that people cast their vote based on party preference, whereas the 2001, 2006, and 2007 general elections were candidate-centered. This thesis, therefore, attempts to uncover explanations for this voting behaviour and electoral politics in the Deep South. In short, it asks: "How and why do people in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat vote as they did?"

Moreover, a crucial aspect that distinguishes the Deep South's electoral politics from the rest of the country is the ongoing violence that creates the atmosphere of fear. Living with fear influences how people behave daily and certainly affects how they perceive the government's ability to solve the problem. The way we can learn about people's voting choice and preference for a political party or political candidate is by examining their voting pattern. An in-depth analysis of voting behaviour and electoral politics can enhance our understanding of how political actors in this region function and operate. It can reveal how actors in the Deep South participate in politics. Elections facilitate communication and engagement between political agents, including political parties, politicians at the national and local level, local bureaucrats, vote-canvassers, civil society, religious leaders, mafias, NGOs, businessmen, security forces, voters and last but not least, the insurgents.

Theoretical Framework

This section is divided into four parts. The first part highlights a general concept which helps us identify the way people decide how to vote. The second part discusses patron-client relationships, limited information, and the politics of ethnic favouritism. The third part explains how I conceptualise violence in this thesis, and the fourth part discusses how voting behaviour and political participation correlates with violence.

The People's Decision to Vote

Blais argues that democracy is a polity in which citizens are given the opportunity to participate. Blais raises four major interpretations in explaining how people decide to vote or not to vote. People decide to vote rather than not to if: 1) They perceive the benefits to outweigh the costs; 2) They adhere to the norm that a good citizen ought to vote in every election; 3) They think in group terms; 4) They have a 'side' in the election.[27]

The classic explanation of human rational actions and voting decisions comes from Anthony Downs. He defines utility as a measure of benefits in a citizen's mind which he uses to decide among alternative courses of action. A rational man always opts for the action that yields him or her the highest utility, so he or she has to act for their own benefit. The rational action in Down's term refers to the process of action which is efficiently designed to achieve what the person consciously selects to be his most profitable ends. What is most important in Downs's argument for voters to vote is their perspective on "current party differential", which is the difference between the utility income the voters actually received in a certain period and the one the voters would have received if the opposition had been in power. Another major factor in voters deciding how to vote is how they can project the trend factor and current performance ratings of the incumbent government into their expected party differential.

> Rational men are not interested in policies per se but in their own utility incomes. If their present utility incomes are very low in their own eyes, they may believe that almost any change likely to be made will raise their incomes. In this case, it is rational for them to vote against the incumbents, i.e., for change in general.[28]

The object of elections is to estimate the gain the voters will get from voting for one party instead of the other. In this sense, local people in Thailand's Deep South are rational actors who weigh their benefits consciously. The incumbents can be voted out of office if they fail to deliver the basic needs for the local people in the region. It is therefore vital to search for the contributing factors that make local people vote the way they do.

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[27] André Blais (2010). "Political Participation", in Leduc, Lawrence, Niemi, Richard and Norris, Pippa (eds). *Comparing Democracies: Elections and Voting in the 21st Century*. London: Sage Publications.

[28] Anthony Downs (1976). *An Economic Theory of Democracy.* Harper & Row Publishers, p. 42.

Patron-Client Relationship, Limited Information, and the Politics of Ethnic Favouritism

In her analysis of elite behaviour and individual voters in patronage democracies, Kanchan Chandra proposes a theory that explains how the patronage system and ethnic influences can determine voting behaviour in a developing country.[29] Chandra identifies a link between limited information, patronage democracy, and the politics of ethnic favouritism. More often than not, patronage transactions between individuals that share the same ethnicity are easier than transactions between those who are from different ethnic groups. Chandra further argues that severe information constraints are an essential but often neglected variable that can help explain the politics of ethnic favouritism. The theory of individual voters and elite behaviour led me to focus on three levels of patron-client relationship—individual voters, the vote-canvassers or brokers, and the politicians. The theory can be applied to explain how social identity and ethnic favouritism influence voting behaviour and determine voting patterns in the southernmost provinces of Thailand.

Compared to developing countries, the process of democratic elections in developed countries seems to rely less on patron-client relations or *clientelism* than in developing nations. For developed countries with strong democratic institutions and proficient programmatic politics, the cost of programmatic party exchange relations is cheaper when constructing organisational machines because fewer personnel are needed to manage relationship exchange.[30] By contrast, relationship exchange in developing nations is more expensive. In developing countries where programmatic politics is inefficient, the importance of the patron-client relationship increases. Weak democratic institutions force politicians and political parties to depend more on the patron-client system instead of party platforms to win election seats. Aspinall argues that in order to understand how politicians and voters exchange material rewards for political support, it is necessary to focus on the role played by intermediaries.[31] Overall, Thailand is a country that has weak programmatic parties and weak democratic

[29] Kanchan Chandra (2007). "Counting Heads: A Theory of Voter and Elite Behaviour in Patronage Democracies" in Kitschelt, Herbert and Wilkinson, Steven (eds). *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 85.

[30] Herbert Kitschelt and Steven I. Wilkinson (2007). "Citizen – politician linkages: an introduction," in Kitschelt, Herbert and Wilkinson, Steven et al. (eds). *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*. New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 9.

[31] Edward Aspinall (2014). "When Brokers Betray: Clientelism, Social Networks, and Electoral Politics in Indonesia". *Critical Asian Studies* 46 (4): 545–570.

institutions. Therefore, the importance of the patron–client relationship remains significant for both agents, more so for patrons.

Conceptualising Violence

The World Health Organization gives the definition and typology of 'violence' as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, maldevelopment, or deprivation."[32] Bienen also provides a simple explanation of the term violence. He argues that men have been killing each other since Cain and Abel, so people must have some knowledge of what we mean by violence.[33] Chaiwat suggests that 'violence' is generated by actors who organise with political consciousness of some sort, and by actions causing damages or potential damages to the human body and members of the public.[34]

There are many types of violence and the study of violence appears in a wide array of disciplines. Thus, when referring to the word 'violence' in this thesis, I mainly focus on violence that happens between insurgents and the state authorities, including violent situations that have a spillover effect on civilians. The main purpose for the insurgents to use violent means is to attain a political goal—is to separate from the Thai state. The main purpose for the Thai state authorities to use violent means is to crack down on the insurgents. Furthermore, it is worthwhile to have a clear distinction between 'political violence' and 'electoral violence'. It has been noticed that in conflict-ridden societies, violence tends to occur during election time. Therefore, Högland proposes that electoral violence is a specific sub-category of political violence. She also claims that electoral violence can be subsumed under the broader category of electoral fraud, which includes activities like vote rigging, vote-buying, and disruption of the registration process. In short, to distinguish electoral violence from other types of violence, it depends on the characterisation of the ***motives***, which is how they influence the election process, and ***timing***, which is during the pre-election time, the day or days of the election, and

[32] World Health Organiztion, See "Violent Prevention Alliance organization" at http://www.who.int/violenceprevention/approach/definition/en/

[33] Chaiwat Satha-Anand. *Islam and Violence: A Case Study of Violent Events in the Four Southern Provinces, Thailand, 1976-1981*. Florida: University of South Florida, Department of Religious Studies, 1986. p. 6.

[34] Ibid., p. 7.

the post-election time.[35] Goldsmith suggests that electoral violence depends on the time span and social conflict. He further states that there is a conceptual distinction between electoral violence and political violence. While "political violence can be applied to almost any coercive means, such as internal wars, insurrections, terrorism, police brutality, or even international conflict, which are directed at a political end," electoral violence is a more specific term "in which the coercion aims just to influence an impending or recently concluded election."[36] In the International Foundation for Election Systems White Paper, Fischer defines electoral violence as "any random or organised act or threat to intimidate, physically harm, blackmail, or abuse a political stakeholder to determine, delay, or to otherwise influence an election process."[37] In that sense, the objective of the present study is to investigate not only electoral violence in Thailand's Deep South but also the impact of the violence between the security authorities and the insurgents. Hence, suffice it to say that my research focuses more on 'political violence' than 'electoral violence'.

Voting Behaviour, Political Participation, and Violence

The next step is to connect my research interest between violence and voting behaviour. I draw on literature on voting behaviour and violence in Latin American and African countries for a comparative analysis. A research study by Blattman suggests that victims of violence in northern Uganda are considerably more likely to vote and lead their communities to participate more in politics. Blattman also refers to a study by Bellows and Miguel (2008) that finds civilians in Sierra Leone whose households experienced a killing, maiming, or displacement are more likely to join political groups and to vote than their neighbours.[38] However, in the case of northern Uganda, it remains unclear whether the high voter turnout was a direct result of mobilization by elites, weighing of costs, or altruistic preferences, as suggested by theories of participation. Blattman admits in his article that there are limitations because the sample size of his survey was too small; therefore, generalisation of the findings may be problematic.

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[35] Kristine Högland (2009). ''Electoral Violence in Conflict-Ridden Societies: Concepts, Causes, and Consequences". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (3): 5.

[36] Arthur A. Goldsmith (2015). "Electoral Violence in Africa Revisited". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 27 (5): 6.

[37] Jeff Fischer (2002). ''Electoral Conflict and Violence''. Washington, DC: International Foundation for Election Systems White Paper, p. 3.

[38] Christopher Blattman (2009). "From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda". *American Political Science Review* 103 (2): 231–247.

In his study of the political effects of terrorism in Turkey, Kibris empirically measures the effects of terrorism on the electoral choice of the Turkish voters in the 1991 and 1995 general elections. Since 1984, Turkey has experienced terrorist attacks led by the Kurdistan Worker's Party (Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan or PKK), an ethnic separatist organisation.[39] Based on his empirical data, Kibris argues that Turkish voters are highly sensitive to terrorism and that they blame the government for their losses. Kibris also cites a study by Gassabner, Jong-A-Pin, and Mierau which demonstrates a relationship between terrorism and electoral accountability by using a panel dataset containing more than 800 elections from 115 countries over the period from 1968 to 2002. Their findings prove that terrorism has a strong impact on the probability that the incumbent government is replaced.[40] In her thesis, Sandra Jessica Ley Gutiérrez presents the correlation between the criminal dataset and the post-2012 presidential election in Mexico. She concludes that voters are likely to refrain from electoral participation because of the criminal violence that surrounds them.[41]

Several studies have also found that violence can either encourage citizens to come out to vote or deter people from voting. Höglund, for example, suggests that violence in the form of threats and political intimidation can discourage people from casting their votes. Violence and insecurity may cause a low voter turnout, interfere with the registration of voters, or affect the validation of election results. In fact, violence can influence both the electoral process and the outcome of elections. From a conflict management perspective, violence can also have a negative impact by polarising the electorate. Höglund further argues that all societies that experience electoral violence are to some extent conflict-ridden.[42] Höglund mentions the case of Sri Lanka as an example. Although the country regularly held democratic and competitive elections, the armed conflict has caused damage to the electoral process; as a result, a large proportion of the population has been excluded from voting, especially in war-torn areas.[43] In a study of voters' behaviour in Columbia, Miguel Garcia argues that the violent context can

[39] Arzu Kibris (2010). "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behaviour in Turkey". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55 (2): 220–247.
[40] Ibid., p. 226.
[41] Sandra Jessica Ley Gutiérrez (2014). "Citizens in Fear: Political Participation and Voting Behaviour in the Midst of Violence". PhD diss., Duke University.
[42] Katherine Höglund (2010). "Electoral Violence in Conflict-Ridden Societies: Concepts, Causes, and Consequences". *Terrorism and Political Violence* 21 (3): 412–427.
[43] Ibid., p. 414.

lead individuals to adjust their voting patterns to favour the dominant armed actor.[44] Garcia's research shows that conflict between guerrillas and paramilitaries has the strongest effect on electoral participation. Voters living in disputed areas are less likely to vote because political violence discourages their electoral participation; they avoid voting to protect themselves.[45]

Overall, these studies suggest that there is a correlation between violence and voting behaviour. Whether people refrain from voting or increase their participation in electoral processes depends on the type of perpetrators and the violence they enact in each of the case studies. The nature of conflict and violence in Thailand's Deep South is distinct from the violence that happens in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Sub-Saharan African countries, where conflict persists because of unresolved disputes after a major war. It would be overstretching to equate the level of violence that happens in the southern part of Thailand with the violence in Afghanistan and Iraq.

Elections have been held regularly in Thailand, but there are very few reports of killings or violent actions on election days in the Deep South. According to the UNDP report on "Understanding Electoral Violence in Asia"[46] and the study by the United States Institute of Peace on "Trends in Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa", [47] tensions and violence are common during an election in conflict-ridden countries. For instance, extra-judicial executions, arbitrary detentions, and personal humiliation in which voters are stripped naked and chased away from polling stations are common in Uganda while bombings are to be found in Tanzania. The studies also reported rape, sexual harassment, hate speech, eviction, and displacement in Kenya. Fortunately, such violent acts rarely occur during Thailand's election process. The course of action taken by the insurgents in Thailand's Deep South on election day is different from that of insurgent groups elsewhere in the world.

As I mentioned earlier in this chapter, my research suggests that not only is the situation tense in Thailand's Deep South, but the level of political participation is also very high. Ockey emphasises that, despite violence in the region, elections continue to demonstrate how

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[44] Miguel Garcia (2008). "Coercing Voters: Violent Contexts and Political Behaviour in Colombia." Americas Barometer Small Grants Research Papers 15.

[45] Ibid., p. 55.

[46] UNDP Press Release (2011). "Understanding Electoral Violence in Asia". United Nations Development Programme.

[47] Dorina Bekoe (2010*). Trends in Electoral Violence in Sub-Saharan Africa.* United States Institute of Peace, Volume 13, p. 7.

integrative the political process can be. Focusing on integration and disintegration between the Malay Muslims and the Thai government, Ockey raised three clear lessons in relation to political participation in the Deep South. First, harsh suppression by the government has never been successful. Only coordinated economic solutions and political measures, as well as allowing citizens to participate in the political processes, seems to be effective. Second, participation in elections and in politics serves an integrative function, even when that participation leads to a discussion of alternatives that the state disapproves of, such as some form of local autonomy. Third, there have always been differences of opinion among politicians and voters in the Malay Muslim provinces. Malay Muslim politicians who have promoted integration or cultural assimilation have been able to win elections over the years; however, these politicians cannot retain their electoral seats once they become associated with unpopular government policies that are seen as threatening the identity and welfare of Malay Muslims.[48]

Research Design

The area of study comprises the provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. This thesis presents research conducted at the level of electoral constituency. There are eleven constituencies in the region: three in Yala, four in Pattani, and four in Narathiwat.

Independent Variable

This thesis has two independent variables. The first is 'massive violence' and the second is 'chronic daily violence'. The indicators that will be used to categorise the two independent variables of 'massive violence' and 'chronic daily violence' include numbers of violent incidents, casualties and deaths obtained from several statistical data sources such as www.deepsouthwatch.org,[49] a joint website developed and run by journalists and academics in the Deep South of Thailand. For example, according to a report by the Deep South Watch organisation, the level of violence during the year of 2007 is considerably high (1198 injuries

[48] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Michael Montesano & Patrick Jory (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 154.

[49] Deep South Watch (DSW), Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity (CSCD), Prince of Songkhla University, Pattani campus, access at http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/sites/default/files/southern_violence_from_jan2004_to_feb2012english.pdf

and 715 deaths)[50] and voting outcome was based on Candidate-Centered voting that is mixed between the ruling party and the opposition party. There were also many newcomer candidates. The long-established Democrat Party won five seats, whereas the newer Puea Pandin party won three, People Power's Party (PPP)[51] two, and the Chart Thai party two also. Interestingly, what distinguishes the 2007 general election from the 2001, 2005, and 2011 general elections is the difference in the electoral rules. In 2007, the acting government of General Surayud Chulanont (the coup government which came to power in 2006) adopted a multi-member district system to prevent Thaksin's political party from returning to power. The size of the district was gerrymandered. From eleven constituencies in the previous elections, the new electoral system in the 2007 general election gave Deep South an extra constituency, resulting in twelve constituencies. It was Narathiwat province that earned one extra seat.

The national election results from 1975 to 2011 will be used to operationalise both of the independent variables. The election results are mainly from the single-member district (SMD) electoral system. Single-member districts were used for the general elections of 2001, 2005, and 2011. The general election year of 2007 was the only year that a multi-member district system was used. As for indicators that can quantify social identity in the region, this thesis will rely on demographic data. Indicators of ethno-religion, language, gender, level of education, household income (urban), household income (rural) will also be taken into account. To substantiate the result of this research, a sampling survey is necessary. Besides qualitative methods of interviewing, a sampling survey can reveal the indicators of the social identity of people in the Deep South, how they participate in politics along with their perceptions and attitudes. However, a shortcoming of the sampling survey is that it can only demonstrate the latest results of the 2011 election. To overcome this problem, I added some questions to the survey that could help analyse people's perceptions towards the 2005 and 2007 general elections; for instance, "After the Kruesae and Takbai massacres, how did you vote? Did you vote for the ruling party (Thai Rak Thai) or the opposition party (Democrat Party)? Why?"

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[50] Ibid.

[51] After the Thai Rak Thai party was dissolved by the Thai Supreme Court in 2007, some members of the Thai Rak Thai party then joined the People Power's Party, an existing minor party that was founded in 1998. After the Thai Rak Thai crew joined the PPP, the PPP became what most people believed as the reincarnation of the TRT party, where Thaksin was still the main leader behind the scenes. In 2008, the People Power's Party was dissolved (again) by the Constitutional Court because of an allegation of an election fraud.

Regarding questions on the Kruesae and Takbai incidents, skepticism might arise concerning the effectiveness of the survey sampling questions because these incidents happened more than a decade ago. From my personal experience in conducting research and attending several workshops in the Deep South, participants (villagers, religious leaders, local and national politicians) always brought up the Kruesae and Takbai massacres. For all those who were directly affected, the incidents remain firmly implanted in their memories.

Pattani-Malay (Bahasa Malay dialect) is the mother tongue of eighty-eight percent of Muslims in the Deep South. The standard Thai or Central Thai is spoken by thirteen percent of the population, a quarter of whom live in urban areas. Narathiwat has the highest concentration of Pattani-Malay speakers, which comprise eighty-nine percent of the population, and the lowest percentage of Central Thai speakers (seven percent). Yala has the highest concentration of Central Thai speakers (twenty-two percent). Nearly all Pattani-Malay speakers are Muslims, but four percent of Buddhists can speak Pattani-Malay.[52]

Urban residents are more likely to have post-secondary education compared to their rural counterparts. Among the southernmost provinces, the people in Yala have the highest level of post-secondary education (twenty-five percent), while Narathiwat has only fifteen percent and Pattani seventeen percent. Central Thai speakers (thirty-three percent) are more likely to have a higher education than Pattani-Malay speakers (seventeen percent). Many Malay Muslims did not attend secular schools but instead went to *pondok* schools for their studies. Some people go to both schools; therefore, I have added the level of religious education in my sampling survey.

Dependent Variable

The Dependent Variable for this research is the voting behaviour or voting pattern. The voting pattern reflects two levels: the level of elites and the level of voters. According to Chandra, voting patterns can be grouped into two categories: the behaviour of individual voters and the elites. The term elite can be defined as those who are upwardly mobile middle-class individuals, better educated and better off than the voters whom they seek to mobilise. In this

[52] James Klein (2010). Democracy and Conflict in Southern Thailand: A Survey of the Thai Electorate in Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. The Asia Foundation: Thailand at: https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/TAFThailandSouthernReport2010.pdf

sense, ‘elite’ can be used interchangeably with the terms ‘politician’, ‘candidate’, ‘incumbent’, and ‘entrepreneur’ in this research.[53]

The indicator that will be used to examine the elite level is ‘electoral strategy’. Electoral strategy consists of patronage-client relationship, vote-buying, intimidation, and policy. Not only does violence affect voters’ preferences, but it also influences the elites’ electoral strategy. These indicators can be examined through in-depth interviews with former and current politicians, local villagers, vote-canvassers, and security officials in the three southernmost provinces. Official documents such as political party platforms were collected for this research. Unofficial documents include magazines, newspapers, private journals, local gazettes, and flyers. The second level of voting pattern is the level of individual voters. The indicator that will be used to examine individual voters is ‘voter’s preference’. According to Blattman, Kibris, and Hoglund, the more violence that occurs, the more people will vote to replace the incumbent politicians.

The Fieldwork

From May to September 2012, accompanied by three research assistants, I made field visits nearly every day to collect villagers’ opinions on their voting decisions. The experience offered me a considerable amount of information on their voting behaviour. I was able not only to collect quantitative data from my sample group but also to gain first-hand interaction with villagers. I found that the strategy of distributing questionnaires randomly throughout the region gave me the advantage of gaining more in-depth interviews through several different sources and networks.

Values and data

Indicators of independent variables and dependent variables have been mentioned in the previous section. Quantitative data related to voting results and census data of the

[53] Kanchan Chandra (2007). “Counting Heads: A Theory of Voter and Elite Behaviour in Patronage Democracies”, in Kitschelt, Herbert and Wilkinson, Steven (eds). *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*. Cambridge University Press, p. 85.

population in the area were obtained from the Office of the Electoral Commission in the provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat.

The general election years of 2005 and 2011 will be the focus of this research since the outbreak of violence started in January 2004. For a proficient data analysis, we need to refer to the voting results of the general election of 1976 as our control variable. The result of the 1976 general election can be used as comparative case for the 2005 general election.

By the same token, a qualitative methodology was also used to conduct this research. In-depth interviews were conducted with former and current politicians, local villagers, vote-canvassers, and security officials in the three southernmost provinces.

Information gathered from in-depth interviews, statistical analysis of violent incidents and aggregate data-level analysis of voting results were used for measuring and determining the pattern of voting behaviour. Villagers selected for interviews were Thai citizens who were eligible to vote. They were recruited through the head of the village. The process of interviewing started from closed circles within a network to which I had access before moving to the snowballing method. In conflict and violence-prone areas, it is preferable to be referred by one individual to another among trusted circles. Random sampling can be risky in areas of violence. Having been working in the area for two years, I have built many connections and networks in the region. I am aware of the potential for bias, so connections through political networks were conducted from both sides (The Democrats and the Wadah group[54]). One of the prominent politicians in Wadah group, Areepen Utarasint, whom I interviewed is my uncle. In dealing with all my subjects, I strove for objectivity. Local university students from the Prince of Songkhla University who are Patani-Malay native speakers were hired as my research assistants when conducting in-depth interviews. The language spoken in this area is predominantly Bahasa Patani-Melayu dialect. Therefore, it was necessary to have translators.

Two villages from each constituency in each of the three provinces were selected. [Yala has three constituencies (eight districts, fifty-eight sub-districts, and 379 villages),[55] Pattani has

[54] There has always been a vacillation of electoral stronghold between Democrat Party and Wadah group in the Deep South. They are the major two contestants in this region. Many of the Wadah members are former Democrat Party members. Because of several conflicts that happened between Wadah faction and other senior members of the Democrat Party, Wadah members left the Democrat Party and remain as the opponent of the Democrat Party until today.

[55] See Province of Yala official webpage at http://www.yala.go.th/webyala/SiteMap/Managearea_Data.html

four constituencies (twelve districts, 115 sub-districts, and 642 villages),[56] and Narathiwat has four constituencies (fourteen districts, seventy-seven sub-districts, 623 villages)[57]]. The most violent village and the least violent village of each constituency were chosen for in-depth interviews. Besides selecting villages based on the level of violence, the factors of ethnicity and religion also played a part in our selection. Each village recruited two men and two women from three different age groups: between 18 and 30, between 31 and 50, and 51 and up. This method is particularly useful for gaining perspectives across different age groups on how local people vote and how they perceive violence in their area. The number of participants were as high as eighty-eight people (eleven constituencies multiplied by two villages equals twenty-two, then multiply by four people from each village equals eighty-eight).

From my numerous interviews, I discovered that most villagers were reluctant to share information about vote-buying or even to criticise any candidates or political parties. It is difficult to ascertain whether our participants were genuine or not when answering the questionnaire. Researching electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South has always been a difficult task because of the low level of trust among villagers and the continuation of violence which makes villagers wary of potential safety concerns and dangers. Violence diminishes trust among villagers. No one knows for sure whose side anyone is on. Some villagers might side with the state authorities vis-à-vis the insurgents; others might side with one political party vis-à-vis another political party. In essence, many of these villagers are wearing different hats: one person might work as a spy for the state authorities, while another person in the same village might be an infiltrator for the insurgents, not to mention that some of these villagers are also vote-canvassers or local politicians who might affiliate themselves with either the Wadah group or the Democrat Party. It is important for researchers not to fall into the trap of ignoring complex factors or losing oneself in the realm of one-sided connections and networking when conducting research in Thailand's Deep South. Specifically, one has to be aware of conducting snowball sampling research because it could result in skewed information. Survey sampling methodology thus becomes a beneficial tool for empirical study when collecting data from a variety of sources. Distributing questionnaires randomly from village to village not only

[56] See Province of Pattani official webpage at http://www.pattani.go.th/pattani/SiteMap/Managearea_Data.html
[57] See Narathiwat Election Commission Official webpage at http://www2.ect.go.th/about.php?Province=narathiwat&SiteMenuID=1580

contributes statistical numbers for analytical purposes but also serves as an effective gateway for me to cross-check the data that I have collected and to obtain a broader range of materials from different interviewed sources.

The Structure of the Thesis

Since 1932, Thailand has had twenty-five general elections for the House of Representatives. The first election was held in 1933. It will be discarded from our analysis because representatives from each province were chosen by the government rather than directly elected by the people. For analytical purposes, this thesis will divide the Thai national elections into two periods. The first period (1975–1996) is essential for an historical understanding on how local citizens in the Deep South participate in politics. Several of the general elections will not be discussed as they were held under a military government. Therefore, the elections of the years 1979, 1983, 1986, 1988 are irrelevant to my study. The September 1992 election is an exception because it serves as a useful comparison to the 2007 general election and supports the observation that voters in the Deep South are more inclined towards Individual-based voting after a military coup. In particular, I focus on the 1975 and the 1976 elections because the incidents that took place in 1975, which will be discussed in more detail in Chapter Three, have powerfully shaped electoral politics in the Deep South ever since.

The second period (2001–2011), which is the time of the contemporary violence, will be the main focus of this thesis. From 1975 to 1996, there were general elections with elected politicians but there were some years the military staged a coup and ruled the country. In 1977 – 1980, the country was ruled under General Kriangsak Chamanan. In 1980, General Prem Tinsulanonda, a retired military officer was chosen as Prime Minister. He ruled from 1980 to 1988. The only election years free from military rule were 1975, 1976, 1988-1991, 1992-1996. The first period needs to be distinguished from the second period because Thailand has since adopted a new electoral system. The 2001 general election was the first to be held after constitutional reforms in 1997. Besides modifications to the electoral system, this period also witnessed growing violence in southern Thailand.

Thus I divide this thesis into two parts. The first part—Chapter Two and Chapter Three—focuses on the historical context of electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South. The second part—Chapter Four, Chapter Five, and Chapter Six—discusses and analyses the role of

political actors in a context of conflict and violence. In addition, this study makes two central claims: first, there is a correlation between massive violence and subsequent political participation. Second, when violence is prolonged and becomes chronic, the patron-client system becomes more deeply entrenched in the electoral politics of the region. The third and the fourth chapters provide supporting data and analysis for my first claim, while the fifth and the sixth chapters elaborate on my second claim. At the end of this thesis, I have developed an analytical model that can be used to predict and to explain the voting behaviour of voters who live in a conflict and violence zone.

Chapter Two: Historical Background of Political Participation

This chapter uses Patani's historical context as a tool to understand the evolution of campaigns and political participation in the region. History can capture the underlying conflicts that continue to recur and help us to understand how electoral politics revolve around the violence. I examine the interaction between Haji Sulong, the president of the Pattani Islamic Committee, several Deep South politicians, and the military government. On 3 April 1947, Haji Sulong issued seven autonomy demands to the military dictator Field Marshal Phibun. The government arrested him and charged him with conspiracy in a separatist movement. In 1954, he fell victim to forced disappearance. Historically speaking, the movement by Haji Sulong and other politicians from the Deep South in this chapter can elaborate the impediments the Malay Muslims had to face with the military government. This chapter shows the unlikelihood of an individual minority being able to stand up against a strong nationalistic state. The next chapter will show that by organising themselves, the Malay Muslims were able to gain greater political leverage vis-à-vis the government.

Chapter Three: The Emergence of Political Participation in Thailand's Deep South: The 1975 Pattani Central Mosque Mass Demonstration

The 1975 demonstration was a critical juncture that helped people in the southernmost provinces embark on the process of political engagement. The demonstration incited people's political consciousness; it made people engage more with politics and fostered a political awareness that informs voting decisions. In response to the government's harsh response to the demonstration, Malay Muslims voted against the incumbent politicians in the 1976 general election. I argue that the incident of the 1975 Pattani demonstration marked the emergence of electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South.

Chapter Four: Violence and Politicians: The Rise and Fall of 'Wadah'

The name 'Wadah' originates from an Arabic word meaning 'Unity.' Associated themselves with an Arabic name, gave them a stronger legitimate status as the representatives for the Malay Muslims. The Wadah group are the Malay Muslims' political representatives, made up of Muslim MPs, provincial leaders, and religious leaders from the five southernmost provinces of Thailand. The Wadah group has survived in the Thai political arena for nearly seventeen years; its longevity surpasses that of many Thai political parties. However, after the Kruesae and Takbai incidents in 2004, all Wadah members lost their seats in the 2005 national election. They were punished by their electorate because they had abandoned their supporters. The Wadah faction within the Thai Rak Thai was also affected by Thaksin's hawkish policy. Through their votes, the locals were also punishing Wadah members for failing to step up for the Malay Muslims during the Kruesae and Takbai tragedies. The more the Malay Muslims representatives supported central government policy that ran counter to the wishes of their local voters, the more retribution came from the electorate. However, the more Malay Muslims representatives supported local voters' demands that came into conflict with government policies, the more they were treated with suspicion and mistrust by the central government.[58]

Chapter Five: Violence and Vote-Canvassers: Friends or Foes

This chapter argues that when there is daily occurrence of chronic violence, the chronic violence shifts the bargaining power away from politicians and towards vote-canvassers. It enhances the vote-influencing power that vote-canvassers have on voters. Like chronic violence, massive violence increases the bargaining power that vote-canvassers have over their patrons. However, in contrast to chronic violence, massive violence decreases vote-canvassers' influence on voters. To put it briefly, chronic violence promotes vote-canvassers' bargaining power vis-à-vis politicians, and vote-canvassers' vote-influencing power vis-à-vis voters. Massive violence also promotes vote-canvassers' bargaining power vis-à-vis patrons, but diminishes vote-canvassers' vote-influencing power vis-à-vis voters. In the southernmost provinces of Thailand, 'chronic violence' and 'massive violence' are the key factors that bring the asymmetric relationship between patrons and vote-canvassers in balance. As it turns out,

[58] Daungyewa Utarasint (2005). "Wadah: The Muslim Faction in Thai Political Party". Paper presented to The Ninth International Conference on Thai Studies, Northern Illinois University, 3–6 April, 2005, p. 10.

the chronic violence and massive violence can enhance the role of vote-canvassers more than when there is no violence.

Chapter Six: Violence and Voters: Voices and Votes amid Violence

The analysis in this chapter relies on the results of the sampling data collected during my survey. Combined aggregate data from both qualitative and quantitative key findings strongly suggest that voters in the southernmost provinces of Thailand are rational actors. Vote-buying practice and social factors such as religion, ethnicity, and gender play a part in the voting behaviour of the electorate in the southernmost provinces. But it is primarily the occurrences of chronic violence and single catastrophic incidents that affect how the electorate votes. Hence, I would argue that voters will conduct 'individual-based' voting for the ruling party when chronic violence continues to occur daily. But when a single catastrophic incident occurs, voters opt to punish politicians of the ruling party by voting against them. Voters would conduct 'party-based' voting for political candidates from the opposition party.

Chapter 2: Historical Background of Political Participation in Thailand's Deep South

Introduction

> It should be known that Thailand had ruled the Malay Peninsula even before the establishment of the Malay nation…or it can be said that Thailand had ruled the Peninsula even 100 years prior to the founding of Islam. Thereby, Malay people should realize that the Muslims in Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun are not Malays but are the Thais who accept Islam to be their primary faith. These people are Thais who live in Thailand. Those who want to be with the Malays may leave - but you cannot take this land with you. (Praya Rattanapakdee) [59]

In 1966, the former Governor of Pattani, Praya Rattanapakdee,[60] took a firm stance against Malay Muslims who wanted to separate the southernmost region from the Thai state. While many Thais may view the Malay population in the Deep South as Thais who embraced Islam, the Malay Muslims, by contrast, perceive the Thais as the aggressors who invaded their kingdom. In his thesis, Che Man mentions the claim made by the Thai state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs documents that Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat, and Satun have been part of Thailand since 1377,[61] which was during the reign of King Maha Thammaracha II. According to various non-Thai historical documents, however, the Thais colonised Patani only in the years 1603, 1786 and 1832.[62] It is not the goal of this chapter to uncover who has the right to claim ownership of the land. This chapter discusses Patani's historical context as a means to understand the evolution of election campaigns and political participation in the region. The first section of this chapter looks back at the time when Siam annexed the Kingdom of Patani or Patani Raya (Greater Patani) from 1786 until 1932, which will provide a general setting for the underlying conflict in this region. The Siamese annexation led to humiliation and the

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[59] Chuleeporn Wirunha (2008). *Phrawatsart khaam boklao khong chao Melayu: Bunga raya* [Bunga Raya: Oral History by the Malays]. Bangkok: SakSopa Printing, p. 124.

[60] Praya Rattanapakdee or "Jang Suwanpakdee" was the former Governor of Pattani (He was the Governor of Pattani from April 1, 1929 – February 28, 1933. See http://www2.pattani.go.th/webptn/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=68&Itemid=22. It is a list of Pattani governors from 1909 until recent times.

[61] W. K. Che Man (1983). "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand: A thesis Submitted for Master of Social Science degree of University Sains Malaysia", p. 34.

[62] Ibid.

resentment among the early sultanates in Patani. The following section contains examples that illustrate how abrupt political changes during the past century at the national level impacted heavily on southern Thailand and the interconnection between central and Deep South politics. By examining this interconnection, we can see the broader spectrum of the Deep South conflict. The second part gives an account of the political situation in the Deep South while the region was under the command of junta leaders from 1938 until 1988. Not only was it an era dominated by military dictatorship, but it was also the period of a power contestation between Field Marshal Plaek Phibunsongkram and Pridi Banomyong, both of whom served as prime ministers. Field Marshal Phibunsongkram was a ultra-nationalist who was busied with his nation-building program and Thai statism. Pridi, on the other hand, was a civilian, an intellectual and a lawyer who understood the Malay Muslims' need to have an autonomous region. This section suggests that the frequent military coups in the capital city of Bangkok bred conflict in the Deep South. In this section, I also look at the political candidates and their election campaigning under military rule, particularly how the political candidates at the time steered their election campaigns to circumvent conflicts. The third section focuses on the well-respected Islamic religious leader and also spiritual leader of the Malay Muslims named Haji Sulong. I argue that under a strong centralised nationalistic Thai state, an individual cannot succeed if they protest alone. Even if the individual represents body of opinion and interests of a larger movement, an individual who acts alone tends to stand out from the rest of the movement, hence easily seen, identified, and targeted by the government. For instance, Haji Sulong, was the only public face for the Malay Muslims' seven-point petition to the Thai state. In 1954, he became a victim of forced disappearance. This section aims to demonstrate the significance of Haji Sulong's role in the region's politics.

Patani Raya (the Greater Patani)

During several of the workshops and focus groups that I attended for my fieldwork, many of the Malay Muslim intellectuals and members of Malay Muslim civil society organisations constantly brought up the glorious past of the Kingdom of Patani. Likewise, during the interviews, some of the retired and active BRN members expressed animosity towards Siamese colonisation. It appears that they have never forgotten the Thai state for its annexation of their region, and Malay Muslims' resentment is perpetuated through local

narratives of Patani history. Hence, a brief discussion of the Patani historical context is essential for our understanding of the southern Thai conflict.

The Kingdom of Patani is believed to have once been the largest and most populous kingdom of the Malay states in the Peninsula. It was a trading kingdom and one of the leading hubs of Islam in Southeast Asia. The kingdom was an important commercial centre for Asian as well as for European traders and in more localised trade with Siam and other Malay and Indonesian ports.[63] Citing Teeuw and Wyatt, Che Man holds the view that Patani was officially declared an Islamic state in 1457; Davisakd Puaksom, however, contends the precise date is still open to debate.[64] The Islamisation of Patani precipitated a shift from the existing Hindu-Buddhist dominant culture to an Islamic one. Islam directly impacted on many traditional customs, such as eating habits, clothing, and ritual practices. The spread of Islam by traders enhanced the economic prosperity of the region as Patani became one of the major trading ports in the Malay Peninsula, particularly for commerce between the Middle East, South Asia and North Asia. Besides trading advantages, the expansion of Islam also created an ideological bond among the people of the region by strengthening a sense of community solidarity that transcended local or provincial loyalties. One of the significant cultural phenomena affected by the arrival of Islam in this region was the replacement of the Indian script with the Malay Jawi script.

The Kingdom of Patani remained an independent state until the Siamese kingdom of Ayutthaya annexed it in 1786.[65] To suppress the numerous local revolts following annexation, Siam divided the former kingdom into seven provinces, which later became seven small sultanates during the reign of King Rama II (1809-1824) of the Chakri dynasty. The provinces were Nongchik, Patani, Raman, Ra-ngae, Saiburi, Yala, and Yaring. These newly established provinces were ruled by 'Chao Muang' or 'Raja', a high-ranking Malay official who was appointed by the Thai king. Most of the local rulers chafed under the tightening control of the Thais and rebelled unsuccessfully in 1832. Eventually, the territorial partitioning of Patani

[63] Teeuw & Wyatt, *Hikayat Patani, The Story of Patani*. The Hague: M. Nijhoff, p. 7.
[64] Davisakd Puaksom (2008). "Of a Lesser Brilliance: Patani Historiography in Contention", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 80.
[65] W. K. Che Man (1988). *Liberationists and Accommodationists: The Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, p. 17.

resulted in its weakening and greater dependence on the Thai state. The policy of sending Thai officials to rule Patani proved to be effective for the Thai government in subjugating the region.

In 1901, as part of policy of administrative centralisation known as the *thesaphiban system*[66] by King Chulalongkorn (also known as King Rama V), Thailand reorganised the seven provinces into one administrative unit called the 'Area of the Seven Provinces' and placed it under the control of a 'Thai Area Commissioner' who reported directly to the Ministry of Interior.[67] Later in 1902, King Chulalongkorn extended this centralizing process by placing the sultanates under the control of the governor of *monthon*[68] Nakhon-Sithammarat, and the tributary system was replaced by a taxation system. In 1906, this administrative unit was once again reorganised into four larger provinces: Pattani, Yala, Bangnara, and Saiburi.[69] The aim of the administrative restructuring was to strengthen Bangkok's hold on the region.

The Deep South Provinces under Military Rule

If the initial Deep South conflict was caused by Siamese annexation, the next stage was brought on by military control. Conflict arose in the Deep South whenever the military seized power in Bangkok. This section will demonstrate that political takeover by the military in Bangkok also affected politics in the Deep South.

In Thailand, coups launched by the military have occurred frequently. An article published in *The Economist* concludes: "Democracy was tried from time to time, but discarded by generals who felt they could do better."[70] Thai military leaders are much practised, skilled even, when it comes to staging a coup d'état, but they often prove incompetent when it comes to governing the country. According to Huntington, the military mindset and their professional ethic are mainly what Huntington termed conservative realism, which means that the military professionals are assumed to be obedient to orders, historically inclined, pessimistic,

[66] *Thesaphiban system* refers to the reform and centralization of provincial administration throughout the kingdom.
[67] Ibid., p. 20.
[68] *Monthon* or มณฑล is a type of local government bureaucratic system; a type of precinct or a province. It was a local administrative subdivision of Thailand during the reign of King Rama V.
[69] Bangnara Province was later named Narathiwat Province in 1942, while Saiburi Province was dissolved and merged into Patani Province in 1931.
[70] See the Obituary section, *The Economist*, "Kriangsak Chomanan" (8 January 2004), accessed on 17 June 2017 at http://www.economist.com/node/2329646

militaristic, nationalist, and power-oriented.[71] The military is so tightly organised and homogeneous that it has poor comprehension of minority communities, rendering it poorly suited to ruling a country as diverse in culture, religion and ethnicity as Thailand. In other words, the culture of top-down and hierarchical military command that is commonly used inside the military barracks is ill-suited when the military wish to govern a heterogeneous nation. Thai-Buddhists comprise the majority in Thailand, but the country is certainly not homogenous. There are ethnic Chinese, Malay Muslims, Mon, Khmer, and highland ethnic groups, and the Malay Muslims are the least dispersed ethnicity of all the minorities residing in Thailand. There are some scattered small communities of Malay Muslims who live in Bangkok, Ayuthaya, Krabi, Nakorn-Srithammarat and Satun, but most of the Malay Muslim population lives in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. Within three southernmost provinces, it contains eighty-five percent of the Malay Muslim ethnic population[72]. Many incidents discussed in this section will reveal how the military has been insensitive to cultural differences.

In 1932, a group of intellectuals, young bureaucrats and soldiers known as 'the Promoters' overthrew the absolute monarchy. There have been numerous military coups in Thailand since the revolution of 1932. The events of 1932 marked a major turning point in Thailand's political history. The Deep South also felt the impact of this transformation. Several members of 'the Promoters' later played a significant role in determining the fate of the region[73]. In 1938, Plaek Phibunsongkram,[74] one of the leading members of 'the Promoters', staged a further coup against the government, resulting in his becoming Prime Minister for six years (he would again hold this position for nine years after another coup in 1948). In 1939, Phibun introduced *Rathniyom* or "State Convention", a nation-building policy to promote Thai

[71] Samuel Huntington (1957). The Soldier and the State: The Theory and Politics of Civil-Military Relations. New York: Belknap Press, p. 79.

[72] James Klein (2010). Democracy and Conflict in Southern Thailand: A Survey of the Thai Electorate in Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. The Asia Foundation: Thailand at: https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/TAFThailandSouthernReport2010.pdf

[73] The four members of the Promoters were Banjong Srijaroon, Cham Promyong, Prasert Srijaroon, and Kareem Srijaroon. They were all Muslims from Bangkok. See Sinlapawatthanathama (24 June, 2017). "The Thai Muslims who were part of the Thai Revolution of 24 June 1932." (In Thai - ชาวไทยมุสลิม ในการเปลี่ยนแปลงการปกครอง ๒๔ มิถุนายน ๒๔๗๕) at: https://www.silpa-mag.com/history/article_10214

[74] I will shorten the last name from "Phibunsongkram" to "Phibun" for the rest of this chapter.

patriotism.[75] All citizens of Thailand were expected to adopt the same standards of morality and way of life as befit a 'civilised nation'. The new Thai nationalism campaign posed a threat to the Malay Muslim identity. *Rathniyom* consisted of twelve cultural mandates that were announced from 1939 to 1942. *Rathniyom* no. 3 states that everyone has to be called Thai for the purpose of national solidarity; no other ethnicity, including that of the Malay, could be specified. The ninth mandate requires everyone to speak Thai because it is the national language; and the tenth mandate dictates that the people of Thailand must adhere to a civilised dress code.[76] The Malays are used to wearing sarongs not pants, long sleeve shirts and dresses. Men were forced to not wear *kopiah*,[77] and women were forced to take off their hijabs[78]. These cultural mandates planted the seeds of conflict in the region and further alienated the Malay Muslims.

In 1944, despite strong objections, Phibun's government attempted to abolish the Islamic Law for family and inheritance cases.[79] Tengku Abdul Jalal bin Tengku Abdul Mutalib or Adun Na Saiburi, as he was popularly known, an MP of Narathiwat and the son of the late Raja of Saiburi, petitioned the Phibun government for an amendment of the cultural assimilation policy to protect the Malay Muslims' cultural heritage and appease the locals' feelings.[80] The petition was ignored. He filed another complaint to Phibun's successor, Prime Minister Khuang, but was again ignored. Adun Na Saiburi lost all hope. Without resigning from his post as an MP, he fled to Malaysia and later joined the secessionist movement.[81] Phibun was the military leader most hated by the Malay Muslim community. Phibun strongly opposed the autonomy regional plan proposed by Haji Sulong,[82] one of the most respected religious leaders of the Malay Muslims who became a victim of forced disappearance during the second term of Phibun's government. Phibun strived to impose 'Thai-ness' upon the

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[75] Julia A. Stowe (1991). *Siam Becomes Thailand: A Story of Intrigue*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press, p. 124.

[76] Thamsook Numnonda (1978). "Pibulsongkram's Thai Nation-Building Programme during the Japanese Military Presence, 1941–1945". *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 9(2): 234–247.

[77] Kopiah is a traditional Malay Muslim hat, an oval shaped hat that is associated with traditional Malay culture and Islam.

[78] Che Man, Liberationists and Accommodationists, p. 27.

[79] Che Man, "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand", p. 75.

[80] Ibid.

[81] Thanet Aphornsuvan (2008). "Malay Muslim 'Separatism' in Southern Thailand", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick. (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, pp. 107–108.

[82] I will discuss in greater detail later in the chapter about Haji Sulong's life and how he was made to disappear.

Malays. For example, he forced the Malay Muslims bureaucrats to change their names to Thai names. Using the Malay language was outlawed.[83] Ibrahim Sukri described the assimilation approach under Phibun's government.

> The government forced the Muslims to dress in a Western style. Whoever acted against the rules, the police would take them into custody and torture them. This also included the Ulamas. If the police saw anyone wore *saruban* (Malaysian dress), they would tear the dress off and step on it. If any vendors was seen wearing the hijab in a fresh market, the police would beat them with guns.[84]

Phibun's policy of forced assimilation resulted in widespread bitterness and anger among the Malay Muslims, many of whom found refuge in the states of Kelantan and Trengganu across the southern border in Malaysia; some even fled to Egypt and Saudi Arabia. Several separatist movements have emerged to rebel against government oppression.

During Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat's administration (1958–1963), socio-economic development was used as an instrument for national integration. Sarit believed that improving the socio-economic welfare of the people would decrease the level of social conflict and built up a closer relationship plus a better understanding between the Thai central government and the villagers in the rural areas. As for the development of the Patani region, the government adopted a strategy that mainly focused on education. The objective of the Sarit administration was to cultivate national loyalty among the Malay Muslims by improving their Thai educational system, which involved studying in Thai language, learning more about Thai culture, and Thai history. The government not only increased the level of Thai educational understanding for the Muslims but also abolished *ponoh* (pondok*)*,[85] the Malay traditional education system. Nevertheless, the central government still allowed Malay Muslims to have their religious freedom in matters of family and inheritance law. This policy of integration was moderately successful in producing a number of pro-Bangkok loyalists among the Malays. The government hoped to accomplish two objectives: to achieve greater understanding and better communication between Muslims and Thai government officials, and to create a cohort of

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[83] Che Man, "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand", p. 74.
[84] Che Man, Liberationists and Accommodationists, p. 27.
[85] *Pondok* is a local Islamic boarding school. Mostly villagers would send their children to study the Quran and Hadith, Arabic and Malay languages. Local villagers in Southern Thailand considered *pondok* a symbol of their identity.

Muslims within the Thai bureaucracy. The fundamental goal was to build the Malay Muslims' trust and acceptance of the authority of the Thai state.[86]

Since Sarit's time, the number of Malay Muslim children entering Thai schools has been gradually increasing, but it does not mean that some of the Malay Muslims no longer perceive Thai education as a threat to the Malay identity. Those who send their children to Thai schools do so because they have no alternatives, as their *pondok* education system has been mostly replaced by government-sponsored Islamic schools. On the other hand, there are many Malay Muslims who hold the view that studying Thai would increase their employment and socio-economic opportunities. Many of these Malays believe that it is better to accept the Thai bureaucratic system because it offers more job security and better living standards. Those Malay Muslims who go through the Thai system of education have more opportunity to enter the public sector and become bureaucratic officials.

Five decades ago, many of the Malay Muslims were unwilling to send their children to a Thai public school, preferring instead the *pondok* schools. Nevertheless, some villagers do not distinguish between adhering to Islam and being ethnic Malay. For them, the Malay language is the language of Islam. If the central government forced them to learn Thai and discard the Malay language, it would be viewed as anti-Islam.[87] One of my friends, a Muslim from Phuket province, shared a story about her father visiting her in Pattani. He met some of the local people at a mosque near their home. One of them asked him why he could read the Quran but could not speak the language of Islam. What the person at the local mosque meant was why could my friend's father not speak Malay. It shows that even today, many of the people in the Patani region still confuse their ethnic identity as Malays with their religious identity as Muslims. The fault lies with the poor educational system and the Malay Muslims' resistance against learning Thai language. As Barbara Whittingham-Jones, the British journalist, observed in the 1940s,

> As the Malays refuse to send their children to Siamese schools, and have so far stubbornly refused to acquire even a rudimentary knowledge of the Siamese language (during the whole

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[86] Che Man, Liberationists and Accommodationists, p. 49.

[87] Imron Maluleem (1995). *Wikhro khwamkhatyaeng rawang rathaban thai kap musalim nai prathet: karani suksa klum musalim nai khet jangwat chaidaen phak tai* [An Analysis of Conflict between State and Thai-Muslim in Thailand: A Case Study of the Southern Part of Thailand]. Bangkok: Islamic Academy Publishing, p. 87.

> of my visit I found only one Haji, a former district officer, able to read and write Siamese), this educational starvation is retarding their entire social and economic development.[88]

Another problem for Thai legitimacy in Pattani is that corruption was rampant under successive military dictatorships. During his premiership, Sarit accumulated a huge personal fortune from misusing public funds.[89] It was a similar story under the government led by General Thanom Kittikachorn (1963–1973) and his Deputy Prime Minister, General Prapat Jarusatien.[90] An American scholar, M. Ladd Thomas, one of the first foreign scholars to conduct research in Thailand's deep south, shared his fieldwork experiences in the late 1950s and early 1960s with me. Professor Thomas related that one day he was in the midst of interviewing a provincial governor when a recently appointed young deputy governor suddenly burst into the room. The deputy governor reported that the border patrol police had captured a group of arms smugglers running weapons by boat on the Sungai-kolok River. In Professor Thomas's words, the governor did not seem too pleased and asked the deputy governor to leave his office. "We will talk about this later," the governor said. Not long after the interview with the governor, Professor Thomas learned that the deputy governor who interrupted the interview was suddenly transferred to another province. Later, Professor Thomas was astonished to learn that the owner of the boat used to smuggle illegal weapons was none other than the infamous deputy prime minister of the country at the time. The American professor was taken aback because he never would have expected such a high-ranking official to be so corrupt. I asked Professor Thomas for the name of the deputy prime minister. He chuckled before replying: "You can see his name everywhere in that province." Professor Thomas also told me that it was this deputy prime minister who brought him along to the Deep South of Thailand. Professor Thomas recounted that once he and the deputy prime minister were strolling along the rice fields together, the deputy prime minister suddenly stopped and turned to face the rice fields. The deputy prime minister then pointed his finger and said, "That is my land." He then made an expansive gesture and waved his hand in different directions, "That is also my land…that one too…that too, and that one too. I can give you some of my land if you want to

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[88] Barbara Whittingham-Jones (1947). "Patani-Malay State Outside Malaya". *The Straits Times*, 30 October.
[89] Che Man, "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand", p. 56.
[90] Ibid., p. 56.

build a house here." The story told by Professor Thomas of his fieldwork experience in the Deep South illustrates how corrupt and powerful the Thai military rulers were.

Military rule continued in the late 1970s and 1980s. General Kriangsak Chomanan served as prime minister from 1977-1980, and was replaced by General Prem Tinsulanonda.General Prem became the next prime minister with the endorsement from the monarchy. There was no election. His premiership lasted from 1980 until 1988. Under Prem's regime, the policy of *Tai Rom Yen*, which means 'the south in the cool shade', was initiated by Lieutenant General Harn Leenanond, the then Fourth Army Region Commander. The objective was to eradicate the violence in the Deep South.[91] The policy included socio-economic improvement, infrastructure development, and trust building with the local Malay Muslims.[92] Harn helped form the Southern Border Provinces Administrative Centre (SBPAC). The institution was established on 20 January 1981 by Prime Minister's Office Order 8/1981.[93] I discovered during my fieldwork that many of the villages in Bang Lang Dam sub-district in Banangsata had new settlers who came from Phatthalung, Nakhornsithammarat and Surathani provinces under the *Tai Rom Yen* policy. For example, in 1983, Chalongchai village was settled by the Thais from Phatthalung province. Santhi village and Sai Surat village were settled on the initiative of Lieutenant General Harn, also in 1983. Interestingly, the *Tai Rom Yen* policy is similar to Sarit's assimilation policy and the *Nikom Saang Ton-Aing* (In Thai - นิคมสร้างตนเอง) or 'the Self-Help Colonies' that were initiated during Sarit's regime. The project helped 15,000 families migrate from the northeastern part of Thailand to Satun, Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Songkhla.[94] The government provided 7.2 to 10 acres of land to each migrated family. In his study, Che Man points out that the Self-Help Colonies project was mainly to assimilate the Malay-Muslim predominant areas and to encourage the local population to be more like the Thais.[95] Burahanuddin Useng, the former MP of Yala, told me that many of the former Muslim

[91] See Colin Campbell, "Thais Try to Turn Violent Area into 'Happy South'", *The New York Times*, 30 April 1982, accessed on 17 June 2017 at http://www.nytimes.com/1982/04/30/world/thais-try-to-turn-violent-area-into-happy-south.html

[92] Napisa Waitoolkiat and Paul Chambers (2017). "The Role of Security Forces in Thailand's Deep South Counter-Insurgency". A Paper for presenting at the 13th International Conference on Thai Studies, 15–18 July, 2017, Chiang Mai, Thailand.

[93] Duncan McCargo (2006). "Thaksin and the Resurgence of Violence in the Thai South: Network Monarchy Strikes Back?" *Critical Asian Studies* 38 (1): 43.

[94] Nantawan Haemindra (1976). "The Problem of the Thai-Muslims in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand". *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* VII (2), pt. 2: 103.

[95] Che Man, "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand", p. 78.

villagers deeply resented the fact that their land was taken from them to give to the new settlers. Burahanuddin further stated that Bang Lang Dam was deemed one of the most violent areas in the region because of the deep-rooted conflict between the old and the new settlers.[96] Just like his predecessors, General Prem's policies in fact bred more conflict in this region.

Since 1932, Thai military generals have taken their turn to stage coup d'état after coup d'état. Because of the generals' ultra-nationalist stance, the assimilation policy has contributed to the conflict in the southernmost region of the country. The exploitation of their power, and the corruption of and suppression by the military rulers and the Thai authorities have deepened grievances among the Malay Muslims. Where the military juntas thought that the assimilation policy can incorporate the Malay Muslims into Thai society, it has in fact alienated them.

Military Rule and the Malay Muslim Political Representatives

Although elections were occasionally held in Thailand during 1950s to 1980s, more than fifty percent of them were contaminated by the military rulers' corruption and abuses of power. Not only did they abuse electoral processes, but they also resorted to intimidating those representatives from the Deep South whom they perceived as a potential threat to national security. Many prominent Malay Muslim representatives, such as Haji Sulong, Haji Ameen, Seni Madakakul and Siddik Sharif, who were highly respected by their electorates for their integrity and outspokenness, were often seen as separatists intent on undermining and destabilising the Thai government. As a consequence, Malay Muslims felt that the Thai government was trying to prevent them from airing their grievances by threatening their leaders.

I divide the following section into two parts. The first part contains a narrative concerning Haji Sulong, a pre-eminent religious leader who became a political activist and later fell victim to forced disappearance by the Thai security authorities. The second part discusses the mistreatment of Malay Muslim politicians by Thai authorities following Haji Sulong's disappearance.

[96] Interview with Burahanuddin Useng while collecting data at Bang Lang sub-district in June 2012.

Haji Sulong: The Villain in the Eyes of the Thai State

Tuan Guru Haji Muhammad Sulum bin Haji Abdul Kadir bin Muhammad al- Fathoni, widely known as Haji Sulong (1895–1954),[97] was the most significant figure in modern Patani history. His contribution to the Deep South was immense. Haji Sulong devoted himself to improving Islamic education in the southern border area. Not only was he was a charismatic religious leader, but he was also one of the first Malay Muslims who boldly demanded autonomy for Thailand's Deep South. He advocating on behalf of his people and ended up paying for that with his own life. On 13 August 1954, Haji Sulong, his eldest son, and two of his friends travelled from Pattani to Songkhla to meet with police officers. Haji Sulong and the three other people were never seen again.[98] The story of Haji Sulong illustrates how an outspoken political activist can become victim to a strong nationalistic state. Haji Sulong's story became a well-known narrative of Malay Muslims' struggle and oppression at the hands of the Thai government.

Haji Sulong was born in Kampong Anak-Ru, one of the communities in Pattani City district. He first started his education at Pondok Bana, one of the famous *pondok* schools owned by Tok guru[99] Wae Musor. The *pondok* was near to his home. Mainly he studied Malay language, Arabic language, and Islamic studies. When Haji Sulong turned twelve, his father sent him to Mecca to enhance his knowledge of Islam and Arabic language. In those days, anyone who received an Islamic education in Mecca was held in high regard by the Malay Muslim villagers. In a traditional Muslim society such as Patani, a male who received Islamic education in Mecca would obtain the title of "Haji" or "Hajyi" before their name. Not only would they have the villagers' admiration, but they could also use the title "Haji" as a stepping stone to become a well-respected religious leader in their home community.

After being absent from his hometown for nearly twenty years, Haji Sulong came back to Patani with his wife, Jeh Yoh, in 1927. His homecoming was a shock for him. He had not realised the worsening conditions in the south and the many pressing problems that his

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[97] See Chalermkiat Khunthongpetch (2004). *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: kabot ru wiraburut haeng si jangwat phak tai* [Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: A rebel or a hero of the four southern provinces] Bangkok: Matichon Printing, p. 13.

[98] Den Tohmeena, *Bantuek panha see jangwat paak tai pen panha yai jing rue* [The Memoir: Is the problem of the four southernmost provinces really a big problem?] San Prachatipat, Democrat Bulletin. November 1979, p. 25.

[99] *Tok guru* is a *pondok* religious teacher

community faced. Despite the area being close to the Straits of Melaka, the oldest regional hub of Islam, with many famous religious leaders educated in Mecca,[100] in Haji Sulong's view the study of Islam in the area had not developed much since he left Pattani at the age of twelve. There were several complications in conducting proper Islamic study in the region. Much to his dismay, many of the local Malay Muslims still believed in ghosts and black magic. Haji Sulong often observed that Islamic studies in many of the *pondok* schools and the surrounding areas remained at the level comparable to the early period of Islam when Nabi Muhammad first started his preaching in the sixth century.[101] The backwardness of Islamic studies in the region greatly concerned Haji Sulong and it was obvious to him that the curriculum of Islamic studies in many of the *pondok* schools was outdated. Instead of paying more attention to teaching the principles of the Quran and Hadith, these *pondok* schools focused their teaching on the Islamic doctrine of life after death. Moreover, Haji Sulong learned that many of the Diagram showing in the region were more interested in receiving *zakat* (alms) donations than teaching their students. After much consideration, Haji Sulong decided to settle down in Pattani instead of returning to Mecca. His main goal was to impart knowledge of he believed to be the true principles of Islamic studies to the local people who had little access to high-quality Islamic education.

As he continued to preach, Haji Sulong became well known to many of the villagers for his distinctive teaching style, which was often described as lively and spiritually inspired. People were drawn to him when he talked.[102] Haji Sulong was known to use humour and jokes in his teaching to make difficult topics more accessible to the villagers. His popularity rose among the locals. He also perceived that many local Malay Muslims had become increasingly aware of the importance of studying Islamic principles from the Qur'an and Hadith. Therefore, Haji Sulong planned for the next step, which was to establish a high-quality Islamic school for the locals, which would benefit many of the poorer students who could not afford to travel to Mecca for advanced Islamic education. However, in founding his school, he came into conflict with Phra Phiphitphakdee (Tunku Mukda Abdunlabut), a former governor of Satun province and the son of the last sultan of Yaring, Pattani, who regarded Haji Sulong as a newcomer

[100] These men have "al-Fathoni" at the end of their names--"Al-Fathoni" means people who are from Pattani in Arabic language.

[101] See Chalermkiat Khunthongpetch (2004). *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: kabot ru wiraburut haeng si jangwat phak tai* [Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: A rebel or a hero of the four southern provinces], p. 16.

[102] Interviewed with Den Tohmeena at his home in Pattani. He is the third child of Haji Sulong.

seeking to challenge the authority of the established elites in the region. Their rivalry became so profound that both family lines continue to run against one another in the national elections even today.[103]

As Haji Sulong's popularity continued to rise, many older traditional Tok guru began to show their hostility towards this famous religious teacher. Jealous of Haji Sulong's growing popularity and perhaps intimidated by his Mecca training in Islamic sciences, these Tok guru tried to undermine Haji Sulong by reporting him to the authorities. In 1927, Phya Udompong Pen-Sawat, the Governor of Pattani, summoned Haji Sulong for questioning because some of the Tok guru had complained that Haji Sulong was behaving suspiciously and could pose a security threat to the nation. After listening to Haji Sulong's explanations, Phya Udompong Pen-Sawat decided to release him. Yet the state authorities continued to monitor his activities. Haji Sulong knew that many of the traditional Tok guru disliked him, but he remained focused on his mission. As he stated:

> I have never paid any attention to gossips and false allegations because I have never committed any offences against the law of the nation. Obstacles always occur when you dedicate yourself to serve the public. Nabi Muhammad (s.a.w.) also experienced obstacles while he was preaching Islam. The obstacle was so immense that he had to flee to Madinah but Nabi Muhammad (s.a.w.) continued to carry out his mission successfully. If we are very knowledgeable about Islam but we are too frightened to practice our own religion. The later generation will imprecate upon us. There is nothing in this world that is as significant as carrying out jihad for our religion.[104]

Not only was Haji Sulong a highly respected religious leader, but he was also involved in the national election campaigning. According to Ockey, the desire to bring justice to the Deep South and achieve Malay Muslim autonomy motivated Haji Sulong to become more involved in national affairs. He formed a movement that called for integration rather than secession from the Thai state,[105] and he received strong support not only from the Malay

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[103] Ibid., with Den Tohmeena. Also see Bukoree Yeema, *Nak kanmueang thin Pattani* [Pattani Politicians].

[104] See Chalermkiat Khunthongpetch (2004). *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: kabot ru wiraburut haeng si jangwat phak tai* [Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: A rebel or a hero of the four southern provinces]. Matichon Printing, p. 17.

[105] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 130.

Muslim community but also from several Thai national figures such as Charoen Suebsang,[106] Pridi Banomyong (one of the key members of the 'Promoters'[107] and also a former prime minister), and the president of the Islamic Council of Thailand, Cham Promyong. As his popularity grew, Haji Sulong also began to attract the attention of the international media. Political support and popularity aside, there were other reasons that motivated Haji Sulong to go ahead with his proposal for Malay Muslim autonomy. For instance, he saw firsthand how Malay Muslim civilians were ruthlessly suppressed by state officials. Thai authorities used extrajudicial executions to put down protests and to punish civilians for criticising or disagreeing with state policies. Also, corrupt officials demanded money from Malay Muslim villagers, many of whom were illiterate and therefore susceptible to state authorities' manipulation. If the villagers chose not to cooperate, they could either be jailed or killed by the corrupt officials.[108]

On 3 April 1947, Haji Sulong laid down seven appeals of autonomy in a proposal to the government of Rear Admiral Thawan Thamrongnawasawat,[109] a Pridi Banomyong-backed government. The seven demands were as follows: 1) The individual who is appointed to be the high commissioner to govern the Greater Patani Region (by grouping four provinces of Yala, Pattani, Narathiwat, and Satun into one single autonomous region) must have full authority to dismiss, suspend, or replace all government officials working in the area. Most importantly, the individual who is appointed as a high commissioner must be a native of the region and should be elected by the local people in an election held for that specific purpose; 2) Eighty-five percent of the government officials in the region must be Malay Muslims; 3) Malay language shall be accepted as one of the official languages; 4) Malay language shall be taught in primary schools; 5) Muslim law shall be applied in the region with separate Islamic courts independent of the government's judicial system; 6) All revenues collected shall be used only in the region; 7) The Provincial Islamic Council shall be given full authority over Islamic

[106] Charoen Suebsang was a government-employed medical officer who became the MP of Pattani.

[107] 'Promoters' was the term used by Fred Riggs to call the group of Thai military, technocrats, and civilians who supported and promoted the coup d'état in 1932.

[108] Den Tohmeena. *Bantuek panha see jangwat paak tai pen panha yai jing rue* [The Memoir: Is the problem of the four southernmost provinces really a big problem?], p. 25.

[109] The Prime Minister of Thailand from August, 1946 to 8 November 1947.

legislation on all Muslim affairs and Malay culture under the supreme authority of the high commissioner of the Greater Patani Region.[110]

For a minority group living in a nationalistic country like Thailand, making such demands was a bold act. The movement encouraged Malay Muslims in the region to engage more with the Thai national political system. The seven appeals of autonomy were, in fact, the result of a collaboration between villagers, ulamas, and local politicians in the Deep South region. More than one hundred people collaborated to bring forth the proposal. It is worth noticing that Haji Sulong and the Malay Muslim community called for autonomy through a peaceful democratic process with an effective political engagement between the Malay Muslim community and Haji Sulong. Ockey has argued that even though the community of the Deep South had been damaged by the authoritarian government or by corrupt state officials who continued to suppress the Malay Muslim minority, the effectiveness of the political participation in the democratic process, in fact, facilitated a positive integration of the Deep South.[111] Thanet Aphornsuvan argues that the Malay Muslims took a stand against the Thai state in an attempt to seek redress for their grievances. Thanet further argues that the seven appeals for autonomy proposed by Haji Sulong could be the first organised civil society movement for human rights in Thailand.[112] Indeed, the democratic process and political participation of the civil society in the most southern part of Thailand happened primarily because of Haji Sulong, who later became the President of the Provincial Islamic Council of Pattani. Haji Sulong became the representative of the Malay Muslims and he was the main actor behind the struggle for autonomy. Explaining his actions, Haji Sulong said that:

> The state authorities heavily suppressed civilians at the time. If there was any conflict happened between villagers and state authorities that caused the state authorities to displease, the state authorities would take them somewhere, shot them, and alleged them that they were fighting against the state authorities. These type of incidents did not happen to only two to three

[110] John Funston (2008). *Southern Thailand: The Dynamic of Conflict*, Policy Studies 50. Washington DC: East–West Center, p. 48.

[111] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 125.

[112] See Thanet Aphornsuvan (2006). *Kwam pen ma khong tritsadee baeng yaek din dan nai paak tai khong thai* [The Origin of the Theory of Separatism in the South of Thailand]. Southeast Asian Studies, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat, p. 59.

villagers, but it happened to more than ten people in each and every districts. If anyone wants to negotiate with the state authorities based on legal terms, they could be charged with additional allegations.[113]

The purpose of the seven principle proposal was to protect the Malay Muslims from the Thai state authorities. The deteriorating socio-economic conditions in the southernmost part of Thailand as a result of World War II had exacerbated the poor relationship between state officials and villagers. The state authorities in this remote area became more corrupt, abusive, and took more advantage of the Malay minorities because few Malay Muslims could speak Thai. Most of my interviewees shared stories about their friends or relatives who ran into trouble with state authorities during this time. The judiciary system was too inefficient for citizens to rely on, especially for the Malay Muslims who were illiterate and lacked Thai language skills. I was told that villagers who confronted Thai state officials often received death threats or were thrown in jail; some of the authorities would even take the matter of justice into their own hands by abducting and killing villagers in a remote rubber plantation area and throwing their bodies into the river. Those who managed to stay alive did so by fleeing their home village in the nick of time. Many of them escaped into the deep jungle of Budo mountainous area and joined the insurgent groups. All of the narratives by the Malay Muslim villagers seem to point the state officials out as the major villains, even though there were no clear evidence that could support the told stories.

Haji Sulong was aware that the persistent problems between the locals and Thai officialdom were increasing. The seven appeals he proposed were intended to connect the Malay Muslim community and the central government in Bangkok. Haji Sulong had asked for the Islamic judicial court to be granted more authority to make it convenient for the locals who sought resolution of problems using Islamic law. An improvement of the economic condition in the region was also expected. Most important of all, Haji Sulong called for justice in the region. The proposal of the seven appeals demanding an autonomous region was indeed daring, but Haji Sulong continued to pursue this high-risk mission although he knew that the Thai state authorities were staunch nationalists. He might carefully have weighed the pros and cons on what he was about to do.

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[113] See Chalermkiat Khunthongpetch (2004). *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: kabot ru wiraburut haeng si jangwat phak tai* [Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: A rebel or a hero of the four southern provinces], p. 86.

As a member of a minority living in a strong centralised state, why did Haji Sulong make such a risky move? In the eyes of the Thai state, his proposal must have looked like a direct challenge to its authority. I argue that the moment was pertinent for Haji Sulong to propose the seven appeals and that there were four factors that led him to take action. Firstly, he thought that he would receive support from the international community through Barbara Whittingham-Johns and Tunku Mahmud Mahyuddin. A British journalist, Barbara Whittingham-Johns was invited in 1947 to observe Pattani where she stayed for three days before going back to Singapore and writing a piece titled "Patani-Malay State Outside Malaya," published in *The Straits Times* on 30 October 1947.[114] The sub-headline of the article ran as follows:

> The writer has just arrived in Singapore after making a 250-mile tour through Patani, the old Malay State in Southern Siam, and is the first newspaper correspondent who has travelled overland from Siam to Malaysia down the Siam-Malay Peninsula since the war.[115]

In her article, Whittingham-Johns revealed that she had an informal conversation with a Bangkok spokesman who said that the Thai state would accept the whole proposal except for the first demand. Whittingham-Johns also had high praise for Che Mahmud Mahyyiddeen (or Tunku Mahmud Mahyyiddeen), the youngest son of Raja Abdul Kadir, the last installed Raja Patani. She also reported on the plight of Malay people living under Siamese authorities and corrupt officials.

> For alleged harbouring of gang robbers, though without preferring a charge in court, the Siamese police burn kampongs to the ground, blackmail the wealthier class of shopkeepers into paying thousands of ticals (the former standard monetary unit used in Thailand before the baht currency) in 'protection money,' force their way into Malay homes, beat up their women and carry off such of the smaller and movable goods as they fancy. Individuals are constantly shot out of hand or simply disappear and are never heard of again.[116]

Barbara Whittingham-Jones divided her article into seven sections, each with a sub-headline designed to shock and pull readers further into the story. For instance, "Malays

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[114] See Thanet Aphornsuvan (2006). *Kwam pen ma khong tritsadee baeng yaek din dan nai paak tai khong thai* [The Origin of the Theory of Separatism in the South of Thailand]. Southeast Asian Studies, Faculty of Liberal Arts, Thammasat, p. 96.

[115] Barbara Whittingham-Jones (1947). "Patani-Malay State Outside Malaya". *The Straits Times*, 30 October.

[116] Ibid. (From the section "Blackmail").

Scorned" headed a section in which she explains how Malay Muslims were affected by the *Rathniyom* policy; "Blackmail" describes the mistreatments of local Malays by corrupt state officials; "Talk is Dangerous" is a discussion about the remaining Kingdom of Patani and the danger of such actions as public protests and demonstrations; "Petition to Bangkok" tells readers about the seven demands proposed by the Majlis Ulama; "Elected Leader" talks about Tunku Mahmud Mahyuddin; "Dynamic Personality" is a discussion of the Patani map that locates the area between Siam and Malaya; and "Link with Indonesia?" reveals how some of the Patani locals preferred to link themselves to Indonesia instead of British Malaya.[117] After the article was published, the grievances in Pattani finally became better known internationally. Whittingham-Jones's scathing criticisms of Thai officials in the Deep South provoked government anger towards her. She wrote,

> Siamese rule in Patani today is nailed down by a skeleton network of Siamese commissioners, police and other officials. Everywhere I went it was the same tale of systematic oppression and of a deliberate campaign to de-nationalise the population. Deepest resentment is aroused by the ban on Malay education. Prohibitions against Malay schools, relaxed in the immediate post-liberation period when Siam was still ex-enemy in status are now being reinforced.[118]

Besides foreign journalists like Barbara Whittingham-Jones, Haji Sulong also had contact with Tunku Mahmud Mahyuddin, a secessionist who had had a close connection with the British since World War II. During the war, Tunku Mahmud Mahyuddin cooperated with the British to fight off the Japanese in the Great Patani Malaya region. Tunku Mahyuddin was following his father's ideology, which was to reinstate the Great Patani Sultanate and seek independence from the Thai state. Haji Sulong perhaps thought that having a strong connection with a member of the sultanate family like Tunku Mahyuddin, who had many sympathisers and followers, would give him more leverage to bargain for support from the secessionist group. What Haji Sulong also needed was a powerful ally to be on his side, and a great power who won the war like Britain would be an ideal ally. Through his connection with Tunku Mahyuddin, Haji Sulong hoped to utilise Britain's great power to counter that of the Thai state.

The second factor that motivated Haji Sulong to raise the seven point autonomy proposal was Phibun's fall from power. During World War II, Phibun had sided with the

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[117] Ibid.
[118] Ibid. (From the section "Malays Scorned").

Japanese.[119] When the war ended, it had also brought an end to Phibun's power. With Phibun gone and Pridi Banomyong coming to power, Haji Sulong felt encouraged to proceed with the seven principle proposal.

Thirdly, Haji Sulong's plans could not be put into action without strong support from his Malay Muslim community. Together, they had been debating, voting, voicing, and collecting villagers' names to ensure that their demand for autonomy happened through peaceful democratic means.

Fourthly, Haji Sulong's connection with leading figures such as Chaoren Suebsang, a government-employed medical officer who became the MP of Pattani, and the support from Pridi Banomyong, then the most powerful civilian leader in the government,[120] and Cham Promyong, "*Chularajmontri*", the president of Islamic Council of Thailand and also an advisor and a good friend of Pridi Banomyong, increased his confidence in proceeding with the proposal.

This proposal, however, worried the Thai nationalist leaders, most of whom were military leaders. Some of the proposed principles, especially the demand that a native of the region be appointed high commissioner of the Greater Patani Region or the proposal that the Provincial Islamic Council shall be given full authority over Islamic legislation on all Muslim affairs and Malay culture under the supreme authority of the high commissioner, were considered to jeopardise national security. It led to a suspicion by the military leaders that Haji Sulong was a separatist.

Rear Admiral Thawan Thamrongnawasawat, then the prime minister, acknowledged the seven appeals from Haji Sulong before placing the proposal into consultation with the cabinet ministers. Prime Minister Thawan attempted to accommodate the Malay Muslims' needs because he feared that they would otherwise be further alienated. The response from his government was ambiguous, however. While not entirely hostile to the demands, the government did not fully accept the seven appeals as they were laid out in the proposal. For example, the government chose to focus their public policy on expanding and developing

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[119] Charnvit Kasetsiri (1974). "The First Phibun Government and Its Involvement in World War II". *Journal of the Siam Society LXII*, pt. 2 (July): 53.

[120] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 128.

infrastructure and supporting the local agricultural economy instead of granting principle number six, which requests for all revenue from the Deep South only be used in the Deep South. As for the first principle, which is basically a demand for autonomy, the government completely ignored it. On 4 August 1947, Charoen Suebsang, the MP of Pattani and a good friend of Haji Sulong, pressed for an answer from the government. The response was that the proposal was still under scrutiny.[121]

Before the government could make a decision, however, there was an abrupt change in the political situation in Thailand. In November 1947, Phibun was invited to become the leader after the coup took over the civilian government. Haji Sulong was subsequently arrested and indicted with conspiracy in a separatist movement. Ironically, an important piece of evidence in the government's case against Haji Sulong was the article written by Barbara Whittingham-Jones, although she did not mention Haji Sulong by name and only used the word '*Majlis Ulama*' which means ulama council. Haji Sulong's connection with Tunku Mahyuddin was also used against him. The charges on the indictment included collusion with outsiders with the intent to destroy Thai national sovereignty, and organising a separatist movement to overthrow the government.[122] These are very serious charges. As a result, Haji Sulong was sentenced to prison and was not released until 1952. He then returned home, but the police still monitored him closely. Despite being released, Haji Sulong was not permitted to travel outside of Pattani without authorisation.[123] In 1954, Haji Sulong was again told to report to Lt. Col. Boonlert Lertpreecha in Songkhla province. He travelled to Songkhla with his eldest son and two of his friends. Unfortunately, after they left to go to Songkhla, none of them returned home.[124] His relatives believed that the body of Haji Sulong and that of his son were thrown into the Lake of Songkhla.[125]

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[121] See Chalermkiat Khunthongpetch (2004). *Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: kabot ru wiraburut haeng si jangwat phak tai* [Haji Sulong Abdul Kadir: A rebel or a hero of the four southern provinces], p. 93.

[122] See Thanet Aphornsuvan (2006). *Kwam pen ma khong tritsadee baeng yaek din dan nai paak tai khong thai* [The Origin of the Theory of Separatism in the South of Thailand], p. 97.

[123] Che Man, "Muslim Elites and Politics in Southern Thailand", p. 44.

[124] James Ockey (2008). "Elections and Political Integration in the Deep South of Thailand", in Montesano, Michael & Jory, Patrick (eds). *Thai South and Malay North: Ethnic Interactions on a Plural Peninsula*. National University of Singapore Press, p. 136.

[125] Interview with Den Tohmeena (the son of Haji Sulong), and Jaturon Iamsopha (Haji Sulong's grandson).

Grievances deepened among Malay Muslims after the disappearance of Haji Sulong. He and his son were nowhere to be found[126]. Four years after he had gone missing, there was an attempt by Thai authorities to search for Haji Sulong's body in the Lake of Songkhla, but they found nothing. Den Tohmeena pointed out that it would be almost impossible to find the body after four years.[127] The search could have been an attempt to appease public opinion and to show that the Thai authorities had nothing to do with the disappearance of Haji Sulong, his son, and his friends. [128]

Haji Sulong's call for autonomy through peaceful means faded away under ensuing military regimes. The case of Haji Sulong illustrates that it takes considerable courage for a minority to stand up against a strong nationalistic state, and the chance of success are small. For many more years to come, long after Haji Sulong had gone, the military rulers continued to monitor political activists and politicians in the region, as we shall see in the following section.

The Insecurity of the Thai Security Authorities

After the disappearance of Haji Sulong, the paranoia of the military rulers towards the Malay Muslim political activists and political representatives heightened. As it turned out, the Thai security authorities were part of the havoc in the region. Any political representatives who became popular and admired within the Malay Muslim community would immediately arouse

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[126] According to one informant, one of the special branch police officers visited the informant's home one night in Narathiwat. The police officer said that he witnessed a meeting between General Pao Sriyanon and a police officer in General Pao's own office at *Paruskavan Palace*. (The junior police officer, Boonlert Lertpreecha, later entered electoral politics. It was said that he spent much money on vote-buying in his constituency. He got elected in Chachoengsao province. Later he became the Deputy Minister of Interior. The following chapter will say more about him.) He reported General Pao that his task had been completed and that Haji Sulong had already been taken care of. General Pao then asked how Haji Sulong had been taken care of, to which the junior officer replied, "Well, there is nothing to worry about him anymore." After hearing the answer, General Pao Sriyanon slapped the junior police officer across the face and bellowed with anger, "How can you do this!! What you have done is a disgrace and it will forever turn the Deep South region into the land of flaming fire from now on!" There were several well-known police officers witnessing the incident that took place in General Pao's office that day (August, 1954). The interviewee gave me the name of all police officers that were in that room, Chai Wirotsiri, Phansak Wisetphakdi, and Phutthi Buranasomphop.

[127] Den Tohmeena. *Bantuek panha see jangwat paak tai pen panha yai jing rue* [The Memoir: Is the problem of the four southernmost provinces really a big problem?], p. 25.

[128] Interview with Den Tohmeena at his home in Pattani. Den told me that he once met General Pao. It was at the Supreme Court in Bangkok during the trial after the death of his father. General Pao was walking with a cane and looked at him. They never exchanged a word. Den said that he was not mad at General Pao. All he felt at the time was lack of emotion.

the authorities' suspicion. When they started to harass and arrest political activists, they served to confirm the Malay Muslims' belief that their leaders were being treated unjustly. This section examines two cases of Malay Muslim politicians who got into trouble with the Thai security authorities: Haji Ameen Sulong, the MP from Pattani (elected in February 1957 and December 1957), and Siddik Sharif, the MP from Narathiwat (elected in 1975 and 1976).

In 1957, the national election was held twice. The first time was on 26 February, and the second time was on 12 December. The second election was held because Phibun was overthrown by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat on 16 September 1957. At the time, the Pattani constituency had two allocated seats. Haji Ameen Tohmeehna, Haji Sulong's second son, ran for the general election as an independent candidate. Only in his mid-twenties, Haji Ameen won overwhelmingly in his electorate. The people of Pattani hoped that once Haji Ameen entered parliament, he could uncover the truth of Haji Sulong's disappearance. The other seat was won by Bunterng Abdulabut (also known as Tunku Brahem) of the Seri Manangkhasila party. The Seri Manangkhasila Political Party was an important political force because Phibun was the party leader and Police General Pao Sriyanon, then the Director General of Thailand's National Police, was the Party Secretary. The February 1957 general election was said to be one of the dirtiest elections in the history of the country.[129] Haji Ameen's victory was a concern for those involved in Haji Sulong's forced disappearance. Not only did Police General Pao coerce Haji Ameen to register as a member of the Seri Manangkhasila Party, he also forced him to take the position of the Deputy Secretary to the Minister of Interior. This move was said to be to prevent Haji Ameen from disclosing the information of his father's disappearance in the parliament.[130] On 12 December 1957, Haji Ameen once again ran for the general election as an independent candidate, and won for the second time. On 20 October 1958, parliament was dissolved by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat.

Shortly after his election victory, however, Haji Ameen was accused of being a separatist because he had compiled and then published Haji Sulong's prison memoirs and writings in a book titled "*Ruam Sang Santi*" (In Thai – รวมแสงสันติ), which means "The Combined Light of Peace".[131] Even though the book contains only '*dua'* (an Arabic word for

[129] Den Tohmeena. *Bantuek panha see jangwat paak tai pen panha yai jing rue* [The Memoir: Is the problem of the four southernmost provinces really a big problem?], p. 31.
[130] Ibid.
[131] Ibid., p. 26.

prayers), the Thai authorities still deemed his activity a threat to the nation. Haji Ameen was therefore arrested. Due to a lack of concrete evidence, he was released after three years in jail. For fear that he might share the same fate as his father, Haji Ameen later fled to Malaysia in the 1980s and never returned to Thailand. Several sources mentioned that Haji Ameen was the mastermind behind the BRN insurgency, but again, there is no concrete evidence to support this allegation.

In 1967, Siddik Sharif, a local politician who later became a Narathiwat province member of parliament, was accused of being a separatist and arrested by the Thai authorities. Like Haji Ameen, he was later released due to a lack of evidence. One of the interviewees, who wishes to remain anonymous, told me the reason Siddik Sharif was arrested. According to this interviewee, it started shortly after Siddik Sharif reported a local mafia boss to the governor for smuggling rice from Thailand to Malaysia. Not only did the governor ignore the rice smuggling report, but he also filed a complaint against Siddik for reporting the incident. The governor then pressed charges against Siddik, accusing him of being a separatist. According to a reliable source, the governor had been colluding with the local mafia and reaping profits from the rice smuggling trade for years.[132]

The cases of Haji Ameen and Siddik Sharif reflect the Thai security authorities' view and treatment of the Malay Muslim political representatives. The Malay Muslims view was that even without any concrete evidence, the Thai security authorities would circumvent the justice system to arrest the Malay Muslim political activists and politicians.

Conclusion

The case of Haji Sulong is a prime example of how the Malay Muslim community was in fact willing to engage with the democratic process when it comes to pursuing their rights

[132] As for the interviewee himself, he was then a student at Thammasat University in Bangkok. He filed a complaint letter directly to General Thanom, the Prime Minister, but the interviewee ended up being followed by the military officers. He told me that he had to constantly move while he was a student back then. In fact, Siddik Sharif was the uncle of Areepen Utarasint, the MP of Narathiwat province from 1986 to 2005. I have experienced an act of rice smuggling myself while conducting my research at one of the villages in Takbai district, Narathiwat province. It was late in the evening where a man paddled a boat full with sacks of rice across Sungai-kolok River to the Malaysian side. My research assistants and I quietly observed from the Thai border, and we were amazed when we saw people who were waiting at the Malaysian side quickly grab a sack of rice per person once the boat reached the land. Every one of them sped their vehicles away as soon as they got their rice.

and their identity. After the 1932 Siamese revolution and especially in the wake of World War II, the political situation in Thailand was fraught with uncertainty, not only for the government in Bangkok but also for the people in the Deep South. Haji Sulong, however, decided to gamble on his strategic plan for autonomy. The proposed plan was unfortunately thwarted by the military coup on 8 November 1947. Had the coup not erupted, the democratic process of the civil society movement and the political participation of the Malay Muslims led by Haji Sulong would have led the Malay Muslims towards autonomy. The southernmost provinces of Thailand would have had a different outlook. It can be said that the military coup on 8 November 1947 succeeded in alienating the Malay Muslims more than ever.

Four of the factors—the encouragement of international supporters; the endorsement from the national politicians; the support of the Malay Muslim community; and the fall of the Phibun regime—had buttressed Haji Sulong's confidence to push through with his proposal. These factors also gave Haji Sulong some leverage to confront the centralised Thai state with the autonomy proposal. However, individual political participation cost Haji Sulong his life. Although the role of Haji Sulong's political participation was only to set the stage for other Malay Muslims to engage further with the national political system, the cost was too high.

One cannot ignore that the insurgency plays a major role in igniting conflict and violence in the Deep South. Many insurgent group members disguised themselves as innocent villagers when undertaking operations, making it difficult for Thai security authorities to distinguish between normal citizens and insurgents. It must also be acknowledged that many human rights abuses have also been committed by the insurgents, which may also have hardened attitudes among Thai security officials. Even if the Thai state authorities might have accurate intelligence information, the Malay Muslims' perception would nevertheless be that the Thai security authorities are treating them unjustly. This has made it difficult for the Thai security authorities to prove themselves to the local Malay Muslims. There is no trust between the Thai state authorities and the Malay Muslims. In addition, the Thai state authorities fear threats to national security, which leads to the extreme countering measures. And this is where the blurred line between accurate intelligence information and a tumultuous procedure comes into place. To the Thai security forces, Haji Sulong was a villain who provoked conflicts and breaches of the peace in the Deep South. To many of the Malay Muslims, Haji Sulong remains an iconic legend. For them, he was an Islamic religious leader and representative of the Malay Muslims who withstood the strong centralised Thai state. What happened to Haji Sulong is a

crucial lesson for the minorities in Thailand, for one has to calculate the risk and think twice before deciding to act alone when protesting against the Thai state. The result of overtly protesting against the Thai government is that one can be unjustly accused and prosecuted, imprisoned, executed without a trial, or possibly disappear without a trace.

The involvement with the national electoral politics and filing a petition demanding an autonomy proposal revealed that Haji Sulong believed in democratic values. Had the elected government of Pridi Banomyong remained in power without any intervention from the military, perhaps the development of democracy and political participation in the Deep South region would have continued to thrive. Suffice it to say that the military coup was a major obstacle to the growth of democracy in the region. Military rule had also prevented the peace process from taking place. This chapter shows that an individual member of a minority standing up against a strong nationalistic state is unlikely to succeed. But as we shall see in the next chapter, if the minority organise themselves into a larger group, they will have more leverage for their political demands vis-à-vis the government. The incident of the 1975 Pattani Mass Demonstration is a case study that supports my claim.

Chapter 3: The Emergence of Political Participation in Thailand's Deep South: The 1975 Pattani Central Mosque Mass Demonstration

> "If you ask me to go down there to bury *luk nimit*,[133] I would go. But if you ask me to go down there to solve the problem, I would rather not." (M.R.) Kukrit Pramoj (Prime Minister of Thailand, March 1975–January 1976) in response to the mass demonstration in front of the Central Mosque in Pattani. [134]

Introduction

The protest started on 11 December 1975 in Pattani province as local people sought justice from the government for five young men who had been brutally murdered by Thai marines. The protest worsened when an unidentified assailant threw a bomb into the rally, killing twelve people instantly. Soon after, thousands of people from all over the southern region flocked to Pattani to join the demonstration. At its height there were as many as 100,000 people. The statement above was made by the then prime minister of Thailand, M.R. Kukrit Pramoj.[135] It ignited a wave of fury among the demonstrators for the prime minister clearly indicated that he would rather attend a Buddhist-Brahman ceremony than meet with them. The demonstrators wanted the prime minister to visit their rally site in Pattani, but he continued to refuse until the demonstrations ended on 24 January 1976. Since the annexation by the Siamese Kingdom in 1902, the Thai authorities had pursued oppressive policies towards the Malay Muslim minority. Hence, the comment made by Kukrit further reinforced the Malay Muslims'

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[133] *Luk nimit* is a sacred, large, golden round stone. The sacred stone has to be blessed through a Brahman ceremony then it will be buried by a designated guest. These invited designated guests are either from members of the royal family, members of the Privy Council, or the prime minister if it is a high-profile temple, and high-ranking bureaucratic officials if it is a low-profile temple.

[134] Kukrit's infamous phrase about *luk nimit* can be found only in *Thairath* newspaper (See *Thairath*, Sunday 28 December, 1975, p. 16.) Several other newspapers that I have been searching, for instance, major newspapers like *Dailynews*, *Siamrath*, *Thai Thaksin*, *Bangkok Post*, and the *Nations* did not report about it. Most information that I have learned about the phrase was mainly from the memories of several interviewees who joined the protests at that time. Books written by Arong and Areepen had also mentioned Kukrit's insensitive comments. It is possible that the Thai mainstream media at the time was unaware of the importance of religio-cultural sensitivity, especially to other religions and cultures that are different from theirs, that is, Thai-Buddhist.

[135] Barbara Crossette, "Kukrit Pramoj, Thai Ex-Prime Minister, Dies at 84," *New York Times*, 10 October 1995, accessed 1 March 2016, http://www.nytimes.com/1995/10/10/world/kukrit-pramoj-thai-ex-prime-minister-dies-at-84.html.

feeling of ethnic and religious marginalisation. Kukrit further incensed the Malay Muslims by saying, "If what the demonstrators need is justice, I can just send the Minister of Justice to meet with them." The Prime Minister was using puns to mock the word "justice" (ยุติธรรม – *yut-ti-tham*), and people were enraged by it.[136] Under these circumstances, the Minister of Justice seemed powerless when it comes to settle the dispute between the villagers and the security authorities.

The 1975-1976 Pattani demonstrations are under-researched. Few books even mention them.[137] When they do, their facts are not always accurate and their interpretations are debatable. In his published thesis, Surin Pitsuwan—one of the most famous politicians of Thailand—claims that the 1975 Pattani demonstration was orchestrated by the insurgent group PULO.[138] There is no evidence to support his claim, however. Surin cited government documents[139] and Dr Arong Suthasana's book, but there is no information in Arong's book to show that the PULO organised the demonstration. As Arong notes, "This demonstration is the demonstration that truly congregates by the people."[140] According to my in-depth interviews and findings from news archives from 11 December 1975 to 24 January 1976, the organisers of the demonstration included former university students who joined the 1973 student uprising in Bangkok, local university students, religious leaders, university lecturers, community leaders, and local politicians. It was the state authorities—for example, Prime Minister Kukrit, the Deputy Minister of Interior Boonlert Lertpreecha, and General Krit Srivara who was then the Minister of Defense, to mention a few—who said in their interviews with journalists that the demonstration was supported by the separatist movements. Surin's assertion that PULO was behind the demonstration in Pattani in 1975 echoes a widely held opinion among state officials that the protest was in fact a separatist movement in disguise. His interpretation

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[136] Kukrit would regularly undermine his image with insensitive comments. The Prime Minister was also well known for his interest in literature and the arts. He authored several famous Thai novels and short stories. He once acted in a Hollywood movie, *The Ugly American*, starring Marlon Brando.

[137] Sanguan Nittayarampong, MD, et al. (2004). *Phoom pravatsaart mahidol puea prachatipatai park song prasarn prachachon u-thid puea udomkarn* (14 Tulakom 2516 – 6 Tulakom 2519) [The Documentation of Mahidol's History for Democracy Part 2: Connect with the people (14 October 1973–6 October 1976)]. Bangkok: Alfa Millennium; Surin Pittsuwan (1985). *Islam and Malay Nationalism: A Case Study of Malay-Muslims of Southern Thailand*. Bangkok: Thammasat University, pp. 236–240.

[138] Surin Pittsuwan (1985). *Islam and Malay Nationalism*, pp. 236–237.

[139] Surin Pittsuwan had cited from Classified Documents, Parliament Special Committee 1979:13.

[140] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], [In Thai - "การประท้วงครั้งนี้นับว่าเป็นบทบาทของประชาชนอย่างแท้จริง"], p. 35.

downplays the Malay Muslim people's collective action and the credibility of civil society and university students in the Deep South as the demonstration organisers. Ayah Ma (pseudonym), a local politician, told me that insurgent groups like PULO, BRN, and BNPP only took part towards the end of the protest. The PULO might have helped mobilise villagers to participate in the demonstration, but they were not the main organiser as Surin has claimed. In order to comprehend the emergence of political participation in Thailand's Deep South, this chapter pieces together accounts of what happened in the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration for analytical purposes. An historical approach will be used as a primary method to reconstruct events surrounding the 1975 Pattani Central mosque incident which triggered the subsequent demonstrations. The secondary resources are mostly from library archives: English language newspapers (*Bangkok Post* and *The Nation*); Thai newspapers (*Thai Thaksin*, *Dailynews*, *Siamrath*, and *Thairath*[141]); and books that have been written on this topic, which are few in number.[142] The primary sources relating to the 1975 Pattani demonstration that I have uncovered come mainly from in-depth interviews, including interviews with national politicians, local politicians, vote-canvassers, religious leaders, journalists, and several insurgents.[143] Even though it has been more than thirty years, most of my informants claimed to still have clear recollection of the demonstration in 1975. To most of them, it was their first direct experience of political involvement. The interviews reveal that the political engagement

[141] The two bestselling newspapers in the country are *Thairath* and *Dailynews*. Despite their reputation for selling their news mainly about crimes, accidents and sensational stories, the two giant presses were attentive on closely reporting the incident of the 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani province. The news was very much in detail daily from 13 December 1975 until 26 January 1976. When collecting data from both newspapers, the perception that I got from reading *Dailynews* was that it was very conservative with reporting the news, and was likely to source information only from security officers. In contrast, *Thairath* was neutral in reporting the news, and even showed sympathy towards the demonstrators. The columnists from *Dailynews* like "Chai Aree" (page 2), "Plaew Singoen" (page 5) for example, have a negative view of the Selatan group and the demonstrators. Both of the columnists believe that there is a separatist movement behind the scenes. But *Thairath* columnists like "Ta-Saeng" (page 3) criticised the government for its lack of responsibility and for being inefficient. *Siamrath* newspaper would normally report news on politics, economics, and society, but the newspaper was founded and owned by Kukrit, so there was some partisanship within the news. *Thai Thaksin* was a regional newspaper, mainly covering news from the Southern Thailand region (the newspaper was based in Songkhla province).

[142] Not many books discuss much in detail about the 1975 Pattani demonstration. Only a few authors mentioned the incident in their books, for example, Arong Suthasasna *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Wan Kadir Cheman (1987) ["Muslim Separatism: The Moros in Southern Philippines and the Malays in Southern Thailand" (PhD Thesis), p. 148], and Kajadpai Burutpat (1976) [*Thai Muslim* (Thai Muslim)].

[143] The names are Wiroj Pipitapakdee (Former MP of Pattani), Den Tohmeena (former MP of Pattani), Areepen Utarasint (former MP of Narathiwat), Worapoj (former Pattani Provincial Public Health outreach worker), Ayah Ma (local politician, member of Pattani Provincial Council), Bae Ha (former BNPP commandos), Bae Ma (current BRN member).

that they experienced together in the 1975 Pattani demonstration generated connections and bonds, which led to more political cooperation between them later.

The 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani has not been well documented in Thai history textbooks. People know very little about the demonstration because it took place outside Bangkok. The paucity of information on this subject indicates that the Bangkok-centric view on how history is written remains strong within Thailand academic circles. Personal discussions with prominent Thai scholars who are not from the southern border provinces confirms that the history of the 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani has largely been ignored. When referring to political movements for the people by the people in Thailand during the 1970s, the period which is known as 'the Era of Democratic Bloom (1973–1976)', most people would recall only the events of 14 October 1973[144] and 6 October 1976.[145] Many scholars could not answer when asked about the 1975 protest that occurred in Pattani. A Thai scholar from Nakorn Sithammarat province said: "The 1973 student uprising didn't just happen only in Bangkok but it happened around the country. The furthest down south where the uprising was demonstrated was at Nakorn Sithammarat province. I don't think it went down any further than that."[146] When I brought up the 1975 demonstration in Pattani, she argued, "It only happened in 1973 and 1976. I think you must be wrong about the year." Her remark brought an end to the conversation. In support of my argument that most Thai scholars who are from the central part of Thailand have forgotten the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration, one need only read the article, "From October-October to May-May (1973–2013), Thai State and the usage of

[144] The tragic event took place over only ten days (6 to 15 October). Between 9 and 12 October, polytechnic students and college students assembled in peaceful protest each day within Thammasat University. On Saturday the 13th, the people marched in a show of strength, a tremendous number of people overflowing Ratchadamnoen Avenue. On the following days, 14 and 15 October, violence started. Youthful demonstrators were suppressed with deadly weapons, leading to a massive uprising in Bangkok and up-country, which eventually toppled the dictatorship. The leaders of the ruling clique, Thanom-Praphas-Narong (Thanom's son), were forced to flee the country.

[145] The protest on 6 October 1976 was staged by pro-democracy students against the return of a military junta leader, Field Marshall Thanom, who had been overthrown by people power during the student uprising of 14 October 1973. The military, however, accused the student protesters of being communists, aliens and of defaming the Crown Prince. As a result, the military and para-military launched a bloody assault on the student protesters at Thammasat University. After the massacre, the military staged a coup by seizing power from Seni Pramoj, the civilian government. (Seni Pramoj is actually the older brother of Kukrit Pramoj.)

[146] She was wrong with her comment that the uprising did not go further than Nakorn Sri-Thammarat province. The 1973 student uprising actually went all the way down to Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. See National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT, 1974), *Kabuan kaan prachachon tulakom 2516* [Movement of the People of October 1973]. Bangkok: Krung Siam Publishing.

Violence"[147] written by Dr Charnvit Kasetsiri, one of the most famous Thai historians. The article was written in honour of the 14 October 1973 student uprising, marking its 40th anniversary. The article mentioned the main incidents where the Thai state used violence against its own citizens, which were the incidents of October 14 (1973), October 6 (1976), Bloody May (1992), and Cruel May (2010). The article pointed out that some incidents were forgotten unintentionally by us, or made to be forgotten intentionally by the state. Charnvit raised awareness on how the Thai state intentionally made people forget major uprisings in the past, and how ordinary people might unintentionally forget these past events. Charnvit also mentioned other major demonstrations that happened in Bangkok, but Charnvit failed to include the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration in his article. The author might have overlooked, or perhaps, not have been aware of the mass demonstration that took place in regions other than Bangkok. In part, this chapter hopes to raise public awareness of the events in 1975 at the Pattani Central Mosque. Rather than being forgotten, the 1975 Pattani incident should be remembered alongside the 14 October 1973 and 6 October 1976, and the Bloody May 1992 movement. It ought not to be ignored because this incident was one of the crucial democratic social movements that was driven by civil society in Thailand's rural areas. The process of democratic social movement in Thailand did not occur only in Bangkok, but the era of democratic bloom also spread to the countryside.

By employing analytical assessment through narrative sections, this chapter provides a backdrop to electoral politics in the southernmost provinces of Thailand. It is a starting point that will help untangle our question on how and why people in the southernmost provinces vote the way they do. The 1975 demonstration is a critical juncture that saw people in the Deep South embark on the process of political engagement. The following chapter will show that there is a crucial linkage between the 1975 demonstration and subsequent Malay Muslim voting behaviour. The demonstration allowed people in the region to gain more information; it made people engage more with politics, thereby gaining a awareness that informs their voting decisions. Because of the government's lack of accountability in its handling of the situation

[147] *Matichon Online*, 21 September 2013, accessed March 2014, see http://www.matichon.co.th/news_detail.php?newsid=1379825247&grpid=&catid=02&subcatid=0207.

of the rally, Malay Muslims therefore voted against the incumbent politicians in the 1976 general election.

Thus, I argue that the incident of the 1975 Pattani demonstration marked the emergence of the Malay Muslims' mass political participation. It has shaped the development of electoral politics in the Deep South which endures until this day. Despite being categorised as non-Thais by state officials,[148] the Malay Muslim minority in the southernmost provinces of Thailand nonetheless actively participate in Thai politics, as will be shown in this chapter. First, the 1975 Pattani demonstration was the major event that unified ordinary citizens who voluntarily traveled from across the Deep South region to join together in demand for justice from the Thai government by peaceful means. The bombing incidents, the shared grievances, and the long duration of the rallies created a powerful sense of solidarity as the Malay Muslims participated in politics together as a community. Second, for the demonstrators and organisers to sustain the rallies over such a long period while keeping everything under control must have taken considerable leadership and networking skills. In particular, when the duration and size of the demonstrations are massive, it forces the organisers to create a stronger connection between different networks from different groups; for example, a group of Muslim bureaucratic officials, a group of village heads and sub-district head chiefs, a group of Tok guru and Imams from each village, and a group of university students needed to come to know each other. Third, the event also helped boost local villagers' awareness that they could be part of the political process. During the rally, villagers received news and updates on current affairs from the stage speakers. Also, since the rally lasted for forty-five days, bonding naturally occurred as villagers got to know one another. Fourth, because of the government's sluggish and indifferent response, the event deepened the distrust between Malay Muslims and Thai state authorities. Fifth, the event also inadvertently strengthened the legitimacy of the insurgency because many demonstrators were forced to flee and join insurgent groups to escape extrajudicial killings by

[148] Thai state officials insulted many of the Malay Muslims by calling them names like "*Kaek*" (แขก) or "*Kaek Malayu*" (แขกมลายู), "*Kaek*" literally means "guest" (but most Thais use the term for calling those who appeared to look like "Indians", or "Arabs", and people who adopted Islam as their religion). Malay Muslims considered this action as demarcating the Muslim population away from being part of the Thais. See Imron Maluleem *Wikhro khwamkhatyaeng rawang rathaban thai kap musalim nai prathet: karani suksa klum musalim nai khet jangwat chaidaen phak tai* [An Analysis of Conflict between State and Thai-Muslim in Thailand: A Case Study of the Southern Part of Thailand], p. 99. Also, see Kukrit's public speech when he visited Yala on 1 February 1976. He had mentioned that, "We have to accept the truth that they are not Thais." (ขอให้ทุกคนยอมรับความจริงว่าเขาไม่ใช่คนไทย). See Arong Suthasasna (1976). *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Pitakpracha Printing, p. 163.

Thai security forces. Some of the intellectuals, university students, and religious leaders fled their homes to join the insurgents. In other words, the demonstration contributed to the resurgence of insurgency in the southernmost provinces of the country. Sixth, last but not least, the event paved a way for many political activists and prominent political figures to participate in national politics.

The sequence of this chapter is as follows: the first section elaborates a broader picture of Thailand's domestic politics and its involvement internationally during the Cold War. Including a background on the Thai government at the time provides us with a broader view of the political situation in the country. It shows that events in domestic and international politics affected the government's capability to manage the 1975 Pattani demonstration. In addition, the series of incidents illustrated in this section reflects how the Thai security officials commonly employed harsh measures to control the people whom they perceived as threat to national security. The second section details the role of the Selatan group. This section explains who the Selatan group were, what influenced their ideology, and their political careers after the 1975 Pattani demonstration. Many of the Selatan group members became politicians, which I will explore in more detail in Chapter 4. The third section narrates the story of the boy named "Samae". Samae was the boy who survived the extrajudicial killing by the Thai marines at Kor Thor Bridge, Narathiwat province on 29 November 1975. In the fourth section, I trace the events that led to the massive demonstration in front of Pattani City Hall. At the end of this chapter, I discuss and analyse the impact of Malay Muslims' political participation on the electoral politics of Thailand's Deep South since then.

Kukrit Pramoj and his government during the Cold War Era

While Kukrit's government was struggling to consolidate its position at the height of the Cold War, Laos, Thailand's neighbour, went through a domestic upheaval. The communist leader Souphanouvong overthrew the Royal Government and arrested many members of the royal family. A few Lao royal family members fled to Thailand in December 1975. On 21 November 1975, a Thai gunboat was attacked by Pathet Lao forces on the Mekong River,

resulting in an anti-communist riot led by polytechnic students in Nongkhai province.[149] More than a hundred shops and homes owned by Vietnamese were ransacked and destroyed as they were seen as communist sympathisers. Seven people were arrested but later released. In 1975, surrounding countries that shared their borders with Thailand had fallen to communism. While international tension was high, domestic politics was also in turmoil in Thailand. The Thai military and the monarchy shared the same paranoia about the domino effect of communist takeover, because both saw communism as a threat to the country's security and stability. The palace was particularly displeased with two of Kukrit's major policies—his ultimatum to the United States to withdraw its military presence from the region, and his establishment of diplomatic relations with China. Thailand was at that time pursuing the policy of "Slaughtering the Left Wing by the Right Wing" (*Khwa Pikhat Sai* – *ขวาพิฆาตซ้าย*). Political activists, university students, intellectuals, leaders of the farmers' organisation, labour leaders, villagers, and communist party members were murdered and assassinated. Most of the killings were committed by the Thai security forces, paramilitaries, and villager scouts; victims received no justice. On 30 July 1975 in Chiangmai province, Intha Sribunruang, one of the leaders of the Thai farmers' organisation (the Farmers' Federation of Thailand – FFT) was assassinated. Intha's death led to protests across Thailand.[150] On 1 October 1975, in front of Pang-nga City Hall, a bomb was thrown into a crowd of university students who were protesting against the Mining Company in Pang-nga province, resulting in fifteen deaths and seventeen injured.[151] In Phattalung province, within two and a half years, as many as three thousand alleged communist sympathisers were killed. The incident of the *thang daeng* killings, or the "red drum" killings, were revealed to the public by university students in February 1975.[152] The military put victims into empty oil drums, then burned them alive. Many innocent citizens were brutally murdered this way. Some were pushed or kicked off a cliff, hence the term "*theeb loeng khao, pao thang*

[149] *Thairath*, Saturday 21 November 1975, p. 16. Nongkhai is a province located at the border of Lao-Thailand in the northeastern part of Thailand.

[150] See Tyrell Haberkorn (2011). *Revolution Interrupted: Farmers, Students, Law and Violence in Northern Thailand*. The University of Wisconsin Press, pp. 117–122.

[151] *Arin Political*, Monday 27 February 2012, accessed 28 February 2016. http://arin-political.blogspot.com.au/2012_02_01_archive.html [In Thai]

[152] Tyrell Haberkorn. "Getting Away with Murder in Thailand: State Violence and Impunity in Phattalung," in *State Violence in East Asia*, ed. N. Ganesan and Sung Chull Kim. Kentucky: University Press of Kentucky, 2013, pp. 185–187.

daeng", which means "Kick off the cliff, burn in the red drums".[153] Besides the turmoil that was happening around the country, Kukrit—who took the premiership in March 1975—also had to deal with political crises within parliament. Only eighteen MPs of his political party (the Social Action Party) were elected in the 1975 general election,[154] forcing him to form a coalition government. His position as premier, therefore, was not stable. Kukrit also had to face several obstacles during his premiership. It was said that Kukrit was no longer endorsed by the Thai conservative elites, also known as the *network monarchy*, a concept that was coined by McCargo.[155] McCargo explains that Thai political processes are best understood when we add the notion of the Thai King and his close circles' intervention and involvement in Thai politics. Kukrit was under incredible pressure from international politics, from his cohorts within the parliament, from the network monarchy, and from civilians. The front page of the *Daily News* reported Kukrit lamenting that he wanted to commit suicide.[156]

Having to deal with the political turmoil from the neighboring country and the turbulent domestic affairs really weakened Kukrit's government in handling the 1975 Pattani demonstration.

From 14 October 1973 to 11 December 1975: The Role of "The Selatan Group"

The coup on 17 November 1971 not only abolished the 1968 Constitution but also dissolved the parliament and put Thailand under the 1914 martial law. A small group of Thammasat University students were arrested after placing a black wreath at the Democracy Monument. The arrests prompted students from nine state universities to form a student-led organisation called "The National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT)" for the first time in the country's history. The event of 14 October 1973, which is known as "Sib-see Thula", can be

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[153] *Komchadluek*, 7 November 2009, accessed 28 February 2016. http://www.komchadluek.net/detail/20091107/36150/36150.html [In Thai]

[154] The general election was held on 26 January, 1975. The Social Action party was elected with only 18 seats but received support from several political parties to form a coalition government with 135 seats. The Democrat Party received the most MP's seats but eventually became the opposition party. The leader of the Democrat Party, MR. Seni Pramoj, was actually the brother of MR. Kukrit Pramoj. So it was a political battle between brothers.

[155] Duncan McCargo (2005) "Network monarchy and legitimacy crises in Thailand", *The Pacific Review*, 18:4, pp. 499-519.

[156] *Dailynews*, Thursday 18 December 1975, p. 1. Quoted, [In Thai – "ดึกฤทธิ์เลอะเทอะ บอกอยากฆ่าตัวตาย"].

described as a bloody revolution when students challenged the military regime by protesting to oust Field Marshal Thanom Kittikajorn and Field Marshal Prapat Jarusathien.

After 14 October 1973, the name "Selatan", which derives from Bahasa Malayu meaning "South", was given by the media to this young college activist group who came for their university degrees in Bangkok and Chiangmai. Primarily, the members of the Selatan group were from the provinces of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani. The Selatan group began their activity by reaching out to poor villagers in remote areas, mainly in the southern parts of Thailand. Some of their outreach services included infrastructure building, teaching the basic principles of democracy, and participating in community activities. These services were carried out during the summer break. Leaders of the Selatan Group were mostly students who won prestigious scholarships from Field Marshal Prapat, the Minister of Interior under Field Marshal Thanom's government. Field Marshal Thanom Kittikajorn, the Prime Minister, and Field Marshal Prapat Jarusatiean, the Minister of Interior were determined to promote higher education for Malay Muslim students who came from the far south of Thailand. At that time, the region was plagued with numerous violent acts, including those by insurgent groups, and criminal acts by gangsters and illegal traders. The central government believed that by providing higher education to the locals, it would help lessen the conflict and violence in the area. As one of the students who received this special government scholarship, Areepen Utarasint remembered his first day of the orientation when Field Marshal Prapat gave a talk in which he said, "I handpicked all of you to enroll in these prestigious universities in Bangkok so when you are graduated, you can go back home and govern among yourself." [157]

The Selatan Group started out as part of the Thai Muslim Student Association (TMSA). Later, they joined The National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT) to protest against Field Marshal Thanom, the military dictator, during the student uprising of 14 October 1973. The group later played an important role in helping to release almost two hundred Malay Muslim political prisoners who were imprisoned under Article 17 during the rule of Field Marshal Thanom Kittikajorn.[158] Some prisoners were falsely accused of wrongdoing just because they

[157] An interview with former Narathiwat MP, Areepen Utarasint, at his home in Narathiwat in June, 2012. Areepen said in the interview that many of those loyal vote canvassers had now passed away because of their old age.

[158] See Thak Chaloemtiarana, *Thailand: The Politics of Despotic Paternalism* (Bangkok: Thammasat University Printing Press, 1979), p. 200. Prior to Field Marshal Thanom Regime, Article 17 known in Thai as "M 17" was used by Field Marshal Sarit Thanarat (1957–1963) to order executions and other activities with

had some petty dispute with some of the Thai authorities; others were accused of being separatists despite a lack of evidence. The prisoners were sent to a prison in Seekiew district, Nakorn-Ratchasima, a province that is in the northeastern part of Thailand and far away from their homes. Relatives of the prisoners, therefore, often sought help from the Selatan Group. The group, led by Chusak Maneechayangkoon, Areepen Utarasint, Theera Mintrasakdikul, and Peerayot Rahimmula,[159] met with Prime Minister Sanya Thammasak to negotiate the release of these Malay Muslim prisoners. On 30 January 1974, the prisoners were released from Nakorn Ratchasima prison and allowed to return to the Deep South of Thailand. Many of the released prisoners soon became strong supporters and vote-canvassers for Areepen Utarasint and Peerayot Rahimmula after they became politicians.[160]

The Case of Kor Thor Bridge and the boy named "Samae"

The trigger for the massive demonstration in front of the Pattani Central Mosque was the shocking murder of five Malay Muslim villagers by Thai marines on the night of 29 November 1975 at Kor Thor Bridge. The bridge was the link between Saiburi district of Pattani province and Bajoh district of Narathiwat province. Had a young boy named "Samae" not had the wit to pretend that he was dead, no one would have known of the actions of the marines. Samae Brasae was stabbed in the back with a knife before being thrown off Kor Thor Bridge into the Saiburi River with five other bodies. Luckily, he survived to tell the story.

The state authorities denied any wrongdoing and instead claimed that it was a third party who was the culprit. Police Lieutenant-Colonel Prakorb Denudom, the Pattani Police Deputy Superintendent, alleged that it was actually the insurgents who disguised themselves

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dictatorial power that could be in Sarit's favor. Article 17 of the Interim Constitution of Thailand, B.E. 2502 which stated: "During the enforcement of the present Constitution, whenever the Prime Minister deems it appropriate for the purpose of repressing or suppressing actions whether of internal or external origin which jeopardize the national security or the Throne or subvert or threaten law and order, the Prime Minister, by resolution of the Council of Ministers, is empowered to issue orders or take steps accordingly. Such orders or steps shall be considered legal. All orders issued and steps taken by the Prime Minister in accordance with the provisions of the foregoing paragraph shall be made known to the National Assembly."

[159] Chusak, Areepen, and Peerayot, all became Narathiwat politicians. Theera became the Governor of Yala and later the Governor of Pattani before his retirement.

[160] See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, p. 72.

as marines by wearing Thai military uniforms.[161] Police Lieutenant-Colonel Prakorb Denudom was from a well-known Patani Malay royal family from Puyut sub-district in Pattani province. His interview with *Thairath* newspaper failed to convince the Malay Muslims who saw him as siding with the Thai state. As a result, Police Lieutenant-Colonel Prakorb Denudom was regarded as a traitor in the eyes of the Malay people. Police Lt.-Col. Prakorb also gave an interview in which he alleged that two failed election candidates and the Selatan group (the group of Malay Muslim university students) were actually the masterminds of this demonstration. These groups of people planned to sabotage the Thai state by having the day of Hari Raya or Islamic New Year day as their target date of starting the rally.[162] Hari Raya is an important Islamic holiday. People would have the day off, so it was easy to gather a big crowd for a rally. General San Pathima, the 4th Region Army Commander, further insisted that the military could not be withdrawn from the area, and it was out of the question to have the prime minister visit the region.

Determined to seek justice for the murder victims, villagers demanded an investigation, from which there were several findings. Firstly, witnesses said that the six victims were captured at the marine checkpoint in front of "Cherng Khao Temple", in Bajoh district of Narathiwat province. This area was under the control of the military. No civilians were allowed to enter the area. Secondly, there was a witness who saw two GMC military trucks and a car heading toward Kor Thor Bridge. The witness even overheard people groaning with pain and crying for help from the truck. Thirdly, there was a fisherman who saw the whole incident at Kor Thor Bridge. Fourthly, five bodies were found on the Saiburi riverbank near Kor Thor Bridge the next day.[163]

The main witness was "Samae Braseh" as he was the only victim who survived the attack. Samae told the investigators that on the night of 29 November 1975, there was a Thai Buddhist man who hired his brother, "Arong Braseh", to drive him back to Narathiwat. Since

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[161] From working in the area of Pattani for a couple of years, I can vouch that whenever there is a violent incident between military officers and civilians, state authorities would publicly broadcast that the men in the military uniforms were actually insurgents who had disguised themselves. It has become a norm for the military to give an interview to the media saying that the militants would wear military uniforms to conduct their killings, so everyone else would mistakenly witness that the killings had been done by the military. But villagers would still believe that the men in uniforms are military officers nonetheless.

[162] *Thairath*, Saturday 13 December 1975, p. 16.

[163] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand]. Pitakpracha Printing, 1976, pp. 59–62.

it was getting dark, Arong asked several of his friends, including his brother Samae, to join him so he could have companions with him on his return trip. There were no problems on the way to Narathiwat where they would have passed the marine checkpoint in front of Cherng Khao Temple. But on their return at around eleven o'clock at night, a marine at the same checkpoint stopped them. Two of Arong's friends, Samaaeh Ee-sor and Samaaeh Payae, were questioned by the marines. Previously, Samaaeh Ee-sor and Samaaeh Payae had been arrested by the marines allegedly for spying for PULO, one of the active insurgent groups at the time. Both of them were transferred to the police, but Samaaeh Ee-sor and Samaaeh Payae were released afterwards due to a lack of evidence.

Little did Samae know that everyone was soon to be transferred to two GMC trucks. The marines separated three people to each truck. Samae described how he and his two companions were forced to face towards the front of the truck. There were about ten marines sitting behind them. While the truck was moving, Samae was stabbed by a knife from behind followed by being hit two to three times on his head with a hard object. Samae fell down and pretended to be dead. Two of his brother's friends were stabbed and bludgeoned to death. Samae told the investigators that, from what he could recall, the truck was headed to Kor Thor Bridge and he heard someone in the truck shout out, "Should we burn them or drown them?" There was an answer from the front truck, "Drown them."[164]

Samae told the investigators that once the truck reached Kor Thor Bridge, he was the first to be thrown over the bridge into the Saiburi River, followed by the other bodies. Although he was badly hurt, Samae swam to the riverbank then sought help from the nearest village.[165]

What made the case of Samae more astonishing than any other alleged abuse cases by state authorities against local Malay Muslims was the horrific nature of the extrajudicial killings. Kor Thor Bridge is located on the main highway that most commuters would use to commute between Pattani and Narathiwat provinces. Most importantly, the only survivor of the attack was willing to testify against the marines' outrageous act of extrajudicial killings. To

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[164] Ibid., p. 57.

[165] Ibid., p. 58. On Samae's first attempt to ask for help from the first house he encountered, he was almost killed because the owner of the house thought that Samae was a robber. It was after midnight and it was pitch dark. Someone inside the house threw an axe at him. The axe grazed him on the nose so he ran for his life to a different house. The next house eventually allowed him to stay overnight. The owner of the house brought Samae's parents to meet with Samae the next morning. Samae was brought to Saiburi hospital, then to Saiburi police station.

take justice into their own hands by killing six innocent civilians was horrendous in the eyes of local villagers. Although two of the villagers, Samaaeh Ee-sor and Samaaeh Payae, were previously questioned by authorities, the other four had never been convicted of any crimes. Besides, there was no confirmation that Samaaeh Ee-sor and Samaaeh Payae had committed any crimes.

The 1975 Pattani Central Mosque Mass Demonstration

On 11 December 1975, local Malay Muslim villagers started protesting in front of the Pattani City Hall to demand justice for the five people murdered by the marines in Bajoh district. The demonstration was peacefully orchestrated by The Center of Protection for the Citizens (CPC), a group founded by Malay Muslim university students from the Selatan Group. Other members of the group included Ustaz (religious leaders), local politicians, spiritual leaders, journalists, doctors, teachers, university lecturers,[166] and local broadcasters. National politicians from the Deep South constituencies, however, were barred from the demonstration. The CPC did not want these politicians to use the demonstration to boost their popularity and gain votes in future elections.[167]

The stage speakers were mainly members of the CPC, who mostly used Malay language to communicate with the protesters. But General San Jitpattima, the 4th Army chief, was displeased. He stated that "the ongoing staged-protest by using both Thai and Malay language was an ill-intention to ignite civilians to rebel against the government."[168] General San objected to protesters using a different language to Thai. The security officials perceived the use of Malay as a threat because they did not understand the language, hence do not know what was being said to the protesters. Besides giving speeches on how local villagers have long suffered from the abuse of power by state authorities, there were also a variety of staged events including announcing day-to-day results of the ongoing demonstration; bringing news and current affairs

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[166] One of the famous Prince of Songkhla University lecturers is Seni Madakakul, who was very active during the demonstrations. He was the representative on behalf of Muslim bureaucratic officials. State authorities however always suspected him as being one of the leaders of the separatist movement. Seni Madakakul later became a well-respected MP of Pattani.

[167] An interview by Wiroj Pipitpakdee, former Pattani MP and Areepen Utarasint, former Narathiwat MP and former leader of the Selatan group.

[168] *Thairath*, Saturday 13 December 1975, p. 16. Quoted, [In Thai - "การเปิดอภิปรายมีการพูดทั้งภาษาไทยและมลายูมีความมุ่งหมายยั่วยุให้ประชาชนกระด้างกระเดื่องต่อรัฐบาล"].

to villagers; exposing state authorities' abusive behaviours; religious praying and Qur'anic reading; Malay and Arabic poetry readings; and even stage performances to entertain protesters and to keep their spirits up. The interaction between the crowd and the stage performers took place day and night.[169]

On 13 December 1975, only two days later, at around 7pm, the demonstration was disrupted by a bomb thrown into the crowd from the City Hall. It was a rainy day. The atmosphere drastically worsened. Many demonstrators identified a policeman as the culprit who threw the bomb. They also witnessed policemen shouting among themselves not to get to the center of the crowd, as there would be a second bomb. Twelve people were killed instantly at the scene and more than thirty[170] people were injured.[171] At the height of the commotion, a *pondok Tok guru* (*pondok* religious teacher) named Mahmud abruptly praised 'Takbir', "Allahu Akbar!! Allahu Akbar!! Allahu Akbar!!",[172] through a microphone on the stage, but a sniper immediately gunned him down. After the bomb exploded, armed police blocked the demonstrators from accessing City Hall. As a result, the angry crowd shifted their ground to the Pattani Central mosque.[173]

Mr Pa Sa-ad, one of the Pattani demonstrators, said in an interview with *Thairath* newspaper that on the night of 13 December 1975, he noticed fifteen police officers standing behind the Pattani City Hall. Before the bomb was thrown, the electricity in the area went out, but power was restored soon after the explosion. A policeman at the scene was electrocuted, which made

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[169] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Pitakpracha Printing, 1976, pp. 33–42.

[170] From *Thairath* and *Dailynews* newspapers the number of injuries was more than thirty people, but Areepen Utarasint mentioned in his book that it was more than forty people.

[171] See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, pp. 106–113. Also *Thairath*, Monday 15 December 1975, p. 16. There were twelve victims. Eleven of the victims were buried at Gubor Tayoh, Pattani, while the twelfth body was taken home to be buried in his own village. The list of deceased victims: 1.) Isma-ae Waedoloh (Pattani), 2.) Thammanoon Marorsae (Narathiwat), 3.) Hasbulloh Tohyeng (Yala), 4.) Abdulhami Jehma (Pattani), 5.) Merlee Kramosor (Pattani), 6.) Ustaz Mamoo Duemalee (Pattani), 7.) Waehama Jehheng (Pattani), 8.) Muktha Baka (Pattani), 9.) Arsae Hayisama (Pattani), 10.) Namadr Musordee (Prince of Songkhla university student, Pattani), 11.) A young teenager named Arun Muhammad (Yala), 12.) Ms. Saleema Ar-wae-bersa (a grade 11 student from Pattani Woman School, "โรงเรียนสตรีปัตตานี").

[172] When in prayer, Muslims would raise both hands to recite the Takbir. Takbir or "Allahu Akbar" literally means "God is the greatest." See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, p. 105.

[173] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Pitakpracha Printing, 1976, pp. 33–42.

demonstrators even more suspicious that police had been responsible for the loss of power. Mr Pa and many other demonstrators believed that the state authorities were behind the bombing incident. Mr Pa mentioned that it was impossible for the bomb to be thrown from outside the rally site. He believed it must have been thrown from within the City Hall because the bomb dropped right in the middle of the crowd near the demonstration's administrative center, which meant the bomber had to be near the area. Mr Pa confirmed that the bomb came from where the fifteen policemen were standing. Moreover, Mr Pa said that the bomb exploded right after all the journalists left the area for a dinner treat.[174] One of the injured demonstrators, a Chiangmai University student named Saudi Charee-ma-sae, said: "There was someone throwing a bomb right into our administrative center. I saw people were dropping like fallen leaves. This heinous act of killing innocent citizens will be avenged."[175] Eight organisations of Thai-Muslims in Bangkok, led by Nithi Hasan, head of the Siamese Muslim group (ชมรมมุสลิมสยาม —Chom Rom Muslim Siam) came out to publicly denounce the bombing.[176] Sutham Sangprathum, a former representative of the National Anti-Dictatorship organisation, observed that every time people demanded justice from the government by protesting, there would be hand grenades thrown into the crowd, causing many deaths and injuries. Sutham compared the protests at Pang-nga province and Mae-Liang Mine in Chiangrai province with the demonstration in Pattani: all had similar bombing incidents.[177] Although witnesses and demonstrators strongly believed that the policemen were behind the bombing, to date the perpetrators still remain at large. There has never been any real attempt to find the culprit.

After the bombing, demonstrators shifted their location to the Pattani Central Mosque as they believed it was safer to stage their protest near a religious landmark. Also, being near a sacred place like *masjid* [178]would perhaps boost demonstrators' morale and strengthen their resolve to stand against the Thai state.[179] Before the anti-government protest by PDRC

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[174] *Thairath*, Thursday 18 December 1975, p. 16.

[175] *Thairath*, Monday 15 December 1975, p. 3. [In Thai, "มีคนขว้างระเบิดเข้าไปในศูนย์อำนวยการ ผมเห็นพรรคพวกล้มลงเหมือนใบไม้ร่วง การกระทำเช่นนี้เป็นการฆ่าประชาชนอย่างโหดเหี้ยม และเป็นการสังหารประชาชน ซึ่งจะต้องได้รับการแก้แค้น"]

[176] *Thairath*, Tuesday 16 December 1975, p. 16.

[177] *Thairath*, Monday 15 December 1975, p. 16.

[178] Masjid is an Arabic word for a mosque.

[179] This is a similar scenario to what had happened on 28 April 2004. There were 32 Malay Muslims who were alleged to be part of the insurgent movements hiding inside Kruesae mosque, when the military already surrounded the mosque. On that same day of the 28th, six alleged insurgents were running away from the police to hide inside the mosque at Huay-Krating district, Yala.

(People's Democratic Reform Committee, October 2013–May 2014) in Bangkok, the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration was one of the lengthiest democratic movements. It lasted forty-five days. As Arong noted, the demonstrators were mainly local villagers, farmers or peasants, who travelled to Pattani from very remote areas on motorbikes and pickup trucks. They were illiterate with very little knowledge of politics but had become aware of their political rights and started to gain intensive political knowledge at the rally.[180]

If the bomb was meant to frighten people away from City Hall and to put an end to the demonstration, it had the reverse effect. Upon learning about the violent attack by word of mouth, massive numbers of villagers flooded in from remote rural areas to participate in the demonstration at the Pattani Central mosque. At the height of the protest, demonstrators numbered between 80,000 and 100,000. Most demonstrators were villagers from Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. University students from Prince of Songkhla University, Yala Teachers' College, Thammasat and Ramkhamhang University also joined the protest. There were also many sympathisers who travelled from Satun and Songkhla province to join the protest. Ages of both males and females varied from children of ten years old to adults up to seventy years old. Protesters who rallied against the state were not only Malay Muslims but also Thai Buddhists living in the region.

On 14 December 1975, a massive crowd of about 10,000 mourners carried four corpses from Pattani hospital to the "Gub ur Tayoh" (Tayoh Cemetery). People were crying and shouting for justice while reading the Quran on the way to the cemetery. Religious leaders unanimously declared that the twelve victims had died as "*shaheed*" (martyrs).[181] Mr Jeh-Useng JehWae-Ma-Air, one of the persons who controlled the protesters' marching line to Gubur, said in a media interview at the time that what the people wanted was justice, not political benefits. Jeh-Useng himself used to be a soldier too. He emphasised: "We Muslims also love this country. People are fighting in a peaceful way, no weapons. If we wanted

[180] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Pitakpracha Printing, 1976, p. 49.

[181] Shaheed or Shahid is an Arabic word meaning "witness" and is also used to denote those who are willing to sacrifice for one God, Allah, and Muhammad as a messenger. The term is used as an honour to Muslims who are willing to give up their life fulfilling a religious commandment, or who have died fighting to defend their faith or family.

separation, why should we have to protest?" Jeh-Useng concluded that he would file a petition to world Muslim leaders.[182]

Prime Minister Kukrit claimed that the demonstrators were using bombing victims[183] as an excuse for separatism. He alleged that the demonstrators, who in the beginning may have appeared to be demanding justice, were ultimately demanding independence. In the end Kukrit proclaimed: "We, the Thai people will not tolerate separatists!"[184] Boonlert Lertpreecha, Deputy Minister of Interior, said in an interview that there were fraudsters disguised as university students among the demonstrators. There were twenty of them and they had all received international funding to incite hatred towards the monarchy.[185] In response to Boonlert's allegations, Pichian Amnajworaprasert, the deputy president of Thammasat University student organisation, reassured the public that the university students were really from Thammasat and Ramkhamhang University. Choosin Wana, political advisor to the Ramkhamhang University student organisation, also expressed deep concerns that university students can easily be branded as separatists by the government, similar to how the government would brand villagers as communist sympathisers.[186]

Fearing that the situation might worsen, the CPC decided to call for Prime Minister Kukrit to come to Pattani and have a dialogue with the people at the rally site. The CPC demanded five key proposals from the government, which were: 1.) The government would pay monetary compensation to the families of the five villagers who were killed at Kor Thor Bridge; 2.) The government would pay monetary compensation to the families of the twelve people who were killed and those who were injured in the bombing incident; 3.) The government would urgently bring the perpetrators to justice; 4.) The government would withdraw military troops from the region within seven days; 5.) The government would re-examine state policy that was being employed in the Deep South region.[187]

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[182] *Thairath,* Sunday 14 December 1975, p. 16.

[183] *Thairath*, Tuesday 16 December 1975, p. 16. Quoted, [In Thai – ในระยะแรกเป็นการเรียกร้องความเป็นธรรม ต่อมาได้มีการถือสาเหตุนี้เป็นการเรียกร้องแบ่งแยกดินแดน ซึ่งเราขอมไม่ได้ ทั้งนี้มีผู้ใช้กรณีที่มีคนตายเรียกร้องขึ้นมา]. Also see *Thairath*, Saturday 27 December 1975, p. 5.

[184] *Thairath*, Tuesday 16 December 1975, p. 16. Quoted, [In Thai – "การแยกดินแดนนั้น ไทยขอมไม่ได้"].

[185] *Thairath*, Thursday 18 December 1975, p. 16.

[186] *Thairath*, Friday 19 December 1975, p. 16.

[187] See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, p. 153.

Kukrit refused to meet with the demonstrators, however. He added that for him to travel to any demonstration sites, it would depend on the decision made after the meeting between the cabinet ministers and the high-ranking military officials. The meeting between them would decide whether the prime minister should or should not visit Pattani.[188] Because he did not believe in the existence of the separatist movement, Kukrit argued, he did not want to meet with the demonstrators.[189] I have observed that this comment was contradictory to what he had said earlier on 16 December when he claimed that the demonstrators were using dead people as an excuse for separation.[190] He alleged the protesters were separatists, but when negotiation was needed, he refused to acknowledge that separatists exist. The Thai government used the alleged-separatist accusation as a tool to control the Malay Muslims. On the other hand, Kukrit's refusal to recognise the separatist movement demonstrated the Thai government's concern that separatist groups would gain more political leverage. On 17 December 1975, the Prime Minister sent the Minister of Interior, Boonteng Thongsawat, to the Deep South. The front page of *Thairath* newspaper bears the headline, "Kukrit 'stubborn' not going to Pattani". Soon after, Kukrit sent the Sheikhul Islam[191] of Thailand to meet with the protesters. Both failed the negotiation process. To protest against Kukrit's lack of accountability and unresponsiveness to their demands, on 22 December 1975, at the rally site, demonstrators used an effigy of Kukrit to mock the court of justice before burning it.[192]

The then President of the Islamic Council of Pattani, Haji Ameen Tohmeena, gave an interview to 'Ta-Saeng' (ตาแซง) a columnist from *Thairath* newspaper, on how the representatives from Kukrit's government dealt with the negotiation process. Haji Ameen Tohmeena was a former Pattani MP and the eldest son of the famous religious leader Haji Surong.[193] Haji Amin had said in an interview that Boonteng did not come close to the

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[188] Reporters also asked Kukrit whether he thought sending the Minister of Justice to meet with the demonstrators on his behalf would be considered a lack of responsibility on his part. Kukrit answered, "You can think whatever you want." Kukrit said that if he met with the demonstrators, it would mean he had acknowledged the separatist movement's existence.

[189] *Thairath*, Monday 22 December 1975, p. 16. Quoted, [In Thai – "ถ้าเอะอะก็วิ่งไปก็เท่ากับยอมรับว่ามีการแบ่งแยกดินแดน ซึ่งผมไม่เชื่อว่ามี ผมจึงไม่ไปเพราะไม่อยากให้เป็นอย่างนั้น"]. At first, it seems that Kukrit's answer is illogical. It is, however, commonly known that most of the Thai state officials believe that meeting with suspected separatists would automatically enhance the leverage of their counterparts.

[190] See footnotes 39, 40, and 42 for a comparison.

[191] *Sheikhul Islam* is a title of the chief of Islam in Thailand.

[192] *Thairath*, Saturday 27 December 1976, p. 16.

[193] Haji Amin later was later alleged to be one of the coordinators of the BRN Coordinates, a faction within BRN. He later had to flee to Malaysia and spend the rest of his life there.

demonstration site at all. Boonteng was waiting for the representatives of the demonstrators at "Bor Thong" Military Camp, outside Pattani city centre, and went back to have an overnight stay in Hadyai district, a city that is about 150 kilometres away from Pattani. The Minister of Interior was staying mainly at Sena-narong Military Camp in Hadyai and was briefed by Lieutenant General San Jitpattima on the situation in Pattani. Unaware of what was really going on, Boonteng did not realise that there were almost 100,000 demonstrators at the centre of Pattani Masjid.[194]

The main reason that the Center of Protection for the Citizens (CPC) and demonstrators wanted to meet with Kukrit in person was because they wanted some reassurance from him that the government would take responsibility in finding the culprit behind the bombings, and bring the convicted marines to justice. Instead of visiting the demonstration site, on 19 December 1975 Kukrit travelled to his vacation home in Kun Tarn in Lampang province for a holiday. It was reported in *Thairath* that the main reason Kukrit travelled to Lampang province was because a fortune teller told him all political crises would be resolved if he could make a getaway to anywhere other than the Deep South of Thailand.[195] On 24 December 1975, Kukrit sent the Minister of Justice Yai Savittichart to negotiate with the protesters. Kukrit continued to avoid visiting himself.

According to the *Bangkok Post* and *Thairath* newspapers, Yai Savittichart did not meet with the protesters at the rally site. Nonetheless, Yai Savittichart came back to Bangkok with a report in his hand, telling Kukrit that there were only two hundred demonstrators at the scene.

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[194] *Thairath*, Wednesday 24 December 1975, p. 3. Hayee Ameen Tohmeena gave an interview. Quoted, "ทีแรกรัฐมนตรีก็จะมาที่ศาลากลางจังหวัด แต่พวกข้าราชการชั้นผู้ใหญ่ที่นั่นไม่ยอมให้ไป ครั้นจะนำรัฐมนตรีมาที่มัสยิดกลาง พวกนั้นก็หาว่าไม่เหมาะสม" [At first the Minister was about to come to the Pattani City Hall, but high-ranking officials opposed him from going. Then when we wanted to bring him to the Pattani Central Mosque, those high-ranking officials claimed that it is not appropriate.] As for the number of demonstrators, which was claimed to be as high as almost a hundred thousand protesters, this estimate was derived from cross-checking information via the interviewees, *Thairath*, *Dailynew*s, *Thai Thaksin*, and the book *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], by Arong Suthasasna, and a book by Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978].Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015.

[195] *Thairath*, Monday 22 December 1975, p. 5. There was also a report in *Thairath* newspaper mentioning that a journalist had asked Kukrit if it was true that Kukrit refused to visit the Deep South because of his belief in fortune telling. Kukrit refused to comment. Two columnists on the same page (page 5) in *Thairath*, both mocked Kukrit about his strong belief in supernatural forces. A columnist named Long Likhit (ลอง ลิขิต) reported that Mr Prasert Sudbantat, the Chief Advisor of the Prime Minister, was the person who revealed that the Prime Minister was told by a fortuneteller to leave Bangkok temporarily until his star signs were back to normal.

In Yai's word, "I have visited the scene and already received a report. There were only two hundred protesters." [196] Like Boonteng, Yai was stationed mainly at Bor Thong military camp and went back to stay overnight in Muang district, Songkhla province. Finally, Yai admitted that he did not visit the demonstration site at Pattani Mosque but only drove past the site. Yai met with some of the Pattani politicians and religious leaders, including Haji Ameen Tohmeena, Den Tohmeena, Haji Tuan Nasair Bupaha, Haji Waetae, Haji Abdulrahman Japakeeya, and Lek Sulaiman.[197] Yai believed that 'justice' had been served because he had already met with the demonstrators, whereas the demonstrators did not believe 'justice' had been served because the government had neither found the culprits behind the bombing nor brought the marines to justice.[198]

On 27 December 1975, the negotiation process failed as the Center of Protection for the Citizens (ศูนย์พิทักษ์ประชาชน) or CPC demanded that they would negotiate only with "Father"[199] or the Prime Minister. The Center of Protection for the Citizens refused to negotiate with Yai because they believed that Yai had no decision-making power to manage the peace dialogue. Kukrit, however, still insisted that he would not travel to meet with the demonstrators at the Pattani Central Mosque. Eventually, on 19 January 1976, one of the bystanders drove his car straight into the midst of the demonstrators. He was drunk. People at the rally site were angered by his action. After the demonstrators learned that the man was a military officer, they dragged him from his car and beat him up. Then someone among the demonstrators stabbed him to death. The CPC guards had to stop people from bashing and kicking the corpse. The situation was getting out of hand. The CPC expressed concern over this incident, worrying that if the protest had to be extended, they might not be able to maintain a peaceful protest.

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[196] *Thairath*, Wednesday 24 December 1975, p. 16. Quoted [In Thai - ตนได้ไปดูการชุมนุมและได้รับรายงานแล้ว ทราบว่ากลุ่มที่ชุมนุมมีคนอยู่ประมาณสองร้อยคนเท่านั้น]

[197] *Dailynews*, Thursday 25 December 1975, p. 3.

[198] *Thairath*, Saturday 27 December 1975, p. 5. Quoted, [In Thai – "ผมไม่ได้เข้าไปในมัสยิดที่เค้าชุมนุมกันหรอก เพียงแต่นั่งรถเฉียดๆ ไปเท่านั้น เพราะไม่รู้จะลงไปหาใคร เค้าร้องขอความยุติธรรม ผมก็ไปให้ความยุติธรรมเค้าแล้วนี่ เรื่องก็จบเพียงแค่นี้"]

[199] "Father" or "พ่อ" refers to Prime Minister Kukrit. By referring to Kukrit with the word "Father" the demonstrators signified how they respected Kukrit's position. If only the government had appreciated how respectful the Malay Muslims were towards Kukrit, the protest might not have lasted as long as 45 days.

Towards the end, the government finally agreed to accept the demands from the CPC.[200] As the government representative, Deputy Prime Minister Preeda Pattanataboot agreed to grant the CPC demands as follows:

1. The government would interrogate six of the marines and if it found them guilty, they would be arrested.

2. The government would pay monetary compensation of fifty thousand baht to each of the families of the five villagers who were killed at Kor Thor Bridge.

3. The government would relocate the marine checkpoint that was located in front of the "Cherng Khao Temple" to a different location.

4. The government would re-examine state policy that was being implemented in the Deep South region.

5. The government would urgently bring the perpetrators of the bombing incident on 13 December 1975 to justice and would also pay monetary compensation to the families of the twelve people who were killed and those who were injured in the bombing.

6. The CPC would disperse the demonstration.

7. The government would not arrest the CPC, the students, or the demonstrators.[201]

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[200] As the story was told, the meeting took place at Prince of Songkhla University. Preeda Pattanataboot was accompanied by a police officer from Bangkok. The police officer walked into the meeting room with Preeda. Muk Sulaiman, one of the CPC representatives, asked the police officer to leave the room. Muk said, "The meeting has nothing to do with police officers …get out." It turns out that the police captain whom Muk had asked to leave was the young Thaksin Shinawatra. See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, p. 153. (Areepen did not mentioned the name of the police officer in his book. He told me in person during the interview.)

[201] See Arong Suthasasna, *Panha khwam khat yaeng nai si jangwat phak tai* [The Conflict Situation in the Four Southern Provinces of Thailand], Pitakpracha Printing, 1976, pp. 86–87. See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, pp. 154–155. See *Thairath*, Saturday 24 January 1975, p.16.

The results from the meeting were announced at the demonstration site at the Central Pattani Mosque. On 24 January 1975, the Pattani mass demonstration ended. Although not fully satisfied with the results, the CPC representatives wanted an end to the demonstrations as they feared the rally might become more violent.[202] On 23 January 1976, six of the marines were taken into custody, but the case never went to court because the police bungled the investigation. The six marines were later transferred to a different location, while the 13 December 1975 bomber remained on the loose. By March 1976, the government had gone back on its promise to compensate victims and their families. The CPC did ask the government again about the compensation money, but the government replied they had no authority to give out the money since the parliament had been dissolved and Kukrit's government was just an acting government until the next general election which would be held on 4 April 1976.

The 1975 Pattani Demonstration and the Malay Muslims' Political Participation

The Pattani demonstration was a 45-day-long protest sparked off by the murder of five innocent villagers and aggravated by a bombing incident that killed twelve people and injured more than thirty people. At its height, the Pattani demonstration saw as many as 100,000 people demand justice for the victims and their families. What then gave rise to the Malay Muslims' political participation, and how did it affect the future path of electoral politics in this region?

There is a wide array of concepts surrounding "political participation". Democratic standards are more likely to prevail if citizens are well informed and willing to get involved if they have the freedom to express their thoughts and needs. The ideas and values of democracy, moreover, can only find open expression in a non-violent society. Although the function of society in Thailand's Deep South is different than that of society in the United States and other developed countries, the political engagement in southern Thailand has always been dynamic. The southernmost provinces of Thailand have been for many years a society of conflict and violence between insurgent groups and security officers. Against this backdrop of tension and violence, government corruption and abuse of power are often seen by the Malay Muslims as evidence of suppression, discrimination and lack of respect. Rather than remaining aloof and

[202] See Areepen Utarasint, *Kloom Selatan klaang kra-sae prachatipatai beng baan: kabuan kaan nuk sueksa Melayu Patani 2515–2520* [The Selatan Group in the midst of the Era of Democratic Bloom: Malayu-Patani Student Movement 1972–1978]. Fourteen Publication Printing, 2015, p. 152.

indifferent to national politics, the people in the Deep South of Thailand have become more involved in politics precisely because of the chronic violence, governmental neglect and discrimination. The Malay Muslims in Thailand often engage in unconventional forms of political participation, such as signing petitions or staging demonstrations, because they are suppressed and treated poorly by the local authorities and therefore cannot freely express their democratic rights.

Bateson argues that crime victims participated more in politics than comparable non-victims,[203] especially when the victims are the victims of the state. Most victims are more likely to seek assistance from elected officials or file petitions for justice from political institutions. Blattman's study on war and political participation in Uganda focuses on people who were abducted by rebels and their families. Evidence from his survey has shown that people who experienced violence are likely to be more involved in politics; they are more likely to vote and play a leading role in their communities.[204] The 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani is an excellent example of ordinary citizens mobilising against the state and seeking redress of grievances despite chronic violence and government suppression. This type of political participation, however, would generate civilians' animosity towards the government in the long term. The political process of the demonstration motivated people in the southernmost provinces of Thailand to turn out to vote, and they were voting against the incumbent coalition government in the 1976 general election. The opposition party—the Democrat Party—won all seats in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat.

The main factor which triggered Malay Muslims' protest against the state authorities was the injustice and the abuse of power perpetrated by Thai government officials in the Deep South. According to McCargo, "Patani Muslims do not rebel because of deep rooted socio-economic or psychological grievances, and nor are they primarily animated by jihadist ideologies. Their cause is a political one that centers on local questions of legitimacy."[205] For McCargo, legitimacy involves granting autonomy to the Malay Muslims, giving them the authority to control their own affairs while retaining Patani region as part of Thailand.

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[203] Regina Bateson (2012). "Crime Victimization and Political Participation". *American Political Science Review* 106 (3): 571.

[204] Christopher Blattman (2009). "From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda". *American Political Science Review* 103 (2): 244.

[205] Duncan McCargo (2008). Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand. Cornell University Press, p. 187.

Authority has been abused by the state bureaucrats for more than half a century in this part of Thailand. Because of the cultural and language difference and the feeling of suspicion has created a relationship of animosity between the Malay Muslims and the local state officials. The predominance of Thai government officials in the South, most of whom do not speak Bahasa Malayu, is a crucial factor in creating an adversarial relationship between the local people and the state officials. The adversarial relationship ranges from complaints by the Muslims of trivial harassment and corruption to more serious accusations of persecution and imprisonment of Muslims based on tenuous allegations of banditry. The difference in perception of the role of the religious leadership in the state, the cultural and cosmological difference, the origin of law, the role and authority of the state towards the local villagers, the lack of language ability on both sides, all these have contributed to the continuity of the political conflict in Southern Thailand for years.

Charles Tilly argues that the activation of latent political identities that separate people into "us" versus "them" often triggers violence. In the case of the Pattani mass demonstration, it started out as a dispute between “citizens” versus “state authorities”. Tilly further states that the causal explanation of how collective violence becomes a special case of contentious politics is when there is involvement by the government. Also, two important relational mechanisms that can trigger the character and intensity of large-scale violence are the mechanisms of “exploitation” and “opportunity”.

McAdam categorised “political opportunity” into four dimensions: “1.) the relative openness or closure of the institutionalised political system; 2.) the stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity; 3.) the presence or absence of elite allies; and 4.) the state’s capacity and propensity for repression.”[206] The condition of Kukrit’s government in the midst of Cold War supports McAdam’s first and fourth dimension. Because Kukrit’s government was overwhelmed from international and domestic affairs, they lacked the capacity to suppress the protesters. Besides, Kukrit’s government was a civilian government. The openness of the institutionalized political system is greater compared to the previous authoritarian government. Meyer, however, states that the concept of political

[206] Doug McAdam (1996). “Conceptual Origins, Current Problem, Future Directions”. In McAdam, D., McCarthy, J. and M. Zald (eds), *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements: Political Opportunities, Mobilizing Structures, and Cultural Framings*. Cambridge University Press, pp. 23–40.

opportunity varies greatly. Cases used for supporting the conceptualisation of political opportunity vary across time and place, and many of the studies base their cases on protests that occurred in developed nations.[207] The concept of political opportunity facilitates our understanding of how the 1975 Pattani demonstration is seen as a successful peaceful demonstration organised by the civil society to challenge the state. By successful, I mean that the CPC and the demonstrators were demonstrating peacefully and they were able to negotiate with the government representatives. One of the most critical factors in the success of the demonstration was having the CPC as the organiser. The CPC was led by highly experienced organisers, such as Chusak Maneechayangkoon, Areepen Utarasint, Muk Sulaiman, and Peerayot Rahimmula, to name but a few. They were university students from Thammasat University who had firsthand experience of the 14 October 1973 Student Uprising in Bangkok. The organisation also received considerable support from the National Student Center of Thailand (NSCT). Stage were set up to protest against the government at *Sanam Luang*, an open-field public park in the middle of Bangkok. Sutham Sangprathum and Veera Musikapong were also among the key players who supported the CPC. They all subsequently became prominent politicians. Chusak, Areepen, Muk, and Peerayot, the front row leaders of the CPC, also became prominent politicians afterwards.

Several external factors also contributed to the success of the Pattani demonstration. The reason that the CPC was able to mobilise up to 100,000 sympathisers and hold the demonstration until the protesters could accomplish their negotiation with the Thai state was because the Thai government at the time was weak, while the civil society was strong. Thailand was not under military rule at that time. but had an elected civilian government. Unlike the 14 October 1973 student uprising and the 6 October 1976 bloody clash between the right-wing movements and the pro-democratic students—both of which took place under military rule—the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration did not end in violent suppression.

Conclusion

Undeniably, the events of Kruesae Mosque killings and Takbai massacre in 2004 ignited the conflict in southern Thailand.[208] The tragic events inflamed an already conflict-

[207] David S. Meyer (2004). "Protest and Political Opportunities". *Annual Review of Sociology* 30: 133. Accessed March 3, 2016.

[208] The Kruesae Mosque killings and the Takbai massacre incidents start out differently. The Takbai massacre started off from villagers who were protesting against the police.

prone region—adding fuel to the fire. While most mainstream Southern Thailand peace and conflict scholars base their arguments on the incidents of the Kruesae Mosque killings and Takbai massacre in 2004 as the beginning of the southern violence dispersal, this chapter proposes a broader perspective is needed to understand contemporary violence in the Deep South. The start of mass political mobilization can be traced to the demonstration and violence of 1975–1976 and too few scholars have acknowledged this. I wish to raise the issue from the angle of electoral political perspective. Thus said, this chapter would argue, that it was the 1975 Pattani demonstration that marked the emergence of the Malay Muslims' political participation. Consequently, the political participation at this major event progressively transformed the spectrum of how electoral politics in this region has manifested up to the present.

A combination of factors made the 1975 Pattani demonstration one of the longest and largest protest rallies in the history of the country: a lack of government accountability and sympathy towards the Malay Muslim minority; the malfunction of justice and law; and the prime minister's stubbornness as well as ignorance of the situation. Another reason for the demonstration lasting as long as it did was that state security authorities and local bureaucratic officials in the Deep South kept sending the central government distorted information and reports. To a great extent, the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration marked a turning point for political activity and participation in Thailand's Deep South. State authorities' use of violent measures as a control mechanism had produced a backlash. The killing of the five young men at Kor Thor Bridge and the bombing at Pattani City Hall only served to solidify Malay Muslims to join in protest against the government. In other words, the use of violence by state authorities unintentionally pushed the Malay Muslims to increase their participation in politics. Not only did the violence motivate the crowd to join the rally, but it also encouraged people to come out to vote. People flocked to the polling stations to punish the ruling coalition by voting against them. The elections will be discussed in more detail in the following chapter.

The demonstration also brought home to local villagers the importance of political participation. During the forty-five days of the rally, Malay Muslims learnt the power of 'unity'. People from various social backgrounds—villagers, students, religious leaders, and journalists—joined the demonstration to demand justice from the central government. They learnt that their problems and grievances were not isolated and unique but shared with others in the Muslim community. The brutal killing of the five young men served to heighten their

shared feelings of not being respected and treated with dignity by Thai authorities. In conclusion, the 1975 Pattani demonstration represents a significant event in the recent history of Thailand's Deep South because it marked the beginning of a period of heightened political awareness and participation among the Malay Muslims.

The previous chapter has shown how Haji Sulong stood up against the Thai state alone and failed. This chapter has illustrated that mass mobilization resulted in enhanced political leverage vis-à-vis the state. In the following chapter, I will examine in more detail how some of the CPC members joined the realm of Thai national politics. In addition, I will analyse the results of the 1976 general election, which took place right after the 1975 Pattani demonstration, and compare them with the voting results of the 2005 general election, which took place after the 2004 Kruesae and Takbai killings. The backdrop of historical narrative analysis demonstrated in this chapter will give us a better understanding of electoral politics in the southernmost provinces.

Chapter 4: Violence and Politicians: The Rise and Fall of Wadah

Introduction

In 1986, a group of lawyers and teachers with support from Islamic religious leaders and spiritual leaders in the southernmost provinces of Thailand formed a political group which later became a well-known political faction called 'Wadah'. It is the only religious- and ethnic-based faction that has endured in Thai politics for more than three decades. The initiators of the Wadah group believed if all political agents from the same region were assembled into one united group, they would enhance their bargaining power vis-à-vis the central Thai government. The name 'Wadah' originates from an Arabic word meaning "Unity". The local Malay Muslims also know 'Wadah' as "Kumpulan Wadah", which means the 'United Group' in Bahasa Malayu.[209] Wadah's relationships with political parties have been fluid and it has been associated with the Democrat Party, Ekkapap Party, New Aspiration Party, Thai Rak Thai Party, People Power's Party, Puea Thai Party, and Matubhum Party. From 1986 until 2001, Wadah members won the majority of the parliamentary seats in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat continuously. But in the 2005 general election, Wadah faced a downturn.

In the previous chapter, I have mentioned some of the Wadah members when they were university students who were the organisers and the main political actors in the 1975 Pattani demonstrations. Ten years after the Pattani demonstrations, this chapter focuses on how the fallout from the Pattani demonstrations helped to give rise to Wadah in the Deep South. I also explore how the lead political characters in the 1975 demonstrations emerged as national politicians and became central figures in 'Wadah'. My primary concern is how Wadah rose in popularity and what led to its downfall. The significance of this chapter is to illustrate that elites of a marginalised group in a democratic country can form a political group that serves their electorates effectively. But when major violence occurs, political elites must respond resolutely to protect their constituents or risk loss of credibility. Otherwise, the consequence of

[209] Najmuddeen Uma, (2011). *Boht baht taang kan muangkhong kloom Wadah nai saam jangwat chai daen paak tai* [The Role of Wadah in the Three Southernmost Provinces of Thailand]. King Prachatipok Institute, 2008. Thailand: Saiyai Prachatham Publishing, p. 89.

mishandling the violent situations can backfire in that the electorate would retaliate against their elites by voting them out in the next election.

The chronic violence that occurred daily after January 2004 was a crucial factor in Wadah's waning political influence, but it was the Kruesae killings on 28 April 2004 and the Takbai incident on 25 October 2004 that led to its downfall. These two violent incidents saw serious conflict between Thai state and the Malay Muslims in 2004 and resulted in a backlash against Thaksin's government. On 28 April 2004 at Kruesae, an ancient mosque in Pattani, approximately 107 youths suspected to be separatist rebels were killed in a violent clash between the security forces and armed groups who had launched an attack on targets including police stations and checkpoints in southern Thailand. The second tragic incident took place on 25 October 2004 when Thai security forces caused the death of eighty-five Muslim protesters during the month of Ramadan at Takbai district in Narathiwat. People in the Deep South responded by voting against candidates from the ruling Thai Rak Thai party led by Thaksin Shinawatra. Nideh Waba, president of the Private Islamic School Association, stated that the Thai Rak Thai Party's defeat came as no surprise to him. According to Nideh, Prime Minister Thaksin misjudged the consequences of the Takbai and Kruesae incidents.[210] Paisal Yingsaman, a former Yala MP and a Wadah group member who was defeated during his candidacy of the Thai Rak Thai party in 2005 said: "During the election campaigning, they (villagers) said that there would be more bloodshed and more killings if Thaksin led another new government."[211]

In the following section, I will first summarise the Thai political factions, then elaborate on the background of Wadah's formation and its evolution since 1986. Subsequently, I will describe the group's accomplishments and discuss in more detail the four factors that led to Wadah's downfall. At the end of this chapter, I show the results of a long-term rivalry between political candidates of the Democrat Party and the Wadah members. I wish to examine whether the Democrat Party did finally gain the electoral stronghold in Thailand's Deep South as its

[210] "Deep South buries TRT". *Bangkok Post*, 8 February 2005, p. 2.
[211] Ibid.

politicians had claimed.[212] This section aims to determine whether it was Wadah's internal strife and not the Democrat Party's electoral success that caused the faction's downfall.

Synopsis of Thai Political Factions

Before delving deeper into Wadah, it is important to understand the function of Thai political parties and the factions within. Factions within Thai parties are considered to be the essence of Thai politics. Factions in Thailand can be defined as the often temporary grouping together of politicians and their support groups both within and apart from an overarching party structure.[213] The 1997 constitutional reforms required political candidates to be a member of one of the political parties for at least ninety days before the election date.[214] Prior to the Thai constitutional reform in 1997, however, factions tended to switch back and forth from one party to another. In short, switching between parties was allowed because it would not disqualify their status as a Member of Parliament (MP). These factions would move to any party that could provide them with financial support. There is no guarantee of loyalty to the party that supports them, however. There are advantages and disadvantages to switching between different political parties. On the one hand, the intra-party factions can maximise the political party's chance to win a majority of seats in parliament. A prime example was the infamous "Wang Nam Yen"[215] faction led by Sanoh Tiantong. He claimed that his faction had sponsored three prominent politicians to become the prime minister of Thailand: Banharn Silapa-acha (1995–1996), Chavalit Yongjaiyut (1996–1997) and Thaksin Shinawatra (2001–2005). On the other hand, these factions could destabilise political parties. The "Kloom Ngoo Hao"[216] faction

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[212] The famous Democrat Party politician from Songkhla Province, Mr Nipon Boonyamanee, had claimed that it was the Democrat Party's wholehearted effort that they have put in the region which earned them the victory, at https://prachatai.com/journal/2011/07/36097, accessed 11 April 2017.

[213] Chambers, Paul (2003). "Factions, Parties, Coalition Change, and Cabinet Durability in Thailand: 1979 to 2001." Diss. Northern Illinois University, p. 80.

[214] Allen Hickens (2006). "Party Fabrication: Constitutional Reform and the Rise of Thai Rak Thai". *Journal of East Asian Studies* 6: 381–407.

[215] Wang Nam Yen was named after the district in Sra Kaew province. The group led by Sanoh Tiantong contained 49 members. The symbol of the Wang Nam Yen faction is the King of Nagas. See Ibid., p. 79.

[216] The group used to reside in the Chat Thai party before it moved to the Prachakorn Party. The name "Kloom Ngoo Hao" (Cobra group), a famous Thai folk tale, was given by Samak Suntaravej, the party leader of Prachakorn Thai. He referred to his group members who, led by Wattana Asawahem, surprisingly switched to the Democrat Party, as being similar to the cobra that betrays its owner. See Khamnuraksa, Nirujana (1999). *Kan sueksa klum kanmueang nai rabob pak kanmueang Thai* [A Study of Factions Within Thai Political Party System]. Thailand: Thammasat, p. 74.

led by Wattana Asawahem is an example. By leaving the Prachakorn Thai party for the Democrat Party, Wattana's faction-switching may have destabilised the Prachakorn Thai party and empowered Chuan Leekpai, the then-leader of the Democrat Party, to become the prime minister in 1997. Thai political parties are incredibly volatile, and factions therefore have a dominant role. As Chambers suggests, the informal institutions such as factions become significant when political parties are less cohesive. He argues that the intra-party factions can be even more significant than political parties because the intra-party factions can reduce the longevity of the prime ministerial terms and affect the durability of coalitions.[217] Furthermore, most political candidates have to rely on faction leaders for organisation and finance. Most political parties in Thailand are formed around personalities rather than ideologies, hence becoming part of the government coalition, or a cabinet minister opens up a channel for many politicians to access government financial resources, which allows some of them to sustain their position as faction leaders or as the center of patronage.[218]

Most factions in Thai politics are temporary, depending on their particular joint-interest at the time. That is, they do not carry a specific platform and are not based on ideological interests. Hence, these temporary factions are likely to switch loyalty when a better opportunity arises.

Before Wadah

The previous chapter shows that the 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani has raised political awareness among villagers and the elites. Various actors such as schoolteachers, local bureaucrats, civil society, academics, university students, journalists, and religious leaders decided to engage more in politics. However, there would be a backlash if any of the Malay Muslims decided to protest or stand up against the central Thai government. Those who fought against the government, even though in a peaceful manner, might become victims of forced disappearance, abduction, or assassination by the Thai security forces. In the aftermath of the 1975 mass demonstrations, many leaders of the protest were either killed or disappeared

[217] Paul Chambers (2008). "Factions, Parties and the Durability of Parliaments, Coalitions and Cabinets: The Case of Thailand (1979–2001)." *Party Politics* 14 (3): 299–323.
[218] James Ockey (1994). "Political Parties, Factions, and Corruption in Thailand". *Modern Asian Studies* 28 (2): 251–277.

without a trace. An example is the murder of Amnuay Yoosoh, who was also known as "Ding German", one of the lead actors of CPC (The Centre of Protection for the Citizens). After the 1975 Pattani demonstration ended, Ding entered the national election race for the Pattani parliamentary seat in 1976 and again in 1979; unfortunately, Ding was defeated in both years. In 1980, Ding German was shot dead[219] while he was in a *da'wah* (preaching) mission.[220] Another example is the disappearance of the CPC leader, Pitak Paramun. Soon after the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration ended, Pitak was abducted by a group of policemen and was never seen again. Also, Dueramae Da-oh, or "Ustaz Mae Nadtohmong", a religious teacher from Dhammavitaya School[221] in Yala province and one of the charismatic speakers during the mass demonstration, was shot dead in 1980. Many interviewees believed that the Thai authorities were responsible for these abductions and killings. Out of fear for their own safety, local people decided not to speak out against these unjust and violent acts.[222]

The demonstration in 1975 at the Pattani Central Mosque paved the way for the local Malay Muslims to embark upon political activities. As a result of a crackdown by the Thai security authorities, many of the protesters had to escape after the demonstration ended. They were faced with two choices: to go underground or to join mainstream politics. For the demonstrators who took the underground path, they decided to join the insurgent groups. These are the local Malay Muslims who took refuge in Malaysia or fled into the jungle of the Budo Mountain[223] to join the insurgent movements. The protesters who fled did so for fear that they would suffer the same fate as some of the main active speakers and CPC guards. The second path for activists lay in the use of formal political tools. Instead of using arms as a combat tool, this group adopted a democratic mechanism to struggle against the Thai state in plain sight. Some of them became activists; others joined non-governmental organisations; still others

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[219] Wiroj Pipitpakdee gave me an interview at his home on the death of Ding German.

[220] Da'wah means 'invitation' in Arabic. It means to invite or summon someone. In Islam, it is not up to individual Muslims to convert others to Islam. In fact, it is believed that the fate of each individual is at Allah's mercy. Hence, the Da'wah mission is to teach, to explain, to invite others towards a better understanding about Islam.

[221] Dhammavitaya School is a well-known Islamic private school in Yala province. Personnel and activities within the school have been closely monitored by the Thai state authorities because the Thai security authorities believe that Dhammavitaya School produces strong, hard-headed rebellious people. Several alleged separatists associated with the BRN insurgent group were Dhammavitaya graduates.

[222] When I interviewed several religious leaders, former politicians, and prominent leaders who were part of the 1975 Pattani Mass Demonstration, almost every one of them told me, "ใครๆก็รู้ แต่พูดไม่ได้" (*khrai khrai ko roo*, *tae phut maidai*) which means, "Anyone knows about it, but we can't talk about it."

[223] The name of the mountain range along the Thai-Malaysian border.

participated in national politics. Most members from the Selatan Group—the university students who helped organize the rallies—decided to continue their battle against the central Thai government through the electoral process. Some of these university students later became Wadah members.

Another significant development after the 1975 demonstration is that more than two hundred Islamic religious leaders from four southern provinces (including Satun province) came together to discuss the role of Malay Muslims in the region. These ulamas believed that they needed to take a proactive approach when confronting the Thai state, for their lack of action in the face of conflict could leave them vulnerable to manipulation by the Thai state authorities. As the *ustaz-ustaz* and *tok guru* said, "เราอยู่เฉย ๆ แล้วจะเจ็บตัว" (*raw yu choei choei laew ca ceptua*), which means, "If we remain quiet, we could get hurt."[224] The ulamas, therefore, collaborated with local lawyers and teachers to create an unofficial group to run for an election campaign. In 1976, the Democrat Party under the leadership of Seni Pramoj agreed to give a cabinet minister position to the Malay Muslim MPs if the ulamas could help the Democrat Party win all of the eight seats in the four southernmost provinces (including Satun province). All political candidates who had the ulamas' support were sworn under oath (*sumpah*) to work committedly to advance the interests of their predominantly Malay Muslim constituencies. The meeting took place at the Pattani Islamic School in Bana (Sasnupatam School). More than a hundred ulamas witnessed the *sumpah* event.[225] The ulamas and Tok guru supported Democrat Party candidates during the 1976 national election campaign, which resulted in a landslide victory of a total of eight seats. As promised, Seni Pramoj, the Democrat Party leader and also the prime minister at the time, appointed Siddik Sharif, an MP from Narathiwat to be the Deputy Minister of Education.[226] Siddik became the first Malay Muslim to be given a cabinet post. In light of this event, it was apparent that the religious leaders and teachers in the southernmost provinces of Thailand played a significant role as a middlemen and in mobilising voters. It also confirmed that the more united the minority, the more

[224] Interview with Khun Worapoj, Wadah Senior Advisor, at his office in Pattani, July 2012.

[225] Interview with Den Tohmeena at his home in Pattani, July 2012. Den Tohmeena did not tell me the exact date of the sumpah ceremony that had taken the place at Sasanupatum School.

[226] Najmuddeen Uma (2001). *Boht baht taang kan muangkhong kloom Wadah nai saam jangwat chai daen paak tai* [The Role of Wadah in the Three Southernmost Provinces of Thailand]. Bangkok: Saiyai Prachatam, p. 59.

bargaining power they would have against the strong centralised Thai state. The group of ulamas was the precursor of the Wadah faction.

Wadah's Formation

Cultural and language differences between Thais and Malay Muslims gave rise to the feeling of suspicion and mistrust, which in turn led to animosity between the Malay Muslims and the Thai state officials. The enmity has prevented the central government from properly understanding the people in southern Thailand. With this perspective in mind, Den Tohmeena and Seni Madakakul believed they were unable to effectively represent Muslim constituencies in the parliament without a strong political grouping that would give them bargaining power. The past experience that Den had with the ulamas' group formation, particularly to argue for a cabinet seat from the Democrat Party in 1976, had inspired Den to push for Wadah's creation. Den believed that people who shared a common interest should unite to strengthen their bargaining power vis-à-vis the central Thai government. However, there was an obstacle at the beginning in the form of disagreement between Seni and Den on the basic ideology for Wadah formation.[227] Seni therefore went on to join the Social Action Party, led by Kukrit Pramoj in 1979.[228]

Wadah survived in the Thai political arena for almost nineteen years (1986–2004). Although only a faction, its longevity surpasses many other Thai political parties. Wadah was a small faction compared to other Thai political factions; it had only eight representatives at its peak. Its members were MPs from Yala, Pattani, Satun, Narathiwat, and Songkhla, and together, they founded the group. The Wadah faction consisted of Den Tohmeena (Pattani), Wan Muhammad Nor Matha (Yala), Preecha Boonmee (Pattani), Areepen Utarasint (Narathiwat), Muk Sulaiman (Pattani), Paisarn Yingsaman (Yala), Sudin Puyutanon (Pattani),

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[227] Interview with Ayah Ma, one of the local politicians of Saiburi district, Pattani province. He was one of the closest assistants to Seni Madakakul. Najmuddeen Uma's book, "*Boht baht taang kan muangkhong kloom Wadah nai saam jangwat chai daen paak tai* [The Role of Wadah in the Three Southernmost Provinces of Thailand]" also mentioned that there was a contention between Den and Seni (p. 63). When I asked Den about this issue, Den hesitated to answer about the disagreement he had with Seni. With respect, he gave high praise to Seni as one of the most promising leaders in the southernmost provinces. Den said that Seni had wholeheartedly dedicated himself to the region.

[228] Interview with Den Tohmeena. In 1989, Seni Madakakul left the Social Action Party and joined Wadah. Not too long after he joined Wadah, Seni passed away in 1991.

Burahanudin Useng (Yala), Prinya Jetapiwat (Narathiwat), Najmuddeen Uma (Narathiwat), Jirayut Naowaket (Satun), and was later joined by Seni Madakakul (Pattani). Politicians from the Wadah faction were intellectuals—lawyers and teachers who came from low to middle-income families—and not all were Malay Muslims. Preecha Boonmee, for instance, was a Thai Buddhist from Khok Pho district, Pattani. Several Wadah members gained cabinet posts in different ruling coalitions. Den Tohmeena was the Deputy Minister of Health in 1990[229] and the Deputy Minister of Interior in 1992.[230] Wan Muhammad Nor Matha was the Minister of Transportation and Communication in 1995,[231] and the Minister of Interior in 2002.[232] Areepen Utarasint was the Deputy Minister of Education in 1997.[233] While working as the Deputy Minister of Interior in 1993, Den Tohmeena accelerated the land title project for farmers and cultivators in rural areas of Thailand to be accomplished within four years (1994–1998).[234] Wan Muhammad Nor Matha generated several key projects, including road building during his post as the Deputy Minister of Transportation and Communication in the Banharn coalition of 1995 and the Thaksin coalition of 2001.

The theory of incumbency advantage explains why some of the major figures of Wadah continued to win elections. Abramowitz defines several characteristics of incumbency advantages: 1. Voters' identifying with the incumbents' party; 2. The incumbents' skills at public relations and their personal popularity; 3. Seniority status; 4. Certain committees in the House being generally regarded as helpful in terms of cultivating the support of constituents and winning re-election; and 5. The ability of the incumbents to outspend their challengers. Besides Abramowitz's definitions of the incumbency advantage concept, Mondak proposed that the success of incumbents partly stems from the person's quality, competence, and integrity. It is difficult to define a leader's quality and integrity, but we can assess Mondak's

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[229] Ibid., p. 6.
[230] Ibid., p. 56.
[231] Monthree Sansuk (2004). *Wan moohammad nor mata* [Wan Muhammad Nor Matha]. Thailand: Animate Group, p. 121.
[232] Ibid., 155.
[233] Wadah group (New Aspiration Party) (1998). *Jaak kham sanya soo kaan pathibut: 12 phee bohn tanon kan muangtai* [From Promising to Practicing: 12 years on Thai Political Path]. Thailand: Muslim News, 62.
[234] The objective is to issue land titles estimated at 12.26 million Rai, for 30 provinces including Satun, Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. See Wadah group (1994). *Pon ngan nai rob phee khong kloom ekkapap* [Annual Report of Wadah Accomplishment]. Thailand: SilapaWannakam, p. 64.

definition of incumbency advantage through Wadah's accomplishments and Wadah members' performance when dealing with their Muslim constituencies.

The date of Wadah's official establishment remains unclear. Initially, the group was named "Ekkapap", which means "United" in the Thai language. On Wadah's first meeting at Den Tohmeena's house on 19 January 1986, all of the members outlined the principle ideas for Wadah. According to these principles, Wadah was created on the basis of solidarity among the Muslim MPs and the provincial politicians, regardless of their political affiliation. Many of the members were still attached to their various patron parties. At the third meeting, Wadah members proposed six principles for the group:

1.) To unify the Muslims in Thailand.

2.) To safeguard the benefits of justice and fairness for Muslim in Thailand.

3.) To develop the Muslim society with respect to politics, economics, education, and society.

4.) To cultivate a consciousness and understanding of politics in a precise way.

5.) To explain and publicise the "Islamic system of thought" to people from other religions in order for them to understand Islam well.

6.) To participate in promoting democracy under the rule of constitutional monarchy, with His Majesty the King recognised as Head of State.[235]

At the fourth meeting on 3 May 1986, the majority of the group agreed to change the name from "Ekkapap" to "Wadah". Initially, the Wadah faction comprised politicians from the Deep South region who shared common interests despite their affiliation to different political parties. At the fourth meeting, however, all members agreed to work together in a single political party. In doing so, the group would have more bargaining power to advance the Malay Muslims' interests through legislation. During that time, Den Tohmeena, Preecha Boon-me,[236]

[235] Wadah group (1994). *Pon ngan nai rob phee khong kloom ekkapap* [Annual Report of Wadah Accomplishment]. Thailand: Silapa Wannakam, p. 126.

[236] Preecha Boon-me was an MP from Pattani province. Preecha is the Thai-Buddhist politician from Khok Pho district, Pattani, who joined Wadah.

Wan Nor, and Areepen Utarasint were part of the Democrat Party. Within the same year, Den Tohmeena came into conflict with a senior member of the Democrat Party, when its leader, Pichai Rattakul, denied him a cabinet post which the party had promised him. It was the second time that the Democrat Party reneged on promises to Den.

Besides the conflict with Den, the Democrat Party also offended the Malay Muslims by its perceived insensitivity towards their religion and culture. Sampan Tongsamak of the Democrat Party, who was the Minister of Education at the time, proposed a policy to install a Buddha statue in every school.[237] As a result, in late 1987, Wadah left the Democrat Party to join a political group called "January 10", led by Weera Musik-kapong and Chalermpan Srivikorn. They established Prachachon Party in 1988. In 1989, the Wadah group under the Prachachon Party merged with other small parties to form the Ekkapap Party.

By 1992, Wadah had aligned with the New Aspiration Party (*Khwam Wang Mai*). One of the main reasons for joining the New Aspiration Party was that Chavalit Yongjaiyut, the party leader, promised to pay special attention to the problems facing Malay Muslims. There was a strong bond between the Wadah faction and Chavalit. When he was an army chief (1985–1986), Chavalit was in charge of the "Harapan Baru"[238] (New Hope) development project, which enabled him to understand the situation in Southern Thailand clearly. The Wadah group was able to pass more important bills under the rule of Chavalit's coalition than under any of the other ruling coalitions.

The number of seats won by Wadah members varied yearly. It ranged from five seats (the 1986 national election) to seven seats (the 1992/1 national election[239]). Jirayut Naowaket, the MP from Satun, never joined the same political party as other Wadah members, even though he played an important role in establishing the faction and remained actively involved in its meetings and activities.[240] In 1986, Jirayut was elected under the Kao Na party and under the

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[237] See Deep South Watch. "Democratic Party's failure: Lessons from handling Southern Thailand Violence" [In Thai - บทเรียนความผิดพลาดของประชาธิปัตย์กับไฟใต้], at http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/node/265, accessed on 2 April 2017.

[238] Harapan Baru means 'New Hope' in Bahasa Malayu language. Chavalit Yongjaiyut, the ex- army chief general turned politician, adopted the name for his new political party (the New Aspiration Party). Harapan Baru project is a government/the Royal Thai Army initiative to bring the marginalised people of Yala, Narathiwat, Pattani, Satun and Songkhla closer to the Thai state.

[239] There were two rounds of the national election in 1992. So 1992/1 means the first round of the 1992 national election which was held in March,1992, and 1992/2 means the second round of the 1992 national election which was held in September, 1992.

[240] Harapan Baru Dengan Bank Islam, pp. 206–209.

Muan Chon party in the 1992/1 election. Table 4.1 presents the name list of elected Wadah members from 1986 until 2005 when Wadah members were all defeated in the general election.

Table 4.1: List of Wadah members who were elected each year from 1986 to 2001.[241]

Year	Party	Province	Elected Candidate
1986 (27 July)	Democrat Party	Pattani	Den Tohmeena
			Preecha Boon-me
		Yala	Wan Nor
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
			Pibul Pongtanate
1988 (24 July)	Prachachon (Ekkapab)	Pattani	Den Tohmeena
			Preecha Boon-me
		Yala	Wan Nor
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
	Kij Prachakom (Ekkapab)		Seni Madakakul
	Ruam Thai (Ekkapab)		Prinya Jetapiwat
1992 (22 March)	New Aspiration Party (NAP)	Pattani	Den Tohmeena
			Muk Sulaiman
		Yala	Wan Nor
			Paisarn Yingsaman
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
			Prinya Jetapiwat
			Najmuddeen Uma
1992	New Aspiration Party (NAP)	Pattani	Den Tohmeena

[241] Najmuddeen Uma, "*Boht baht taang kan muangkhong kloom Wadah nai saam jangwat chai daen paak tai* [The Role of Wadah in the Three Southernmost Provinces of Thailand]", pp. 20–25. From all of the elected members that Najmuddeen listed in his book, I singled out only the names of Wadah members who were elected from 1986 to 2001.

(13 September)			Sudin Puyutanon
			Muk Sulaiman
		Yala	Wan Nor
			Paisarn Yingsaman
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
1995 (2 July)	New Aspiration Party (NAP)	Pattani	Sudin Puyutanon
			Muk Sulaiman
		Yala	Wan Nor
			Burahanudin Useng
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
1996 (17 November)	New Aspiration Party (NAP)	Pattani	Den Tohmeena
			Muk Sulaiman
		Yala	Wan Nor
			Paisarn Yingsaman
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
2001 (6 January)	New Aspiration Party (NAP dissolved to join Thai Rak Thai Party on 22 March, 2002)	Pattani	Muk Sulaiman
		Yala	Paisarn Yingsaman
			Burahanudin Useng
		Narathiwat	Areepen Utarasint
			Najmuddeen Uma

After the 2001 national election, Thaksin invited the New Aspiration Party to join the Thai Rak Thai party and on 22 March 2002, the two parties merged.[242] Wadah had remained

[242] Najmuddeen Uma, "*Boht baht taang kan muangkhong kloom Wadah nai saam jangwat chai daen paak tai* [The Role of Wadah in the Three Southernmost Provinces of Thailand]", p. 23.

in the Thai Rak Thai party until the attack on the military camp in Narathiwat on 4 January 2004. Consequently, three of the senior Wadah members—Den Tohmeena, Areepen Utarasint, and Najmuddeen Uma—were accused by Thaksin's government of masterminding the attack. When Den, Areepen, and Najmuddeen asked Thaksin for support in rebutting the accusation, Thaksin said, "How can I help you? Even your own group leader (Wan Nor) didn't bother to help you."[243] Thaksin's unsympathetic response angered Den, Areepen, and Najmuddeen. In 2007, they finally left Thaksin's party.

Wadah's Political Platform

Like any political party, the Wadah faction also had its own platform. The political platform drafted by Wadah members allows the faction to join any ruling coalition and aims to use whichever political party Wadah decides to ally itself with. If the political party accepts these policies, the agreement has to be recorded as a written statement by the party for publication. During its stay with the ruling coalition, Wadah accomplished several projects in the Deep South, including promoting and subsidising cash crops like rubber and palm oil, developing irrigation in remote areas, promoting small boat fisheries, and assisting in establishing an Islamic Bank.[244] Wadah's platform strongly encourages the political party to support education and religion for all Malay Muslims in accordance with Section 4, Section 5, and Section 25 of the 1978 Constitution of the Kingdom of Thailand.[245]

As for the Administration of State Affairs (governing principles for the Ministry of Interior), Wadah's policy was to promote fair treatment for Malay Muslims. Some of the policies called for Thai bureaucrats to end the exploitation of Malay Muslims. In other words, the Thai bureaucrats must treat the Malay Muslims with fairness and respect while trying to understand the traditions and cultures of the Malay Muslims. Another important policy was for

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[243] Interview with Areepen Utarasint at his home in Narathiwat, June 2012. Thaksin said in Thai, "ลูกพี่พวกคุณยังไม่ช่วยคุณเลย ผมจะช่วยอะไรได้".

[244] Section 4 – The Thai people, irrespective of their birth or religion, shall enjoy equal protection under this Constitution.

Section 5 – Any enactment or legal code that is against the 1978 Constitution is considered illegitimate.

Section 25 – All persons shall enjoy full liberty in professing a religion, a religious sect or creed, and to exercise a form of worship in accordance with their beliefs, provided that it is not contrary to his civic duties, public order, or good morals. See Wadah group (1994). *Pon ngan nai rob phee khong kloom ekkapap* [Annual Report of Wadah Accomplishment]. Thailand: Sinlapa Wannakam, p. 136.

[245] Ibid., p. 134.

Thai officials in the Deep South to learn the basic principles of Islam. Also, in accordance with the 1978 Constitution, the political party had to amend legal codes, regulations, and ministerial orders that were against the principles of Islam. For example, all school students, college students and government officials were allowed to dress in accordance with Islamic principles. The "Names Act" was also amended so that Malay Muslims no longer had to spell their names in two different ways and the names of villages remained as they were in the Malay language instead of altering them to sound like Thai names. Wadah assisted in the establishment of the Islamic College of Thailand and introduced reforms to the educational system in the southern provinces. This long list of achievements is significant because Wadah merely reversed several of the cultural mandates implemented by Phibun's government which caused grievances among the Malay Muslims. I have mentioned in Chapter Two that Phibun's *Rathniyom* or "State Convention", a nation-building policy, had alienated the Malay Muslims from the Thai state. Wadah simply advocated the restoration of Malay Muslims' living standards and rights to their original level before Phibun came to power. Wadah also helped standardise the Malay Muslim cultural norms and legalised their identity.

Wadah raised eight principles in relation to the political party administration. Three are particularly significant because they elaborate Wadah's ethics as the representatives of the Malay Muslims. Firstly, Wadah members will only recognise the authority of the political party's leader and will not be part of any conflict between groups within the political party. Secondly, if the political party in which Wadah is residing displays any unethical behaviour towards civilians, Wadah will withdraw from the party. Thirdly, the political party is required to support Wadah election campaigns both locally and nationally. Even after they are defeated, they should continue to assist other candidates in election campaigning.[246] As for the executive branch, Wadah aims to push the ruling coalition to promote decentralisation in the southern border provinces, so that they could have an autonomy similar to that in Bangkok and the Pattaya district. Another crucial principle for Wadah's political platform is that the party should provide a quota of at least one seat of the cabinet post for a Muslim representative from the Deep South. Becoming a minister or a deputy minister of any ministry would further enable Muslim representatives to drive policies for their Muslim constituencies.[247]

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[246] Ibid., p. 138.
[247] Ibid., p. 137.

In an interview with Areepen Utarasint, he said that Wadah considered seven provisions as their main accomplishments in resolving the problems of the Malay Muslims. The seven accomplishments are as follows:

1) Passed the Islamic Administrative Organisation Act of 1997.

2) Passed the Islamic Bank of Thailand Act of 2002.

3) Passed the Narathiwat Rachjanakarin University Act of 2003.

4) Amended the Ministry of Education regulations by permitting Muslim female students to wear the hijab in accordance with Islamic principles in 1995.

5) Expanded the curriculum of Islamic studies in public schools other than the schools located in southern border provinces.

6) Amended the "Names Act" regulation. Correctly spelled Islamic names equivalent to the name as it is spelled in the Quran in order to prevent the confusion of one person's names spelled in two different ways.

7) Provided monetary compensation to religious leaders of Morality Training Center at every Mosque.[248]

Wadah gained popularity in their constituency because of the above-mentioned achievements and also because Wadah had shown its supporters that it could contest the Thai state through the parliamentary system. Notably, the support from the New Aspiration Party's leader, Chavalit Yongjaiyut, was a buttress for Wadah's success from 1992 to 2001. In 2002, after the New Aspiration party merged with the Thai Rak Thai party, Wadah lost its momentum in achieving their political platform because Thaksin was not as sympathetic to the faction as Chavalit. Besides, the eruption of violence in 2004 also caused Wadah's popularity to plummet. The following section will explain and analyse the contributing factors to Wadah's downfall.

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[248] Wadah group (New Aspiration Party) (1998). *Jaak kham sanya soo kaan pathibut: 12 phee bohn tanon kan muangtai* [From Promising to Practicing: 12 years on Thai Political Path]. Thailand: Muslim News.

The Fall of Wadah

From its inception in 1986 to 2001, Wadah had never lost an election. However, the group suffered a humiliating defeat in the 2005 election. What are the factors that contributed to Wadah's downfall? According to collected datasets and empirical evidence, I have concluded that the fall in Wadah's popularity stemmed from four reasons: (i) the outbreak of significant violence (ii) its neutral stance in the aftermath of the violence (iii) its financial reliance on its political patronage, and (iv) internal strife.

Major Violent Incident

Any major violent incident that erupts in a constituency would critically undermine the creditability of the incumbent ruling coalition and incumbent politicians, causing the incumbent politicians to lose their MP seats in the next round of elections. An example of how the incumbent government was ousted by voters as a consequence of a major violent incident can be seen from the case of the 2004 Madrid terrorist attack. In her study of the electoral impact of terrorist attacks, Bali (2007) suggests that we need to carefully examine whom the terrorist attack may influence, also how and why these influences occur. Her research concluded that the effect of the Madrid terrorist attack in 2004 had an impact on voters' choices and increased voter turnout. Voters who were leftist and centrist changed their stance and voted for the opposition party. The timeframe of the terrorist attack also affected voting behaviour because the incident was still sharp and traumatic in voters' memory. Bali points out that the incumbent government led by José María Aznar from the People's Party had upset voters[249] because he continued to act contrary to their wishes by backing the war in Iraq. Moreover, he insisted that the ETA (Basque separatist organisation) was to blame for the attack while in fact the bombing had been carried out by al-Qaida.[250] The consequence of mishandling the Madrid terrorist attack case caused the voters to oust him from office.

A study by Gassebner, Jong-A-Pin, and Mierau (2008) also suggests that the severity of the terrorist attack could also cause the incumbent government to be replaced. Examining

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[249] Valentina A. Bali (2007). "Terror and Election: Lessons from Spain". *Electoral Studies*, 26: 669–687, accessed 18 April 2016, http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.electstud.2007.04.004.

[250] Giles Tremlett (2004). Monday 15 March. "Furious voters oust Spanish government," accessed 5 August 2017, https://www.theguardian.com/world/2004/mar/15/spain.gilestremlett .

more than 800 elections in about 115 countries over the period from 1968 to 2002, the study's findings show that a terrorist incident increases the probability of a cabinet change at the next election.[251] We can compare the studies by Bali and Gassebner, Jong-A-Pin, and Mierau to the incidents of Kruesae on 28 April 2004 and the Takbai incident on 25 October 2004 in Thailand's Deep South. In 2005, none of the representatives that ran for the Thai Rak Thai party were elected, including Wadah members.[252] From the data collected, there was no evidence that Wadah members came out publicly to support victims and their relatives after the Kruesae and Takbai incidents. Wan Nor, the Wadah faction leader and the then Minister of Interior, issued a condolence message to the victims but the tone was very neutral. He did not condemn the actions of the Thai security forces, which was what people from the Deep South of Thailand wanted to hear. Another example of the incumbent government losing the election after a major violent incident was in 1975 when the local Malay Muslims clashed with the Thai security forces. The 1975 Pattani mass demonstration strongly affected the outcome of the 1976 national election.

[251] Martin Gassebner, Richard Jong-A-Pin, and Jochen A. Mierau (2008). "Terrorism and Electoral Accountability: One Strike, You're Out!" *Economic Letters* 100: 126–129, accessed 10 April 2016, see https://www.academia.edu/16696603/Terrorism_and_electoral_accountability_One_strike_youre_out

[252] Only two MPs from the Wadah faction, Wan Muhammad Nor Mata and Areepen Utarasint, entered the parliament through the proportional system.

Table 4.2: The 1975 and the 1976 Election Results of the Southernmost Provinces.

Year	Province	Elected Candidate	Political Party
1975	Yala	Prasat Chaiyatho	Social Justice (SJP)
	Pattani	Thawisak Abdunlabut	Chart Thai (CT)
		Kamthorn Latcharoj	Chart Thai (CT)
		Sudin Phuyuthanond	Social Nationalist (SNP)
	Narathiwat	Siddik Sarif	Democrat (DP)
		Tavorn Chaisuwan	Social Justice (SJP)
1976	Yala	Usman Useng	Democrat (DP)
	Pattani	Sudin Phuyuthanond	Democrat (DP)
		Surapong Ratchamookda	Democrat (DP)
		Den Tohmeena	Democrat (DP)
	Narathiwat	Vachira Marohabutr	Democrat (DP)
		Siddik Sarif	Democrat (DP)
		Siri Abdulsalae	Democrat (DP)

As shown in Table 4.2, the incumbent politicians from the ruling coalition were all defeated in the 1976 national election. I argue that violence undoubtedly undermines politicians' power in their own constituency. The larger the magnitude of the violence, the more likelihood incumbent politicians from incumbent government coalitions will be voted out by their electorates in the following general election. Wadah was defeated in the 2005 national election after the Kruesae and Takbai killings which took place in 2004.

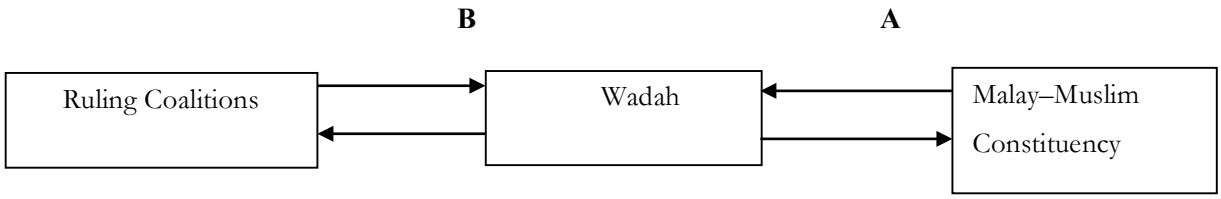
In the 2005 national election, all of the incumbent candidates from the ruling coalition were defeated. Voters opted for the candidates from the opposition party in retaliation for the incumbent government's mishandling of the violent incidents. Besides, the voter turnout in the Deep South of Thailand had increased from sixty-five percent in the 2001 general election to approximately eighty percent in the 2005 general election. This evidence supports the findings of Robbins, Hunter, and Murray (2013) who also found a clear correlation between terrorism and increased voter turnout. The research analyses voter turnout in legislative elections from over fifty democracies and more than 350 legislative elections in two different datasets that focus on distinct types of terrorism and different geographic areas of coverage. They concluded that terrorist incidents induce voters' emotions, such as fear, anxiety, and scrutiny, which trigger cognitive processes that push people to become more interested in the election, and therefore they are more likely to come out to vote.[253]

The Neutral Stance Strategy

The second reason for Wadah's defeat lies in its decision to remain neutral in the clash between the Malay Muslims and the Thai central government. Figure 4.1 illustrates the Wadah faction's complex role in the national political realm. Not only did the Wadah faction originate from a minority community's struggle against the centralised Thai state, but it also found itself wedged between the Thai government and the local Malay Muslims. Hence, Wadah was in an awkward position when managing conflicting interests from both sides.

[253] Joseph Robbins, Lance Hunter, and Gregg R. Murray (2013). "Voters Versus Terrorists: Analyzing the Effect of Terrorist Events on Voter Turnout". *Journal of Peace Research* 50 (4): 495–508, accessed 18 April 2016.

Figure 4.1 Relationship of Wadah in between its ruling coalition and its Malay Muslim Constituency.



When Wadah comes across conflicting interests between their predominantly Muslim constituencies and the central government, **A** is the Malay Muslim minorities that are voting for the Wadah faction to enter parliament, and **B** is the criterion when Wadah faction is under the control of the leader of the political party of which Wadah is a member. However, the part that forces Wadah to juggle with more complicated roles is mainly **B**. James Ockey points out that a small faction may be entirely or partly subsumed within a larger one.[254] There are three levels of patrons within one political party that small factions have to associate with. Small factions have to support their own faction leaders, the leader of the larger faction, and the leader of the political party who sits at the topmost level of the hierarchy. Following Ockey's observation, Wadah faction was subsumed under a larger faction that came under the umbrella of the political party. Then not only did Wadah need to support their own faction leader, but they also needed to support both the leaders of the larger faction and the leaders of the party, hence the limitation of Wadah's mobility to implement any policy that might benefit their electorate. Generally, Wadah faction would receive one to two cabinet seats when they were part of the ruling coalition. When they received cabinet minister positions, they were expected to work for the benefits of their political party patrons rather than their Muslim constituency. In the end, it seems that Wadah was leaning too much towards central government interests because it was fearful of losing cabinet seats. Wadah had to decide what was best for their political party patrons, but more importantly, it had to decide what was best for themselves. For Wadah, their primary objective was to obtain or retain seats in the parliament. Their second objective was to obtain cabinet seats. They needed to implement their political agenda to gain votes in the next election. It was not an easy task for Wadah to compromise both sides' interests (**A** and **B**).

[254] James Ockey (2004). Making Democracy: Leadership, Class, Gender and Political Participation in Thailand. Hawaii: University of Hawaii Press, p. 37.

While holding positions as elected MPs, Wadah members had to juggle the faction's position as the mediator between the Thai central state and their electorate cautiously. Wadah had to assure their constituents and the Thai state that it was not favouring one group over another. It was thus a difficult task for Wadah to bridge both sides' interests without displeasing one or the other. There were pros and cons with the neutral stance that Wadah was taking, however. On the one hand, it could secure Wadah's position as the mediator between its constituents and the ruling coalition. On the other hand, in the event of major catastrophic incidents that required an immediate response from Wadah, a neutral stance could lead to retaliation from the Malay Muslim voters as well as the central government. Indeed, Wadah's neutral strategy caused its Muslim constituencies to retaliate at the general election in the following year. Thaksin, the leader of Wadah's patron political party, refused to support Den, Areepen, and Najmuddeen, who were accused of orchestrating the attack on the Narathiwat military camp in January 2004. That said, for a small faction like Wadah, riding the turbulent tides of Thai politics was not an easy task, and taking a neutral stance appeared to be the safest strategy for Wadah at the time.

Financial Dependence on the Patronage Political Party

The third reason that caused Wadah's downfall was its excessive dependence on the patron political party, the Thai Rak Thai party, for organisation and financial support. Wadah was a small faction that needed a patron political party that could support it financially during the election campaign. Ockey points out seven types of factional ties in the Thai political party system: 1.) Ideological ties; 2.) Regional ties; 3.) Personal ties; 4.) Kinship ties; 5.) Monetary-based ties; 6.) Business ties; and 7.) Electoral ties.[255] In this case, "Monetary-based ties" are the factional ties that bind Wadah to their patron party. The ruling coalition is another crucial actor as Wadah faction needs their support to implement policies that benefit the Malay Muslims. They need as many votes from their political peers as possible to pass an act that benefits their Muslim communities. The ruling coalition agrees to support the party leader but the party leader also has to support the ruling coalition. The party leader needs all the factions in the party to be loyal to the party, but in return these factions want the party to provide them with funding for their provincial and national election campaigns. Ockey mentions that the "Monetary-based ties" are based on an exchange of benefit, so they are more cohesive than the

[255] Ibid., pp. 257–259.

"Regional ties" or the "Ideological-based ties", but they are still subject to betrayal.[256] The lack of financing for their election campaigns made Wadah decide to stay with a patron party that could support them financially.

The massive violence in 2004 had an immense impact on attitudes in the Malay Muslim electorate. One of the BRN active members informed me that his organisation mobilised voters against the Thai Rak Thai Party. He recalled that all they had to do was to say to villagers, "Look at what Thaksin has done to us". Although it was a simple message, it was enough to ignite villagers' anger and resentment against Thaksin and the Thai Rak Thai Party. One of my other interviewees told me that not too long after the Takbai incident, posters with a caricature of Thaksin's face could be seen everywhere in that district.[257]

Despite the ruling coalition's mishandling of the security situation in the south, Wadah remained with the Thai Rak Thai Party for the 2005 general election. Wadah's neutral stance after the Kruesae and Takbai incidents and its dependence on Thaksin's party for financial support caused disappointment to the Malay Muslim community. A BRN member told me that the organisation had high expectations given Wadah's performance from 1986 until 2001. According to senior BRN sources, several of their members supported Wadah prior to the Krusae and Takbai incidents and further evidence for this comes from the fact that BRN members acted as Wadah vote-canvassers. As a result of Wadah's detachment after the Kruesae and Takbai incidents, however, the BRN decided to stop supporting Wadah. He also said that Wadah was not sincere to their electorate. For him, Wadah members were no different than most other corrupt politicians. During my fieldwork, many of the interviewees believed that Wan Nor wanted to stay with the Thai Rak Thai Party because he received great financial benefits from Thaksin. Numerous people that I interviewed also believed that Wan Nor had made vast sums of money by corrupt means when he held a post as one of the cabinet ministers. There is no substantial evidence regarding the allegations, but the villagers would point at Wan Nor's luxurious house in Yala province as concrete evidence.[258]

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[256] Ibid., p. 258.
[257] As a high-ranking security officer, the interviewee wishes to remain anonymous.
[258] McCargo had also mentioned Wan Nor's mansion in his book (McCargo, *Tearing Apart the Land*, pp. 77–78).

The Internal Conflict

Fourthly, it was the internal conflict within the faction that caused Wadah to break down. Subsequent to the massive violence in 2004, not only were some of the Wadah senior members antagonised by Thaksin's insensitive policy towards victims of the Kruesae and Takbai incidents, but Den, Areepen, and Najmuddeen were also being victimised by the military's allegation that they were behind the raid on 4 January 2004. Den Tohmeena, Areepen Utarasint, and Najmuddeen Uma were also accused of being the masterminds behind various insurgency activities in Thailand's Deep South. During the interviews, none of them explicitly condemned Wan Muhammad Nor Mata for not supporting them when they were under scrutiny by the media and the public. Instead, they put more of the blame on Thaksin. Their action, however, was quite the opposite. They left Wan Nor and formed a new political party named Matubhum Party. They even invited General Sonthi Boonyarattaklin, a former General Army Chief and a Muslim from Bangkok, to be the leader of their political party. Areepen told me in an interview that Sonthi was the best candidate for the position because he had a strong linkage with the military and was able to financially support the party. Most importantly, Sonthi was Muslim, which made him perfect as leader of a Malay Muslim political party from Thailand's Deep South. In the 2011 general election, however, Matubhum Party won only one election seat in Pattani. In addition, none of the candidates in the Deep South constituencies (under Wan Nor's supervision) from the People's Power Party[259] were elected. Undoubtedly, Wadah's popularity had sunk to a record low in its political career.

The Question of the Democrat Party's Stronghold in the Deep South

This section aims to elaborate further on the internal ructions that brought down Wadah. No single political party has been able to consistently hold electoral power in the Deep South. There has always been a fluctuation between electoral strength of the Democrat Party and the Wadah group. Nevertheless, unlike their northern counterparts, the majority of the constituents in the three southernmost provinces of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat have often, but not always, given their loyalty to the Democrat Party. Many scholars claim that the Democrat Party controls

[259] People's Power Party or PPP is a successor party to Thaksin's dissolved Thai Rak Thai party.

the whole southern region of Thailand because of the 2005 and 2011 election results in which the Democrat Party won most of the constituencies. I disagree with this assessment.

There are four reasons that I wish to contest the claim of Democrat Party dominance. My argument is based on an analysis of the national elections held in the Deep South region in the past thirty years. First, as shown in Table 4.3, for the past thirty years the Democrat Party won only 37.5 percent of the total number of election years in this volatile region. Out of the total sixteen general elections in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat since the 1975 general election, the Democrat Party managed to earn more than fifty percent of the total seats only in six elections—which are the national election years of 1976 (100 percent), 1986 (62.5 percent), 1995 (54.5 percent), 1996 (60 percent), 2005 (91 percent), and 2011 (81 percent).

Table 4.3: Total seats won by the Democrat Party in southernmost provinces of Thailand.

Election Date	Number of Democrat Party winning seats/total of constituency seats	% Seats won by Democrat Party
January 26, 1975	(1/6)	16%
April 4, 1976	(7/7)	100%
April 22, 1979	(1/9)	11%
April 18, 1983	(0/8)	0%
July 27, 1986	(5/8)	62.5%
July 24, 1988	(1/8)	12.5%
March 22, 1992/1	(0/9)	0%
September 13, 1992/2	(3/9)	33%
July 2, 1995	(5/11)	54.5%
November 17, 1996	(6/10)	60%
January 6, 2001	(5/11)	45%
February 6, 2005	(10/11)	91%
April 2, 2006	(Democrat boycott the election)	N/A
December 23, 2007	(5/12)	42%

July 3, 2011	(9/11)	81%
February 2, 2014	(Democrat boycott the election)	N/A

Second, the Democrat Party's landslide victories in the 1976 and 2005 national elections resulted in part from massive violence in the years prior to the elections (Pattani Mosque mass demonstration in 1975, and the Kruesae and Takbai massacres in 2004). Because of the incumbent government's harsh responses, the Deep South constituents voted in favour of the opposition party—which turned out to be the Democrat Party both times. Therefore, it is unclear whether Deep South voters indeed wanted to vote for the Democrat Party or they just wanted to vote for any opposition party at that moment. Several of the insurgents that I interviewed mentioned their animosity towards the Democrat Party because the party never kept its promises made to the Malay Muslims. However, the Kruesae and Takbai incidents in 2004 shifted the Malay Muslims' animosity from the Democrat Party to Thaksin because of Thaksin's hawkish policy on handling the Deep South conflict. Thaksin also failed to deliver strong support or to take substantive responsibility to civilians who were affected by the violent incidents.[260]

Third, if we look back at Table 4.3, the Democrat Party won 62.5 percent of the majority seats in the 1986 general election. But when we take a closer look at all of the names of the candidates who were running for the Democrat Party, they were actually all Wadah members. Together as a group, the Wadah faction initially sided themselves with the Democrat Party when they first entered the national election race. Hence, it is invalid to conclude that the Democrat Party won the majority of the seats in 1986 because it is uncertain whether the Democrat Party won because of the party per se, or if they won because of individuals from the Wadah faction who were running under the Democrat Party.

Lastly, although they may have won the majority of parliamentary seats both in the 2005 and 2011 national elections in the Deep South region, the proportion of vote-share retrieved by the Democrat Party was less than in the previous election. In accordance with the 1997 Constitution, Thailand has adopted a Mixed Member Majority (MMM) system, which combined First-Past-The-Post (FPTP) voting and party list proportional representation. In

[260] The interviews took place at one of the safe houses and some restaurants in the Deep South region.

Table 4.3, with FPTP voting system, the Democrat Party won most votes in each constituency from the elections of 2005 and 2011. In 2005, the Democrats won ten out of eleven seats. In 2011, the Democrats won nine out of eleven seats. A quick glance at the statistical data shown in Table 4.3 may lead one to conclude that the Democrats won a landslide victory in both elections. The broader picture, however, offers a very different view.

As I mentioned earlier, the Democrat Party won most of the seats from the 2005 national election because of the public backlash against the incumbent government and its political candidates, which caused the Thai Rak Thai candidates to lose all of their seats. It was a windfall for the Democrat Party candidates. In the 2011 national election, it was the Wadah group's miscalculation that led all of the seats to go to the Democrat Party. Wadah was also plagued with internal strife after the violence of 2004. As a result, some of the Wadah members went their separate ways to form their own political party in 2011. The purpose of grouping up the Matubhum Party, Puea Thai party, the Prachatam party, and the Bhumjai Thai party as seen in Table 4.4 is meant to show the total votes that the Wadah members would have received had they remained united as a single group. The Wadah faction would have won the majority of the seats instead of the Democrat Party. It was a mistake for the Wadah group to break up, which resulted in a splitting of their votes.[261]

Table 4.4: A comparison of percentage of vote share (calculated per each constituency) between Democrat Party and Wadah group in the southernmost provinces of Thailand.

Province	Constituency	2005 Election Result		2011 Election Result	
		Democrat Party	Thai Rak Thai Party	Democrat Party	Matubhum + Puea Thai+ Prachatam + Bhumjai Thai
Pattani	1	43.19%	23.70%	38%	59%
	2	60.77%	12.4%	59%	40.71%
	3	50.98%	31.70%	26.25%	73.71%

[261] Daungyewa Utarasint (July 11, 2011). "*Oawasarn khong "Ekkapap": Kaan lueak thang 3 karakada kub bote rian khong chon melayu* [The End of "Wadah": Malay Muslim and the Lessons Learned from the July 3 Election]. Deep South Watch Organization, article online. Retrieved from http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/node/2108

	4	50.97%	24.66%	30.51%	68.78%
		46.62%	22.44%	46.78%	34.29%
		52.07%	35.11%	34.60%	54.22%
Narathiwat	1	30.85%	31.52%	30.70%	40.95%
	2	51.02%	29.46%	31.30%	39.19%
	3	52.85%	32.19%	69.96%	29.10%
	4	37.13%	30.90%	37.75%	60.42%
Yala	1	57.77%	33.66%	47.03%	47.11%
	2				
	3				

If we take a look at Table 4.5, the percentage of total vote share calculated based on total vote counts in all of the eleven constituencies, the Democrat Party's percentage of total vote share in the 2011 national election in the Deep South region actually diminished from the year 2005—from 48.50 percent of total vote share in 2005 down to 39.66 percent of total vote share in 2011.

Table 4.5: A comparison of the percentage of total vote share between the Democrat Party and Wadah group in the 2005 and 2011 general election.

	2005 Election (Total votes = 740,452)		2011 Election (Total votes = 822,560)	
Democrat Party	359,115	48.50%	326,280	39.66%
Wadah Group	206,727	27.90%	410,609	49.91%

Furthermore, in the 2006 and 2014 general elections, the Democrat Party boycotted the national election in protest against the Thai Rak Thai Party, which later changed its name to

"Puea Thai Party".[262] The Democrat Party won the majority of the seats in 2011 from FPTP system because the Wadah group were splitting up. Not only did the Democrat Party fail to gain total control of the Deep South region, but it also lost more of its total vote share in the following election. Thus it would be erroneous to claim that the Democrat Party has a strong hold on the southernmost provinces.

Conclusion

Given that Malay Muslims are marginalised within Thailand, Wadah's survival for nineteen years in a hostile political system was no small achievement. Some of the Wadah members like Den and Wan Muhammad Nor became well-respected politicians and are nationally well known. Besides their solid background of political involvement since their childhood and their contributions to their communities, some of the Wadah members have always been re-elected for several other reasons. They have strong backing from the party leader, and in some cases even the larger faction leader, who not only supports Wadah's ideology but also provides financial support to Wadah for their local and national election campaigns. Everything appeared to be going well for Wadah until the eruption of violence in 2004. Not only did the Wadah faction take a neutral stance and act indifferent towards the incidents, but it also continued to run candidates for national parliament under the name of the Thai Rak Thai Party, the incumbent party, in the national election following the violence. With the incidents still fresh in their memory, Malay Muslims in the Deep South punished Wadah members by voting against them.

As a result, I argue that violence does indeed undermine politicians' power in their own constituency. The bigger the magnitude of violence, the more likelihood incumbent politicians from an incumbent government coalition will be ousted by their electorate in the next general election. The Wadah MPs had also failed reach out to their electorates; they had failed to acknowledge the grievances the villagers had towards Thaksin; and the massive violence also

[262] The Constitutional Court dissolved two of the political parties founded by Thaksin Shinawatra because of their violation of the electoral laws. First was the Thai Rak Thai party (founded in 1998) that got dissolved in 2007. Thereupon, the former Thai Rak Thai members sought refuge to a new party, the People's Power Party (PPP). In 2008, the Constitutional Court dissolved PPP again for the same reason as the Thai Rak Thai party. The creation of Puea Thai party was the replacement for the PPP. See Chambers, Paul W. and Aurel Croissant (2010).

contributed to the internal conflict which split Wadah into different political parties, which in turn split the vote in the 2005 national election. Wadah members had miscalculated their political strategy while they were subsumed under the ruling coalition party. Similarly, Wadah had also underestimated the impact of the Kruesae and Takbai incidents on the electorate.

The Wadah faction failed completely to reassure its constituents that it could protect them against abuse and violence. I suggest four factors led to Wadah's downfall. The first factor stems from major violent incidents that critically undermined the credibility of the incumbent ruling coalition and its politicians and ultimately caused the incumbent politicians to lose their seats in the next round of elections. Therefore, I argue that violence undermines politicians' credibility in their own constituency. The greater the magnitude of the violence, the higher the likelihood of incumbent politicians losing their office in the next general election.

The second factor that led Wadah to its downfall was Wadah's neutral stance on the major clashes between the Malay Muslim community and the Thai state. It was clearly a big misstep on their part. None of the Wadah members explicitly condemned the violence perpetrated by the security forces. Instead, Wadah chose to remain silent. Their reluctance to stand up against the Thai government led voters in the Deep South to believe that Wadah was taking the government's side. The more support Wadah gave to central government policies that worked against the interests of the Malay Muslims, the more electoral retribution they would receive from their Malay Muslim electorate. On the other hand, if Wadah supported and defended local interests that conflicted with the interests of the state, they would incur political retribution from the central government.[263]

The third factor that brought about Wadah's disastrous election results was that Wadah relied excessively for financial support on their patron political party, the Thai Rak Thai Party. Ockey points out that the current set of political parties and factions in Thailand has created a system where corruption is an integral part of the political process. Parties have come to depend on the faction leaders for organisation and finance.[264] Wadah is a small faction that needs

[263] Daungyewa Utarasint (2005). "Wadah: The Muslim Faction in Thai Political Party". Paper presented to The Ninth International Conference on Thai Studies, Northern Illinois University, 3–6 April.

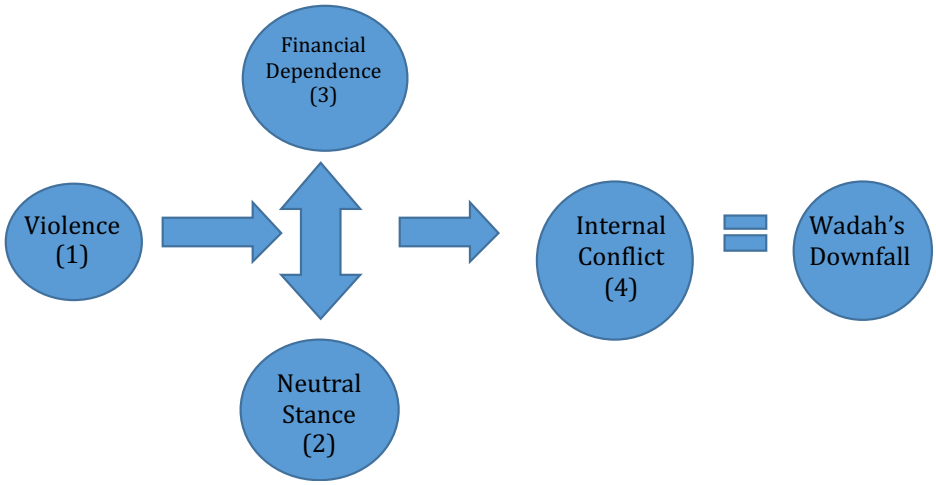
[264] James Ockey (1994). "Political Parties, Factions, and Corruption in Thailand". *Modern Asian Studies* 28 (2): 253–255.

financial support from other faction leaders to fund their election campaign. Because Wadah's financial strength is inadequate, relying on a heavily funded political party is inevitable.

An internal conflict within the Wadah faction is the fourth factor that contributed to its downfall. Soon after the violence outbreak in 2004, considerable friction arose between Den Tohmeena (Pattani) and Wan Muhammad Nor Matha (Yala), who is also known as Wan Nor. Because of this internal conflict, Wadah members split into four different political parties: some of the Wadah members formed a new political party (Matubhum Party, Prachatam Party) while some members would just join other existing political parties (Puea Thai Party, Bhumjai Thai), resulting in an electoral effect called "vote splitting" which ultimately led to Wadah's failure in the 2011 national election.

As shown in Figure 4.2, these four factors that contributed to Wadah's downfall are intertwined. The root of Wadah's failure is the third factor, which is their reliance on their patron political party. This was a significant drawback because it limited Wadah's capacity to fully serve their electorates. The financial support could be withdrawn at any time if the patron political party disagreed with Wadah's political platform, in which case Wadah would have inadequate funds for their election campaigns. The best strategy for Wadah's financial security was to avoid having conflicts with their patron political party.

Figure 4.2: Diagram showing the interlinking factors that led to Wadah's downfall.



Wadah thus continued to adopt a neutral stance as their political strategy to secure their cabinet posts and their MP seats. Wadah had to navigate carefully between their electorates and the political parties. Had violence not erupted, such a political strategy would have benefited Wadah in the long term. But the massive violence had erupted, and the neutral stance strategy actually backfired Wadah. The major violence situation is an intervening variable. It is the dynamic factor that interrupted Wadah's longstanding political strategy. It is also the dynamic factor that gave rise to Wadah's internal conflict, resulting in the splits within Wadah, which then caused Wadah's popularity to plummet.

Wadah senior members have difficulties passing on their duties to the next generation. They have not prepared the younger generation for succession. Although they have tried, the Wadah senior members had given up searching for or training younger members. Their attempt to train potential members called 'Wadah Youth'—most of whom are Wadah's vote-canvassers, supporters, or their close relatives—has not been successful. Some of the Wadah members told me that many of the politicians of the younger generation are too superficial to dedicate themselves to the cause of Malay Muslims. What younger politicians care more about nowadays is to gain benefits for themselves. There has not been any politician from the younger generation with the charisma and potential for true leadership. Whereas the younger

generations view is that Wadah senior members are narrowminded and too conservative to open up to newer ideas and opinions.

Moreover, the ongoing violence makes it harder for Wadah to recruit the next generation of members. After the 2004 Kruesae and Takbai incidents, Wadah lost not only their election seats but also their credibility among the younger generations. During my fieldwork, many of the villagers who are in their late thirties to late forties revealed that they were greatly disappointed with Wadah. They said that Wadah was no different than other self-serving politicians.

In the past two years, Wadah has lost two of their prominent members: Burahanuddin Useng and Paisan Yingsaman, both former MPs of Yala province, have passed away. The remaining Wadah members are now in their sixties and seventies. Den Tohmeena, the initiator of Wadah, is in his eighties. Although most of them are still in very good health, some have fallen ill. Thus far, there have not been any prominent younger members to continue Wadah's mission and regain Wadah's popularity. Wan Nor has lost his credibility as a leader. From several interviews with members of insurgent groups, vote-canvassers, and local politicians, it is difficult for Wan Nor to regain his popularity. The next generation of Malay Muslim leaders have some big shoes to fill indeed. The conflict and violence in the area in recent years have further weakened the Malay Muslims' trust, hence the impediment to unite together and form a political organisation like Wadah. The prospect of having the next generation of prominent representatives for the Malay Muslims seems to be gloomy.

Chapter 5: Violence and Vote Canvassers: Friends or Foes

The consensus among most of the politicians and high-ranking officials that I have interviewed is that vote-buying is the main problem in Deep South electoral politics. One of the retired senior bureaucrats observed that people do not know how to mark the ballot box until they receive money.[265] His tone was mocking of poor villagers. When I began my research, I accepted this view that 'vote-buying' was the chief electoral problem in the region. However, after I conducted my fieldwork and had a chance to talk extensively with villagers, I found that vote-buying was not the main driver of voting behaviour. Rather, it was violence.

Violence has persisted in the southernmost provinces of Thailand for more than a decade. Violent situations not only affect people's daily lives, but also disrupt the process of electoral politics and voting behaviour in the region. As I have mentioned in Chapter Three, Malay Muslim voters are reluctant to express their political view overtly, because of the Thai state's suppression. Violence alters the traditional dyadic (two-person) relationship between vote-canvassers (middlemen) and their patrons (politicians). Two independent variables affect patron-client relationships. The first independent variable is 'chronic violence', which I define as violent incidents that occur daily; and the second independent variable is 'massive violence'. I define it as one-off, large-scale incidents that cause mass casualties. Usually such incidents are clashes between the state authorities and civilians. As a result, 'massive violence' is likely to traumatize civilians emotionally and physically. For instance, the Kruesae Killings and Takbai Massacres in 2004 would be examples of 'massive violence'. The existing literature sheds little light on the consequences of chronic violence and massive violence on the linkage between patrons, vote-canvassers, and voters in the Deep South. Empirical evidence is particularly scarce. In this chapter, I hope to remedy this lack by investigating the complicated roles of these political agents when affected by violence in this region.

This chapter argues that when there is daily chronic violence, the chronic violence shifts the bargaining power away from politicians and towards vote-canvassers. It enhances the vote-

[265] The interview was conducted on May 28, 2012. The retired high-ranking official strongly condemned vote-buying. However, at the last stage of collecting my data, one of the interviewees mentioned that the retired high-ranking official himself was the one who called all of the government officials in the province to have a meeting with him. He asked all of the district chiefs and sub-district chiefs to vote for one particular party.

influencing power that vote-canvassers have on voters. Like chronic violence, massive violence further increases the bargaining power that vote-canvassers have over their patrons. However, in contrast to chronic violence, massive violence decreases vote-canvassers' influence on voters. In short, chronic violence promotes vote-canvassers' bargaining power vis-à-vis politicians, and vote-canvassers' vote-influencing power vis-à-vis voters; massive violence also promotes vote-canvassers' bargaining power vis-à-vis patrons, but diminishes vote-canvassers' vote-influencing power vis-à-vis voters.

In general, exchange relationships between vote-canvassers and politicians are known to be asymmetric. Scholars of Thai politics regard vote-canvassing networks as the most important factor in winning elections,[266] but also see vote-canvassers as having an unequal relationship with their patrons. Politicians are more powerful because they have higher socio-economic status with better access to information and resources than vote-canvassers. As James C. Scott puts it, "patrons are able to use their own influence and resources to provide protection or benefits, or both for a person of lower status (client) who for his part, reciprocates by offering general support and assistance, including personal services, to the patrons".[267] But there is an exception. Scott mentions that in special cases, if there is a circumstance in which that client "has highly valued services to reciprocate with, if force is available to clients, or if clients can manage without the patron's help, then the asymmetric relationship balance will be more nearly equal".[268] Thus, the degree of bargaining power that clients have with their patrons increase, and the asymmetric dyadic relationship achieves near-equilibrium. In the southernmost provinces of Thailand, 'chronic violence' and 'massive violence' are the key factors that bring the asymmetric relationship between patrons and vote-canvassers into balance. The chronic violence and massive violence eventually promotes the role of vote-canvassers more than when there is no violence involved.

According to my findings, the key reason that vote-canvassers acquire more power vis-à-vis politicians, and are able to exert larger influence on voters during chronic violence is because their strategic advantage, as middlemen, is enhanced. They have access to information

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[266] Anyarat Chattharakul (2010). "Thai Electoral Campaigning: Vote-Canvassing Networks and Hybrid Voting". *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 4: 67–95.

[267] James C. Scott (1977). "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia." In *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientalism*, edited by Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott et al. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 125.

[268] Ibid.

from the politicians and patrons who fund them as well as to voters on the ground, whereas direct communications between politicians and voters is disrupted by violent situations. Thus violence benefits those able to mediate between higher levels of politics and the lower level of the electorate. Information matters when it comes to electoral campaigning for both political candidates and for voters. For political candidates to conduct a well-organised plan for their election campaigning, the ability to access sufficient information regarding villagers' basic necessities and preferences is essential. For voters, having information about political candidates' personality, ideology, backgrounds, and policy packages helps voters make a decisive voting choice. Some studies suggest that candidates can persuade voters more with face-to-face interactions in a political campaign (Barton, Castillo, and Petrie, 2011, Hoffman et al., 1996). Violence interrupts the usual channels for communication between politicians and voters. Therefore, both politicians and voters have to rely more on vote-canvassers for information.

Massive violence, however, generates a slightly different result. When massive violence occurs, it raises already high levels of fear among civilians to extremes. As a consequence, after incidents of massive violence many villagers feel acute vulnerability and are reluctant to admit outsiders, including politicians, into their communities. Even during my fieldwork in 2012, villagers were often suspicious of my presence. In such situations, political candidates are wary of alienating voters or placing their own safety at risk by trying to enter villages, and thus rely more on their vote-canvassers to approach voters. But for voters, when massive violence occurs, it is readily apparent to voters. The massive violence is in and of itself a direct information for voters. Middlemen may not be able to convince voters as much as they wish. Information about the massive violence is in the news and in the conversations among their neighbours. Voters may even have experienced the incident themselves. The information is clearly visible for voters to make their own voting decision.

In other words, in a minimal to no-violence period, politicians can easily approach villages and have face-to-face meetings with them. Politicians can access information directly. In such cases, politicians still need vote-canvassers to help them mobilise voters for vote gains. But when there is continual chronic violence that plagues the region, the bargaining power that normally weighs more towards the politicians' side would instead lean more to the vote-canvassers' side. In short, politicians lose their advantage of bargaining power vis-à-vis vote-canvassers. Violence obstructs politicians' capability to access information as regularly as they

would like. Thus, vote-canvassers who can access information more easily than their patrons use 'information' as their bargaining power. Vote-canvassers can bargain for more material benefits and demand a higher social status from politicians. The lower the tier of vote-canvassers in the patron-client pyramid structure, the closer they are to voters, which is why they can access information from voters more easily than politicians who are at the top. To avoid confusion from other various definitions of patrons and the variations in roles, when 'patron' is discussed in this chapter, it signifies only politicians and political candidates. And to avoid ambiguity in the many different levels of clients, when 'client' is used in this chapter it will refer only to voters.

Examining the modalities and extent of vote-buying provides a good indicator of the power of vote-canvassers both to influence voters and bargain with politicians who use their service. Sombat Chantornvong has argued that the practice of vote-buying cannot be viewed separately from the context of the Thai political order.[269] In fact, the nature of the electoral system, the nature of the party system, the nature of political power and influence in provincial areas, and prevailing cultural norms are all intertwined with the widespread practice of vote-buying.[270] Vote-buying in Thailand's Deep South has increased steadily in the past twenty years, even more so in the past ten years. This information was based on my fieldwork research in interviewing political candidates, vote-canvassers, and villagers who were part of the vote-buying process.

Other than believing that the common practice of vote-buying is the sole problem of this region, several scholars and political candidates in the Deep South region also presume that religion and ethnicity play the most significant role in determining the outcome of election results. This Deep South of Thailand has a character distinct from the rest of the country. Several variables that distinguish electoral politics here from elsewhere include the influence of Islam, the importance of Malay identity and history, and the frequent presence of violence. In fact, religion and ethnicity play only a partial role as a political apparatus for vote gaining. But after 2004, violence plays a far larger role than religion and ethnicity in determining the

[269] Sombat Chantornvong (1993). *Leuktangwikrit: Panha lae taang ork* [Thai election in crisis: Problems and solutions]. Bangkok: Kopfai Publishing, pp. 13–16.

[270] William Callahan and Duncan McCargo (1996). "Vote-buying in Thailand's Northeast". *Asian Survey* 36 (4): 378.

outcome of the election results. More evidence on statistical results from 800 questionnaires collected across the Deep South region is presented in the next chapter.

In order to get a better grip on the importance of vote-buying as a measure of vote-canvasser power, I describe the current vote-buying situation and elaborate on vote-buying procedures in the southernmost provinces. I develop a conceptualisation of the patron-client relationship in violent contexts and then discuss the role of vote-canvassers, followed by diagrams of vote-canvassers' relationship with their patrons and clients when in the context of no violence, in the context of chronic violence, and in the context of massive violence. Finally, I deliver key analytical concerns and discuss more deliberately on the future prospects of Deep South electoral politics, in the hope of illuminating how electoral politics function amidst violence.

The Discourse of Vote-buying in the Deep South

Wiroj Pipitpakdee and Den Tohmeena, both former Pattani MPs, believe that the fierce contestation between General Kriangsak Chamanan, a former prime minister and Bunlert Lertpreecha in Roi-et province of 1981, which became known as "Roi-et disease", marked the beginning of the spending of significant amounts of money for vote gains that later spread to other provinces across the country, including the provinces in the Deep South.[271] Wiroj had mentioned that when he first entered the national election competition in the late 1980s, the practice of vote-buying was not yet rampant. The vote-buying in Thailand's Deep South has increased incrementally in the past twenty years, even more so in the past ten years, especially after the 2004 outbreak of violence. One retired village headman told me that during his twenty-seven years in the job (1984–2011), vote-buying increased from 100 baht per person in 1984 to 500 baht in 2011. Although the amount of vote-buying increased, the competition between candidates did not intensify because each vote-canvasser in the village knows one another and they know who works for which candidates. Hence, the vote-canvassers in the village avoid overstepping one another.

[271] Interviews, in Pattani province at their homes, June 2012.

One of the vote-buying techniques that I have come to learn about while conducting my interviews, which I would call "equal distribution", can be used as an explanatory term for one phenomenon of vote-buying. This vote-buying practice is one of the most important strategies for vote buyers in the Deep South. The term "equal distribution" does not mean that vote buyers have to hand out cash or gifts of equal amounts to every eligible voter in each village, but rather vote buyers distributing cash or gifts to every eligible voter in a village, particularly in those villages that the political candidate believes they can win. There are some psychological aspects involved with the practice of "giving and taking" money between vote buyers and voters. The act of giving money to one village, but not giving money to a village nearby can create animosity between villages. The villagers who were not given money feel that they were excluded or not seen as important. Villagers from different villages in the Deep South are connected to one another through relatives and friends, so if vote buyers were giving money in one village, contiguous villages would know by word of mouth. Thus it is crucial for vote buyers to equally distribute the money to all of the villages in a particular location. As research results from Leight, Pande, and Ralston in Kenya and the U.S. with 386 participants suggested, subjects who know payments are distributed but who are not part of the process respond negatively in their reaction to politicians, indicating a backlash from their exclusion.[272]

One of my interviewees, a housewife in village A, mentioned that her cousin received money from one of the political candidates but she missed out. She resented being excluded. Another example was the case of a housewife in one of the villages in Pattani province. She was complaining that all of the villages around her received money and gifts but not her village. She made a sarcastic comment: "Does that mean we are not important enough to earn some of their monetary gifts?" But there is an explanation for this case. I asked one of the vote-canvassers later about their vote-buying strategy and learned that vote-canvassers tend to overlook voters in small villages, especially villages that have a small number of eligible voters. There are only 100 households in village A. Political candidates and vote-canvassers have to determine how to minimise their outgoings (money and gifts to dispense) and maximise the returns (votes from voters). Violence may have clouded other information that the political candidates might have about voters' preferences and basic needs, but the number of households

[272] Jessica Leight, Rohini Pande, and Laura Ralson (2014). "Value for Money in Purchasing Votes? Vote-buying and Voting Behaviour in the Laboratory". Accessed at https://events.barcelonagse.eu/live/files/280-eae2014-leightpdf

and the number of eligible voters in each villages is prime information that political candidates already have to hand. Political candidates do weigh between the cost and loss. They know that vote gains from that village are not worth their effort.

Vote-buyers will put more effort into villages that they believe they have higher chances of winning. However, winning the election seats in the Deep South does not depend on large amounts of money for vote-buying. It does not mean political candidate A will win if he or she hands out 1,000 baht to each eligible voter. In fact, political candidate B might win despite giving only 300 baht to each voter, which is much less than what his opponent is spending. Every political candidate has to put into practice a well-planned election campaign. Political candidates would put maximum effort into villages that have swing voters, but they will ignore villages that they know are their competitors' strongholds. For example, one of the majority Thai-Buddhist villages that I visited reported that they had never seen any candidates from Wadah visiting their village. I later discovered that the Thai-Buddhist village was a stronghold of the Democrat Party. For their own electoral strongholds, political candidates would provide minimum cash or gifts to their loyal electorates. Showing a kind gesture to their loyal voters is a simple practice of recognition that patrons would normally express to their electorates.

The Analogy of the Stock Market and Vote-buying

When referring to the legal norm of commercial transaction in a modern capitalist world, exchange of goods and services can be guaranteed between buyers and sellers in a routine operation of market exchange. The compliance relationship between vote-buyers and voters, however, is uncertain because there is no guarantee that the receivers would reciprocate with the money givers.[273]

Vote-buying is similar to investing money in the stock market. Imagine when investors put their money into the market, surely they are doing so in expectation of substantial profits in return. Likewise, if political candidates decided not to fund vote-buying they would automatically be eliminated from the competition because vote-buying has become mandatory in Deep South electorates. This practice provides the political candidate with an entrance

[273] Frederic Charles Schaffer (2007). *Elections for Sale: The Causes and Consequences of Vote-buying.* Boulder: Lynne Riener Publishers.

ticket[274] to the election contestation. Those candidates who chose not to participate in vote-buying are hurting their chances of winning the election. For example, if political candidates B, C, and D engage in vote-buying, but political candidate Z refuses to do so because the practice is deemed illegal or immoral, the chance for political candidate Z to win the election seat is negligible. But if political candidate Z joins the vote-buying mainstream, the chance of Z winning the election seat might still be fifty-fifty.

Not only is vote-buying becoming the norm among vote-buyers, but electors have come to expect payments of money from vote-buyers. Buying votes or handing out gifts ensures that candidates are competitive. However, there is no guarantee that vote-buyers who spend huge amounts of money would have a better of winning—for voters have a mind of their own. To maximise the utility of their votes, electorates in the Deep South must consider many factors and variables. Hence, patrons can only speculate about the election results. The more information about voters a political candidate can obtain, the better their ability to calculate their chances for victory and how much needs to be paid. When there is chronic violence, substantive information about voters' preferences and basic becomes more difficult to obtain and candidates' uncertainty is heightened. Similar to investors who put their money in the stock market exchange with no substantive information in hand, a political candidate without information about voters would have to blindly bet on the amount of money they ought to spend to maximise votes.

The Strategy of Vote-buying

Distributing cash or gifts to the villagers is not easy or straightforward work for vote-canvassers in the Deep South, especially when there is chronic violence. Before vote-canvassers distribute cash and gifts to voters, they estimate the amount of cash they need personally before handing out the remainder to eligible voters in each household. A vote-canvasser told me that if a village was plagued by violence, thus making it difficult for political candidates to gain access, money would pour into that village in order to compensate for the lack of direct contact. In general, vote-buyers will invest more into villages that have the

[274] Edward Aspinall, "Inducement or Entry ticket? Brokers Network and Vote-buying in Indonesia", Paper presented on March 8, 2016 at Hedley Bull Centre, The Australian National University.

potential to return high numbers of votes. A fierce battle of vote-buying between political candidates occurs in any particular constituencies or villages that are mostly swing voters with a large number of eligible voters. But because violence obscures the channel for political candidates to get information about their electorates, they put more money into the villages. The uncertainty of winning or losing because of the lack of information causes the escalation of vote-buying. Vote-canvassers are, therefore, a vital source of information for political candidates.

However, as mentioned previously, to win election seats in the Deep South does not entirely depend on large amounts of money for vote-buying. The chance of winning also depends on the effectiveness of the vote-buying strategy. One of the vote-canvassers told me that in the 2011 national election, political candidate "R" hardly ever paid a visit to his electorate. However, he spent seventy million baht (about two million US dollars) on his election campaign and won the seat. In Pattani province, political candidate "N" paid 1,000 baht per eligible voter, where political candidate "M" paid only 500 baht per eligible voter. Turns out that political candidate "M" won the seat although he paid less than his counterpart. Hence, the amount of money spent is not as significant as how vote-canvassers and their patrons manage their money and gift-giving technique. In addition, time and schedule management are also very important for vote-canvassers and patrons to gain more votes.

The Manoeuvre of When to "*Ying Krasun*"

During the interviews, vote-canvassers had tremendous fun explaining the interesting terminology that they used when referring to the strategy and methods of vote-buying. One of the most common expressions is "*ying krasun*", which means "shoot the bullet" – "*ying*" or "shoot" refers to the act of paying while "*krasun*" or "bullet" stands for money. One of the village head chiefs in Sungai-padee district told me that there were two main techniques of "*ying*" or shooting the bullet. The first technique was "shooting" at a large group. The group has to have someone that the vote-canvassers have close ties with. The second technique was "shooting the bullet" at an individual household—ideally the target should be the father or the head of the household. From his experience, the village head chief mentioned that the first technique was by far the best approach for him.

Every individual vote-canvasser has their own technique. One of the second-tier vote-canvassers, Ahmad,[275] explained the tactic he used for vote-buying—which proved unsuccessful in the end. He told me that he sent out his subordinates (the third-tier vote-canvassers) to observe how much their opponents were handing out money to villagers. After learning that the vote-canvassers from the rival political party were offering 200 baht to each villager in one of the villages, Ahmad then ordered his inferiors to start "*ying krasun*" at 300 baht per person. He believed that by paying 100 baht above what his opponents were giving out would undoubtedly send his opponent out of the game. Ahmad was wrong. It turned out that Ahmad's opponent had saved their "bullets" for the very last moment before the Election Day. Ahmad's opponent shot an extra 300 baht that night in addition to the 200 baht he had already given out to each villager, bringing the total of "*krasun*" or bullets that Ahmad's opponent shot to each target to 500 baht. Ahmad mentioned that the tactic his opponent was using was called "*ying krasun song rop*" (ยิงกระสุนสองรอบ), which means shooting two rounds of bullets. Ahmad was very upset by this tactic. He said that they deceived him into believing they had spent all their money, which led him to think that he had outstripped his opponent by "shooting out" 300 baht for each villager.

Ringgit Money for Vote-buying Strategy

In the 2011 general election, vote-canvassers in the southernmost region adopted many different strategies. Political candidates from one political party came up with an idea of using Malaysian Ringgit for vote-buying. Paying in Ringgit was a new phenomenon and attractive to voters. One political candidate said Ringgit had never been used prior to the 2011 national election.

Given that Narathiwat and Yala share the border with Malaysia, it is common for people who regularly cross the border between the two countries, whether for trade or to visit relatives, to have Malaysian Ringgit in hand. Two official border-crossing checkpoints in Narathiwat province are located in Sungai-kolok district where people can walk across the border, and in Takbai district where people have to commute by ferry. The border-crossing checkpoint in Yala is located in Betong district. The Malaysian Ringgit is ideal for vote-buying for several

[275] A pseudonym is used to protect the identity of the interviewee.

reasons. One reason is that people who live along the Thai-Malaysian border use Ringgit and Thai baht interchangeably. The other reason is that it is harder for the Election Commission of Thailand (ECT) staff to investigate how much money has been withdrawn, by whom, from any of the banks in the Deep South area. Generally, the money will be given to political candidates from their political party patrons in the form of cash. The strategy started from an incident where there was a shortage of cash during their vote-buying frenzy. Finally, vote-buyers came up with the solution of using the Malaysian Ringgit to make up the cash shortage. What the vote-buyers did in the end was withdraw money from Malaysian banks. Many politicians in the Deep South have their banking accounts in Malaysia. Moreover, political candidates also support diaspora voters who are working in Malaysia and give them money to return home to vote.

Vote-buying from Villagers' Standpoint

During my fieldwork, I visited more than 140 villages in the Deep South and heard countless stories from villagers about vote-buying. The most recent national election before I started on my fieldwork was that of July 2011. The fieldwork research in 2012, which took place at the same time as the provincial administration organisation (PAO) election campaigning, indeed gave me invaluable experiences. Although my main interest was the national elections in the region, regional elections also proved beneficial to my study. My research assistant and I even came across one of the famous local politicians who at the time was running for president of the PAO. Surrounded by his armed bodyguards, the powerful and wealthy local politician was handing out money to the religious leaders (*imam*) and the sub-district headman. When we arrived at the scene, the group dispersed but we did get to see money being given to these vote-canvassers. This infamous local politician turned to us and asked, "Who are you? Why do you come here? And do you know who I am?" I replied that I knew who he was, so he laughed, "Of course, you'd better know who I am."

Another example was when my research assistant and I were interviewing villagers in one of the villages in Narathiwat province, a man whom we believed to be a vote-canvasser walked into the house and bluntly asked, "How many eligible voters live in this household?" The owner of the house replied, "Eight". The man then pulled out the money from his pocket and started counting money before giving it out. After that he ticked the paper that he had in

his hand with a pen. He gave 1,000 baht per eligible voter.[276] The amount of money given out per person during local provincial elections in the southernmost provinces of Thailand can range from 1,000 baht to 3,000 baht per person, whereas the money given out during the national election in this region can range approximately from 200 baht per person to 1,500 baht per person.

"Sin-nam-jai", a gratuity gift

During the survey-sampling questionnaires, some of the villagers were reluctant to discuss vote-buying in any detail. They would either look away or simply change the subject. Many villagers realised that taking money from vote-buyers was illegal, but some preferred to think of the money as "*Sin-nam-jai*" (สินน้ำใจ), which means "a gratuity gift." Villagers took the money that was given to them because they believed they were being paid "*Sin-nam-jai*" for giving up their time and for loss of earnings. It is indeed a sacrifice for villagers to take time off from work to go to the polling station. Many areas in the Deep South still have inadequate infrastructure. For example, in Sribunpot district in Narathiwat and several sub-districts in Bannang-sata district,[277] many villagers live in the mountains without access to public or private transport. Villagers are mainly blue-collar workers and agricultural workers who are often paid hourly wage-labour or earn their payment through the amount of agricultural products they can sell per day. For example, rubber tappers put in long hours and only get paid for the hours they have worked. If for some reason they cannot work for a day, that could mean that they would not get paid. It is thus very difficult for them to take time off and commute a long distance to the polling booth. The more time they have to spend travelling to the polling station, the more earnings they would lose. Therefore, villagers think of "*Sin-nam-jai*" as a kind gesture or gratuity money that they should be given if they were to sacrifice their time and

[276] The man who gave out the money to the owner of the household whom we were interviewing even asked us if we were part of the household.

[277] Sribunpot sub-district (Narathiwat province), many of the Bannang-sata's sub-districts (Yala province), and Janae district (Narathiwat province) were all districts located in a mountainous area. The area was known to be a former Chinese Communist rebel stronghold. Now it is well known as an insurgent group stronghold. Beside Betong district of Yala province, Sribunpot is the considered one of the farthest sub-districts of the Deep South of Thailand.

income, and spend money on gas and other expenses to turn out to vote. Villagers in the Deep South are make a rational calculation when it comes to weighing their cost and benefits.

Conceptualisation of the Patron–Client Relationship in a Context of Violence

Programmatic politics is an indirect exchange of public goods and policies for votes that takes place between politicians and voters. In the words of Kitchelt and Wilkinson, "politicians would enter an indirect political exchange through a device of policy packages that is likely to benefit a larger group of voters". [278] Under a strong democratic institution, programmatic politics would allocate resources, such as social insurance benefits, education, land, jobs and so on, to a wider range of voters instead of relying on the specific conduct of individual voters and small groups of voters. When comparing the process of democratic election campaigns between developed countries and developing countries, developed countries rely less on patron-client relations, also known as *clientelism*. For developed countries with strong democratic institutions and a proficient programmatic politics, the cost of programmatic party exchange relations is cheaper when constructing organisational machines because it needs fewer personnel to manage exchange relations.[279] In developing nations, the cost of relationship exchange is more expensive.

In developing countries where programmatic politics is inefficient, the importance of the patron-client relationship increases. Weak democratic institutions force politicians and political parties to depend more on the patron-client system instead of party platforms to win election seats. Besides, a direct exchange of particular needs and services for votes between politicians and voters is difficult if the election competition takes place in a large constituency. It is not possible for politicians to provide individual services to every single voter. As a result, there has to be middlemen or vote-canvassers to connect politicians with voters. According to Aspinall, to understand how politicians and voters exchange material rewards for political support, it is necessary to focus on the role played by the intermediaries.[280] Overall, Thailand

[278] Herbert Kitschelt, Steven I. Wilkinson (2007). "Citizen – Politician Linkages: An Introduction". In *Patrons, Clients, and Policies: Patterns of Democratic Accountability and Political Competition*, ed. Herbert Kitschelt, Steven I. Wilkinson et al. New York: Cambridge University Press, pp. 1–49.
[279] Ibid., p. 9.
[280] Edward Aspinall (2014). "When Brokers Betray: Clientalism, Social Networks, and Electoral Politics in Indonesia". *Critical Asian Studies* 46 (4): 545–570.

is a country that has weak programmatic parties and weak democratic institutions. Therefore, the importance of the patron-client relationship remains significant for both agents, more so for the patrons, because patrons have more manpower, and money power to achieve more relative gains.

Scott mentions that the pattern of patron-client analysis is commonly used by anthropologists to explain interpersonal power relations in small local communities.[281] The leadership-centred, informal local power groups, and the dynamic of reciprocal relationships, have long been the main characteristic that determines political activity in many Latin American and Southeast Asian nations, such as Argentina, Columbia, the Philippines, Indonesia, and Thailand. Landé points out that the structure of Philippine society consists of networks of patron-client relationships tying poor individuals or families to specific rich ones, landlords to tenants, and between those who are not related to one another.[282] In Thailand, the parliamentary system has always been fragile. Frequent military coups impeded the continuation of the democratic process in the country. Weak programmatic party politics forces Thai politicians to rely on clientelistic networks in their electoral constituency during an election. The southernmost provinces of Thailand also share these same characteristics with other parts of Thailand. According to McCargo, Malay-Muslim politicians in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat provinces follow the same path as other politicians elsewhere in the country and build powerful networks of vote-canvassers.[283] As a result of the protracted armed violence between the Thai state security forces and the insurgency movements, however, the patron-client relationship in the Deep South of Thailand is markedly different from the rest of the country. In addition, study of patron-client frameworks is often obscure and vague, as it varies across time and countries. The primary challenge in understanding the complexity of politics in the southernmost provinces is to untangle the connections between kinships, family, cliques, and networks, and to place them into a clearer picture for analysis.

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[281] James C. Scott (1977). "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia". In *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientalism*, ed. Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott et al. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 124.

[282] Carl H. Landé (1966). Leaders, Factions, and Parties: The Structure of Philippine Politics. Michigan: Yale University, p. 10.

[283] Duncan McCargo (2008). *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, p. 184.

The Power of Vote-canvassers

Vote-canvassers play a significant role in Thailand's electoral politics. They are political candidates' right-hand men. It can be said that "*hua-khanaen*" (Thai for 'vote canvasser') are by far the most powerful political instruments by which political candidates win elections in Thailand. Without the assistance of "*hua-khanaen*",[284] political candidates would struggle to win elections. Vote-canvassers are thus crucial in this sense because they are one of the major political components that explain how the patron-client system in Thailand is functioning. Vote-canvassers might not directly influence voting behaviour, but they are an element in the wheel that drives how voters are voting when massive violence arise. The vote-canvassers I encountered in the Deep South had distinctive personalities. Some were boastful and talkative, some had an intimidating and secretive character, and others were humble and friendly. A tier one vote-canvasser told me that it is crucial for political candidates to have powerful and influential vote-canvassers under their wing to help them win a seat. The ideal vote-canvasser is someone who is well respected in the village, such as a spiritual leader or someone who has a big extended family.[285]

Anyarat Chattharakul mentions that vote-canvassers in Thailand are mainly sustained by long-term dyadic relationships. The first of these is the hierarchical relationship between the vote-canvassers and the political candidates. The second is the horizontal relationship between the vote-canvassers and the voters.[286] It is important for vote-canvassers to collect data on the total number of eligible voters in each household, which village is loyal to which political party, who is the vote-canvasser of this village, and who he is working for. Experienced vote-canvassers would factor all this information into their vote-buying strategic plan.

[284] The words "*hua-khanaen*" and 'vote-canvassers' will be used interchangeably throughout this chapter.
[285] The person who gave me an interview wants to remain anonymous. He is a former insurgent who is now retired and has become one of the powerful and influential vote-canvassers.
[286] Anyarat Chattharakul (2010). "Thai Electoral Campaigning: Vote-Canvassing Networks and Hybrid Voting". *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 4: 67–95.

The Hierarchy of Vote-canvassers

Figure 5.1 explains the hierarchy levels of the relationship between patrons and clients in the Deep South region. The following chart derives from James C. Scott's[287] pyramid structure on patron-client relationships. The structure of the chart is universal. It is so widely known that not only scholars who are studying patron-client relationships would base their explanations on it, but one of the village chiefs in Dusong-ngor sub-district whom I interviewed actually drew me a similar chart to explain how vote-canvassers organised their activity under their patrons in his constituents. With no knowledge of the theory of clientelism, the village chief explained the relationship between vote-canvassers and political candidates using a diagram remarkably similar to the one presented by James C. Scott.

Studying politics in the Philippines, Kerkvliet argues that we can better understand everyday politics by going beyond the patron-client framework.[288] This view is supported by Walker, who believes that "electoral contests are embedded in local social relationships, and values of discussions about 'elections', 'candidates', 'policies', and 'campaigns' are a regular feature of day-to-day politics in the village".[289] Walker argues that "everyday politics" and the formal politics of electoral contests cannot be distinguished from one another. The practices of a village's "everyday politics" in fact spill over into the realm of electoral contests, or what Walker calls "rural constitution".[290] Walker raises a very important point. Most Thai studies have failed to verify with substantive empirical findings that villagers are uneducated so they are less interested in policy issues, and easily swayed by the power of money. These studies tend to use the patronage system to understand rural politics. The aggregate data that I have collected from the rural provinces of Thailand's deep south supports Walker's claim. Villagers incorporate electoral politics into their way of life and their everyday politics. Events like a daily meeting at a teashop in the morning, a religious ceremony, a bird-singing contest, a

[287] James C. Scott (1977). "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia". In *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientalism*, ed. Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott et al. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, pp. 123–145.
[288] Benedict J. Tria Kerkvliet (1995). "Toward a More Comprehensive Analysis of Philippine Politics: Beyond the Patron-Client, Factional Framework". *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 26 (2): 401–419.
[289] Andrew Walker (2008). "The Rural Constitution and Elections in Northern Thailand". *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 38 (1): 87.
[290] Ibid.

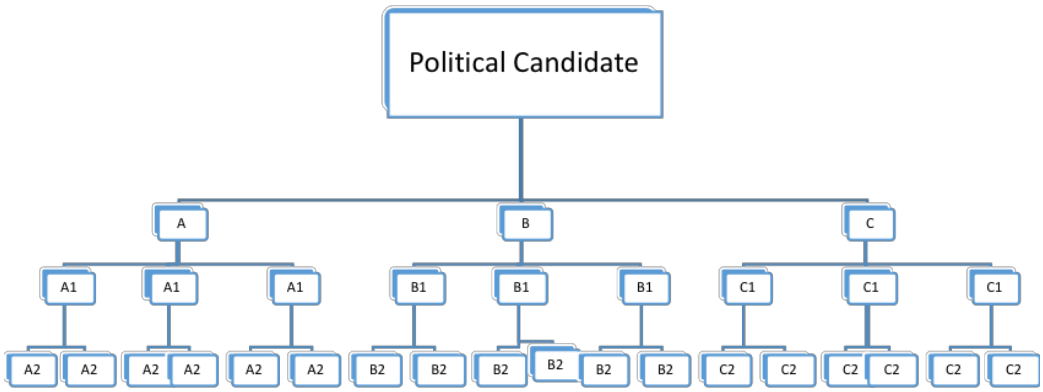
football match, for instance, are events where one can observe vigorous discussions among villagers about politicians, policy issues, local politics, and military operations in the region.

However, I agree with Walker that to uncover the complexity of the Deep South's entangled relationships between political agents during the election season, the patron-client framework provides a useful starting point. The study of the patron-client relationship ought not to be used as a catch-all mechanism to examine the phenomenon of rural politics. Whether the patron-client framework should be dismissed entirely from our focus depends on the subject of the research. My research focus in this chapter is about relationships between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters. To understand politics in the southernmost provinces, we need to bring the patron-client relationship into our analysis. The cultural importance of having good connections, a wide range of networking, and hierarchical status is strongly embedded in Malay Muslim society. Kitchelt and Wilkinson suggest that "ethnicity may be a particularly powerful bond of network construction and political organization promoting clientelistic building".[291] My own experience during the fieldwork supports this claim. When approaching random people for an interview, the most common questions put to me were, "Who are you related to?" or "How did you get here? Do you know someone?" If my interviewee happened to be familiar with my connection, then they would happily cooperate. However, if my connection was unknown to them, they would either be reluctant to answer any questions or simply refuse be interviewed. Having local connections is apparently very important.

In line with my research question, this section aims to untangle the complexity of kinships, family, cliques, and networks relationships before reconstructing them into a simpler chart. I also aim to avoid the confusion of using the terms 'patron' and 'client' interchangeably when discussing those various roles during the electoral participation process. Therefore, I intend to use the term 'patron' only when referring to politicians or political candidates. As for the intermediate levels between the- patrons at the top and voting clients at the bottom, I apply the term 'vote-canvassers'. According to Figure 5.1, A, B, and C is the first level of vote-canvasser which I will term 'vote-canvassers tier 1'; A1, B1, and C1 is what I will refer to as 'vote-canvassers tier 2'; and A2, B2, and C2 is what I shall refer to as 'vote-canvassers tier 3'.

[291] Kitchelt and Wilkinson, "Patrons, Clients, and Policies," p. 34.

Figure 5.1: Diagram Illustrating the three levels of vote-canvassers under the wing of one political candidate.



Like anywhere else in Thailand, vote-canvassing networks in the Deep South perform most of the strategic planning for vote-gaining, persuading voters, and distributing gifts and cash to voters. The level of vote-canvassers is not distinguished by their occupations but by how close they are to their patrons, how important their social status is, and how much power they have over voters in their area. The farther down the hierarchy of vote-canvassers from the patrons, the lesser their importance. Insurgents can fill positions in any of these vote-canvasser tiers, but they would mostly be in the last tier: the tier that is in the closest relationship with voters and the farthest relationship from their patrons.

The first tier of vote-canvasser is where A, B, C are situated. These are the highest levels of vote-canvassers to their patrons (political candidate), and they are the closest and most loyal to their patrons. The first-tier vote-canvassers have long-term relations with their patrons. They also have a direct and face-to-face access to the political candidate. In other words, the relationship between vote-canvasser tier 1 and political candidate is a dyadic relationship. Prajak Kongkirati called the first tier of vote-canvasser "chief vote-canvassers",[292] whereas Anyarat termed it "core vote-canvassers".[293] They can be religious leaders, influential *Kamnan* (Sub-district Chief), President of the Provincial Administration Organization (PAO), high-

[292] Prajak Kongkirati (2013). "Bosses, Bullets and Ballots: Electoral Violence and Democracy in Thailand, 1975-2011". PhD diss., The Australian National University, p. 81.
[293] Anyarat Chattharakul (2010). "Thai Electoral Campaigning: Vote-Canvassing Networks and Hybrid Voting". *Journal of Current Southeast Asian Affairs* 4: 74.

ranking bureaucratic officials (governor of the province), or high-ranking military personnel[294] in the area. Some of the vote-canvassers in the first tier are actually retired insurgents. They are faithfully devoted to their patrons. James C. Scott refers to this level of vote-canvassers as patron-client cluster because they are the clients who are directly tied to their patrons.

Second tier vote-canvassers are middlemen or brokers situated between the patron-client cluster and the lowest level of vote-canvassers. This level of vote-canvassers occasionally meets with political candidates directly, and many of them are well known to the political candidates. However, they are not as close to their political candidates as the vote-canvassers in tier 1. These second tier vote-canvassers can be the *ustaz* or *imam* in the village, village headman, local politicians, bureaucrat officials, military officers, or policemen.

At the third tier of vote-canvassers, where A2, B2, and C2 are located, the level of importance to the patron is diminished. The lower the tier of the vote-canvassers, the more disconnected they are from their patron. This tier is the least loyal to the patron. They can potentially switch from one patron to another if the move provides them with more material rewards. The third-tier vote-canvassers in the Deep South of Thailand fall into what Aspinall categorises as "opportunist brokers".[295] Their main goal is to seek short-term material gains during the course of an election campaign. Although not as powerful as the first and the second-tier vote-canvassers, third tier vote-canvassers are the principal agents who have the closest relationship with voters. When chronic violence occurs, this tier of vote-canvassers becomes more vital to the political candidate, giving them more bargaining power with their patrons. They can demand more material rewards from their patrons in exchange for villagers' information. Some of the third-tier vote-canvassers may have a chance to meet with their patrons occasionally, but patrons or political candidates often do not remember their third tier vote-canvassers. One insurgent revealed to me that he had been a vote-canvasser to one of the politicians in the Deep South. He had met the patron only once, however, and was not certain if the patron would recognise him at all.

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[294] From interviewing military officers in the Deep South, it turns out that both major political parties in Thailand's Deep South have military officers assisting them with vote mobilising. The ranking of the military officers are as high as Major General.

[295] Edward Aspinall (2014). "When Brokers Betray: Clientalism, Social Networks, and Electoral Politics in Indonesia". *Critical Asian Studies* 46 (4): 545–570.

McCargo argues that depicting Malay Muslim communities as having close ties and being resilient is too idealistic. In the southernmost provinces of Thailand, Malay Muslim communities are divided between the traditionalist school, known as *khana kaw* (คณะเก่า) and the rise of the Wahhabis, known as *khana mai* (คณะใหม่). [296] This division leads to confrontation and an erosion of the ties within the Malay Muslim communities.[297] There is no denying McCargo's findings. However, rather than searching for what causes violence, my primary concern is to step back to observe the bigger picture on how violence affects electoral politics and voting behaviour. When election season arrives, religion is not the main explanation for the erosion of ties within Malay Muslim communities. The split within the Malay Muslim communities because of the division in Islam still plays a smaller role in voting decisions than violence does. From my survey samplings collected from many villages, the ties between Malay Muslim communities among their cliques, friends and relatives were affected badly during the elections because of the violence. So when we add the factor of violence to our analysis, the chronic violence appears to strengthen the bargaining power of vote-canvassers vis-à-vis their patrons. As we shall see in the following section, I have developed a diagram to illustrate how important the role of vote-canvassers has become because of chronic violence.

Diagrams of the Function of 'Vote-canvassers' in the Deep South

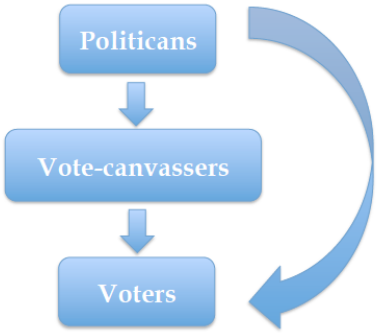
The three diagrams shown below represent a comparison of the linkages between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters. The first situation is when there is no violence. The second situation is when there is chronic violence. The third situation occurs when there is massive violence. Our main focus is to examine how these three situations affect the relations between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters. More specifically, I wish to examine the role

[296] The Traditionalist School adhere to the teachings of the classical Sunni law schools and also incorporate Malay and sometimes pre-Islamic spiritual and supernatural components into their practices. The Wahhabis have a stricter, more puritanical approach to Islamic law and culture, rejecting all practices that they believe do not have a sound basis in Islamic scripture or Prophetic example. In Deep South of Thailand, the traditionalist viewed the reformist as a threat to their practices and beliefs. See Joseph Liow (2009). *Islam, Education and Reform in Southern Thailand: Tradition and Transformation*. Singapore: Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, pp. 77-80.

[297] Duncan McCargo (2008). Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand, p. 20.

of vote-canvassers, their bargaining power and vote-influencing power when they are working under these three different conditions.

Figure 5.2: A diagram that represents the linkage between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters when there is no violence in the region. The arrow represents a connection in which politicians can interact directly with voters.



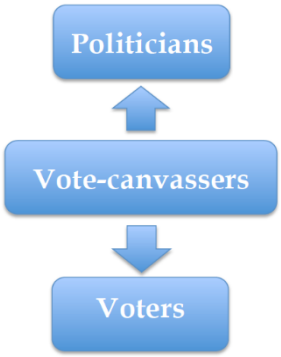
The first diagram (5.2) represents the role of vote-canvassers and their linkage with politicians and voters when there is either no violence or only a low level of violence. I have used the year 2004 as a benchmark to distinguish between a low level of violence and chronic violence in the Deep South. There has always been fighting between the Thai state security forces and insurgents in this area for the past one hundred years, but the violence never reached massive levels. After 2004, large-scale violence started to affect innocent civilians, causing higher numbers of casualties than ever before. Before the outbreak of violence in 2004, programmatic politics and democratic institutions were stronger and more dependable. As I have mentioned in Chapter Four about the Wadah faction, political candidates in the Deep South were conducting a promising election campaign complete with policy packages related to ethno-religious basic needs. Some policies were successfully implemented: for example, the Islamic Administrative Organization Act of 1997, the Islamic Bank of Thailand Act of 2002, and so forth.[298] Nevertheless, clientelism continues to dominate the political system in the Deep South, as it does elsewhere in Thailand. Most political candidates are incumbent politicians. It

[298] Wadah group: New Aspiration Party (1998). "From Promising to Practicing: 12 years on Thai Political Path" [In Thai - *จากคำสัญญาสู่การปฏิบัติ: 12-ปี บนถนนการเมืองไทย*]. Thailand: Muslim News.

is a tough task for newcomers to break into the established and powerful vote-canvasser networks and the wide array of connections enjoyed by incumbent politicians.

Figure 5.2 shows the top-down relationship between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters at the time when there was no violence or when there was a low level of violence before 2004. In a more peaceful context, the power of politicians increased vis-à-vis vote-canvassers. Oftentimes, vote-canvassers needed financial and political support to help buttress their social status in the Malay Muslim community. Politicians could impose their power on to their vote-canvassers, and vote-canvassers would carry out their mission, trying to influence voters to vote for their patrons. The arrow pointing down from the top (politicians) to vote-canvassers and from vote-canvassers to voters represents this dynamic. The side arrow in Figure 5.2 marks the existence of direct interactions between politicians and voters. Politicians personally visited villages on special occasions such as wedding ceremonies, funerals, and religious ceremonies. Villagers' petitions against corrupt local officials would also bring politicians and voters closer together.

Figure 5.3: A diagram that represents the linkage between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters when in the midst of chronic violence.



The patron's role becomes more volatile under chronic violence. If the patrons are the incumbents, their influence on the constituents would dwindle because the programmatic politics and democratic institutions have been weakened by chronic violence. As a result of violence, the incumbents cannot carry out their promises—whether policy packages, distribution of private goods or allocation of infrastructure facilities—nor can they return

favours to their electorates. Not only does chronic violence make the status of patrons (political candidates) less secure, it also prevents them from accessing villages and acquiring the necessary information. Maisrikrod and McCargo noted that direct contact between politicians and voters in Thailand is limited.[299] The chronic violence in the Deep South renders the already weak connection between politicians and voters even more tenuous. Before 2004, it was common for political candidates to set up a stage in villages for election campaigning at night. After finishing up their work, villagers would spend their free time listening to speakers on stage. For villagers, engaging with staged public talks was another channel for them to update themselves on current affairs. Sometimes political speeches given by political candidates would continue past midnight, but crowds of people still stayed around.[300] After 2004, however, political candidates can no longer give public talks at night when villagers are mostly free from their daily work, or even set up a stage for election campaigning. The threat can either come from the Thai state authorities or the insurgents. It is no longer safe for both politicians and voters. Simply put, the longer the chronic violence continues, the weaker prospects for programmatic politics and the more bargaining leverage vote-canvassers will have vis-à-vis patrons, which is the case in the Deep South at present. According to an Asia Foundation report, the provincial GDP per capita in the three provinces of the Deep South declined by around twenty percent in the twenty-five years prior to the 2004 violence outbreak.[301] Despite rising socio-economic inequalities from 2004 to 2009, the distribution of vote-buying money, however, has increased. It is estimated that money given out to voters during this period ranged from 200 baht per person to 1,500 baht per person in some villages. The scale of vote-buying in the Deep South is slightly higher than that in other regions of Thailand. On average, the money given out to villagers in the Northeast and the North of Thailand in 2007–2011 ranged between 150 to 300 baht.[302] In short, economic growth in the Deep South decreased in inverse proportion to the amount of money spent on vote-buying.

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[299] Surin Maisrikrod and Duncan McCargo (1997). "Electoral Politics: Commercialisation and Exclusion". In *Political Change in Thailand: Democracy and Participation*, ed. Kevin Hewison. London: Routledge, p. 136.

[300] Bae Ma, in his 70s, a local politician of Pattani province, gave me an interview at his home in Yaring district. He mentioned Seni Madakakul and Siddik Sharif by far were the best stage speakers in the old days.

[301] Adam Burke, Pauline Tweedie, and Ora-orn Poocharoen (2013). "The Contested Corners of Asia. Subnational Conflict and International Development Assistance: The Case of Southern Thailand." The Asia Foundation. See https://asiafoundation.org/resources/pdfs/SouthernThailandCaseStudyFullReport.pdf , accessed 17 May 2017.

[302] Neeranuch Niamsaap (2007). "Vote-buying: Problem or Mythology in Thai Society?" (In Thai). *Prachatai* newspaper, 7 November. See https://prachatai.com/journal/2007/11/14740 accessed 23 May 2017. Somjit Rattana-

I observed that many of the political candidates and the first-tier vote-canvassers were afraid to enter red-zone villages. The way they expressed this fear indicates how violence has significantly affected the meeting between patrons and their electorates. While collecting data in Narathiwat, one of my informants, who was a first-tier vote-canvasser, refused to go to two of the red-zone villages in Ruesoh district. He insisted that I change to another village. The likelihood of getting ambushed by assailants when travelling through small roads between villages frightened him. Another key informant who was also a first-tier vote-canvasser urged me to leave one of the villages in Ra-ngae district. He was uncertain of our safety had we stayed longer in the village. Keeping in mind that my fieldwork was in 2012, eight years after the 2004 violence outbreak, their fearful reactions reflected the psychology of people living with chronic violence. In one village in Pattani, the headman told me that politicians used to visit the area regularly. After the violence in 2004, they hardly visited any more. Instead, politicians would ask their vote-canvassers to meet them in private at their homes. Moreover, politicians no longer set up a stages for election speeches in the village like they once did. Politicians would now ask the *imam* to use the mosque, after the *khutbah*[303] on Fridays, for their election campaigning stage. Politicians would only schedule talks at their regular strongholds, areas that are more familiar and secure for them. They would let their vote-canvassers work on their behalf in the riskier red-zone areas.

Hence, these patrons would have to rely more on their clusters of vote-canvassers. If we follow the patron-client pyramid structure,[304] along the top-down vertical ties, vote-canvassers or middlemen have a closer tie to voters who are situated at the bottom of the pyramid. The third level of vote-canvassers in the pyramid structure would eventually grasp that they have leverage power to bargain for more from their patron because the top patron does not have much access to the village. The vote-canvassers' bargaining of power vis-à-vis patrons involves demanding more material rewards, or even threatening that they would switch

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Udomchoke (2009). "Vote-buying in Sakon Nakorn Province". (In Thai). *Sakon Nakhon Rajabhat University Journal* 1(2): July–December 2009. See http://snrujst.snru.ac.th/wp-content/uploads/2016/08/SNRU-JST-1-2-8.pdf accessed 23 May 2017. Suthikarn Meechan (2012). "Vote-buying in the Northeast Region: A Case Study of Maha-Sarakham Province". (In Thai). See http://www.journal.msu.ac.th/upload/articles/article23_60843.pdf accessed 23 May 2017.

[303] Khutbah is public preaching in the Islamic tradition. The sermons are delivered in the mosque on Fridays, after the *dhuhr* (noon) praying time.

[304] James C. Scott (1977). "Patron-Client Politics and Political Change in Southeast Asia". In *Friends, Followers, and Factions: A Reader in Political Clientalism*, ed. Steffen W. Schmidt, Laura Guasti, Carl H. Landé, and James C. Scott et al. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press, p. 128.

their loyalty to another patron. When I asked one of the village chiefs in Pattani if there was any bargaining for more rewards from their patrons in the village, he answered no. But when I asked if he had ever heard of bargaining for more material rewards in nearby villages, he looked straight at me before answering yes. Significantly, the neighbouring sub-district was one of the most infamous red-zone areas. The village chief suggested that I should not travel to that sub-district if I did not need to.

At the horizontal level, third-tier vote-canvassers would occasionally form a collective group between villages to bargain for more material goods from their patrons. Many groups of third-tier vote-canvassers, especially in the dangerous red zone areas like Panarae and several subdistricts of Yaring, would adopt this approach. One of the village heads told me that she had bargained for more money from her patron. The female village head, who was a Thai Buddhist in her fifties, recounted how she managed to get more money from her patron. Claiming that the risk to her safety had increased after the bridge across the village was bombed, the village head asked for more money to cover the high risk she had to take. She also told me that the village chiefs from each village in the same township, both Thai Buddhists and Malay Muslims who were all good friends, teamed up to collect resources from their patrons before sharing the material gains between them equally. I shall term it "payment pooling." One of the main reasons for the 'payment pooling' practice is to prevent their patrons from discovering that they were being deceived. Not only does the collective action of 'payment pooling' enable the third-tier vote-canvassers to maximise material rewards from their patrons, but it is also a joint practice among the third-tier vote-canvassers to mobilise voters to vote proportionally to the number of political candidates who provide them with money. The method is simple. If, say, there were five political candidates in a constituency, each political candidate from each political party would distribute their money to their third-tier vote-canvassers. It is the third-tier vote-canvassers' duty to distribute the material rewards to voters. Some political candidates might provide 500 baht per eligible voter, another political candidate might provide 1,000 baht, and some other might give out 200 baht. The practice of 'payment pooling' basically is to pool all the money that all of the third-tier vote-canvassers received from their patrons, then deduct money from the pool share and share it among the team members. The final step is to distribute the remainder evenly to individual voters. Unbeknownst to the political candidates, the collective action of 'payment pooling' is one of the mechanisms that the third-tier vote-canvassers adopt to maximise their benefits to themselves in situations

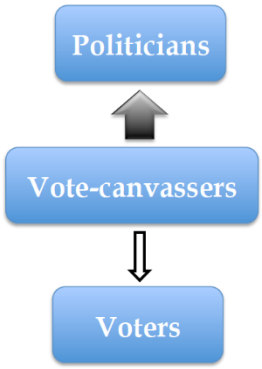
of chronic violence. I asked the village head what if the political candidates discovered the 'payment pooling' practice. She simply said: "They won't know. The area is too scary for them to access."[305]

In one of the red zone villages in Pattani province, villagers explained why they had to accept money from every vote-buyer. They were well aware that accepting money from vote-buyers was illegal, but they were also aware that none of the state authorities could help them if their life came under threat. One of the interviewees, a housewife who earned a bachelor's degree from the Prince of Songkhla University, shared the dilemma facing villagers during every election. She said that vote-canvassers at the village level all had a list of eligible voters from every household in their hand. If one political party approached the villager with vote-buying, that villager had to take the money. And if there were more vote-buyers coming from other political parties, that same person had to take the money given them by every vote-buyer. If villagers only took money from one vote-buyer (vote canvasser) but not from others, they would be announcing to vote-canvassers who they would and would not vote for, which might put them at risk. These villagers were living in an atmosphere of tension, fear and violence. Retribution could come from insurgents, mafias or state authorities. No one knew for sure. Thus, the solution was for every eligible voter in the village to take money from every vote-canvasser so that they would not learn of villagers' voting decisions and come back to harm them. Through this example, it can be said that although vote-canvassers might have more influence on voters in many ways and vote-buying may still be effective in many villages, it does not mean that every voter can be persuaded to vote in the way vote-canvassers ask them to vote. Voters may still defect from their vote-buyers in the context of chronic violence.

As a result, the side arrow that links politicians and voters shown in Figure 5.2 has disappeared in Figure 5.3. The chronic violence abolishes the dyadic relationship between politician and voters. Furthermore, vote-canvassers started to have more bargaining power vis-à-vis their patrons, and more vote-influencing power vis-à-vis voters; hence, one arrow pointing up to politicians and another arrow pointing down to voters, marking vote-canvassers as a more influential agent in the context of chronic violence.

[305] Interviewed in one of the villages in Panarae district.

Figure 5.4: A diagram that represents the linkage between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters when there is massive violence.



The last diagram represents the role of vote-canvassers and their linkage with politicians and voters when massive violence occurs in the region. The reason for distinguishing 'chronic violence' from 'massive violence' is because their impact is different. Physically and psychologically, massive violence had a considerable effect on electoral participation and voting behaviour in the Deep South. Massive violence proved to have a greater impact on voters' decision-making when the national election is held shortly after the incident of massive violence. The 1975 Pattani mass demonstration, for instance, incentivised electorates in the southernmost provinces to vote against incumbent politicians and the incumbent political party in the 1976 national election. The Kruesae killings and Takbai massacre also had a similar impact. The high number of casualties prompted voters in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat to vote against the incumbent politicians and incumbent political parties. Both incidents of massive violence happened due to the confrontation between the Thai state security forces and local villagers.

When massive violence occurred in the region, political candidates had difficulty accessing villages for election campaigning. It was not safe to access many of the villages because tensions remained very high between Thai state authorities and villagers. Thai state authorities often assumed that insurgents were disguising themselves as villagers, while villagers believed that Thai security forces planned to kidnap or assassinate villagers and their relatives who participated in the protest. The atmosphere was full of tension and distrust. As a result, political candidates came to rely more and more on their vote-canvassers to access the

village for them. Hence, the arrow facing from vote-canvassers upwards to politicians in Figure 5.4 illustrates the increase in vote-canvassers' bargaining power vis-à-vis their patrons at the time. Every piece of information the political candidates have is obtained through their vote-canvassers. On the other hand, when there is massive violence, voting-influence power that vote-canvassers have in relation to voters tends to diminish; hence, the thin arrow shown in Figure 5.4 is pointing down from the vote-canvassers to voters. The thin arrow indicates the influence that vote-canvassers have over voters diminishes when there is an occurrence of massive violence.

It is inaccurate to jump to the conclusion that rural voters are uneducated and unsophisticated, and therefore not concerned with political policy or susceptible to vote-buying tactics. When there is an incident of massive violence, rural voters would vote decisively against the incumbent politicians and political parties. The clash between the Thai state and Malay Muslims is deeply disruptive and impactful on rural voters, some of whom might experience the massive violence firsthand. Voters might also receive information about the violence from relatives and friends. The information was so abundant and widespread that people could make decisive voting choices without the aid of vote-canvassers. Therefore, vote-canvassers become essential to voter decision-making when there is a massive violence in the region because voters now have direct access to information. In the 1976 national election, all of the incumbent politicians from the coalition government's political party were defeated in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat because of the mass demonstration that occurred in the previous year. Similarly, the 2005 general election saw all of the incumbent politicians who held offices under the Thai Rak Thai party lose their seats to the opposition party because of the 2004 Kruesae and Takbai incidents.

Conclusion

Cases of vote-buying in the southernmost provinces of Thailand can illuminate how complex the situation for the villagers can be when it comes to voting, especially when adding the context of violence to the spectrum. Despite the general understanding of the discourse of vote-buying, elites or educated urban dwellers still believe voters in rural areas would simply take the money from vote-buyers and cast a vote in return for the favour. Villagers in fact have

minds of their own and would only vote for candidates of their choice. Villagers might comply with the vote-buyers but might also defect from the political candidate who offers them money.

Ultimately, electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South may not be that much different from the rest of the country. Programmatic politics and democratic institutions are weak, which in turns reduces politicians' capability to keep their promises to their constituents. Thus, vote-buying becomes a shortcut solution for politicians in Thailand to buy their way back to the parliament. The weakness of programmatic politics in the Deep South allows the patron-client system to become more entrenched. However, the chronic violence and massive violence situation are the real culprits in the entrenchment of the patron-client system in the Malay Muslim community. Although vote-buying practices have already been widespread in the Deep South, the chronic violence opens up a window of opportunity for vote-canvassers to bargain for more material rewards from their patrons. The scale and methods of vote-buying are indicators that can be used to gauge the importance of vote-canvassers in the context of violence. The findings of this research show that a climate of violence has helped vote-canvassers to become more important to their patrons. In the context of violence, they are the main source of information regarding voters' preferences and needs, which is what political candidates require to predict and speculate about their election campaigning plan in order to win the seat.

When it comes to voting in the context of violence, it is not an easy task for political candidates and vote-canvassers to control or mobilise voters. To political candidates or patrons who are at the top tier of the patron-client pyramid structure, the obscurity of information because of the violence forces them to spend more money on vote-buying. But because of the violence context, voters make voting decisions with the information about the candidate available to them. Voters will evaluate whether they ought to vote for or to defect from the candidate. Therefore, voting decisions made by villagers under the condition of chronic violence are rational and well thought out.

Thus, the longer chronic violence continues, the weaker programmatic politics and democratic institutions become, the more bargaining leverage vote-canvassers have vis-à-vis political candidates, and the more influence vote-canvassers have over voters. Likewise, if there is an occurrence of massive violence in the region, the bargaining leverage that vote-

canvassers may have over their patrons remain high, but the vote influence that the vote-canvassers may have over voters would actually diminish.

In light of the empirical evidence presented in this chapter, it can be said that the overall system of patron-client relationship, vote-buying, and vote-canvassers would not have emerged if programmatic politics had been strong and democratic institutions stable. This means that the blame which elites and urbanites lay on local politicians and rural voters over the years is misdirected. It is not only the bottom-up political structure or grassroots and local political organisations that account for growing clientelism, but military intervention, an ineffective justice system, and inadequate political party platforms also contribute to weakening democratic institutions.

Unlike patron-client relationship in other parts of Thailand where patrons are well established and suffer no risk to their personal safety, the chronic violence forces patrons in the southernmost provinces of Thailand to fall into a vulnerable position. Political candidates have to rely more on their clusters, which inadvertently gives more leverage power to their vote-canvassers to bargain for what they want. As long as chronic violence persists in the most southern region, the traditional system of patron-client relationship will remain solid, and vote-buying will remain epidemic. In the end, political candidates in the southernmost provinces of Thailand need to learn that spending large amounts of money is not a guarantee that they will win a seat in the election.

Chapter 6: Voices and Voters amid Violence

*"*I want a politician who is highly skilled, someone that can help us." – Kakak Ya, widow of a physician of Na Pradu Subdistrict who was killed by an unidentified assailant.[306]

*"*Who said that Thailand is a democratic country? A country with an emergency decree and martial law for the past ten years in the south, tell me…is that democracy?" – Bae Ma, local politician.

Introduction

Voices from voters are significant. Voters express their wishes at the ballot box, a low-stake action that is a basic expressive act. The primary motivation to vote or not to vote depends on whether the citizen has something to express. And when in the midst of violence, the struggle for their voice to be heard can make voting even more significant. Voters have the propensity to adjust their political behaviour in accordance to the menace of violence surrounding them.[307] People living in a violent place are likely to be exposed to threats from either state authorities or insurgent groups. Rather than pursuing a form of non-electoral political participation, such as demonstrating in the streets, boycotting or filing petitions, all of which can easily lead to imprisonment or worse, citizens choose to express their political opinions through the ballot box, which represents a lower risk for them.

Extensive data collected during my fieldwork in southern Thailand challenges the perception common in urban and middle class circles that villagers are money-hungry and rash in their voting. Furthermore, when we add the condition of daily small-scale chronic violent incidents as well as massive violence to voters' decision-making, we can see why the Malay Muslim minority vote as they do. The analysis in this chapter relies on the results of the sampling data collected during my fieldwork. Aggregate data from both qualitative and quantitative findings strongly suggests that voters in the electorates in the southernmost

[306] Interview with Kakak Ya at her home in Na pradu, Pattani in 2012. I was visiting only Kakak Ya's home, then one of her friends stopped by to join the interview. Kakak's Ya friend, Suwaima, is also a widow because her husband was also killed by a perpetrator.

[307] Miguel Garcia (2008). "Coercing Voters: Violent Contexts and Political Behavior in Colombia." *Americas Barometer Small Grants Research Papers*.

provinces of Thailand are rational actors when it comes to voting. By rational actors, I mean that they are inclined to optimise their gains by carefully calculating the costs and benefits before casting their vote. Villagers will make their voting decision based on the information available to them, such as the political party with which villagers are affiliated; the amounts of money given out by vote-buyers and where the money comes from; potential threats from influential vote-canvassers; candidates' political platforms; the incumbent politician's track record and competence; political candidates' charisma, and so forth. All of these factors contribute enormously to how villagers make their voting choice.

The practice of vote-buying and social factors such as religion, ethnicity, and gender play a part in electoral behaviour in the Deep South. But it is primarily the occurrences of chronic violence and single catastrophic incidents that affects how the electorate votes. Hence, I argue that voters tend to practice "candidate-based" voting when chronic violence continues to occur daily (the national elections of 1979, 1983, 1986, 1988, 1992, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2007). When a single catastrophic incident occurs, however, voters opt for a punitive vote against politicians from the ruling party. In the aftermath of a massive violence incident, voters tend to practice "party-based" voting and opt for political candidates from the opposition party (the national elections of 1976 and 2005).

To be clear, there are many forms of political participation, but this chapter will focus on only one form of them, namely, electoral participation. In an established democratic country that has a free and fair election process, election results reflect the citizens' perceptions and preferences towards their government and other parties. In other words, elected politicians from a certain political party, with certain policy packages, represent what people want and need from their government. If the government is accountable and efficient, the government will pay attention to the needs of the electorate and would likely respond to their demands.

The Malay Muslims realise the significance of their right to vote. They want their voices to be heard by the state authorities. An example that illustrates the importance of elections to the Malay Muslim electorate was the confrontation between the PDRC[308] protesters which was

[308] PDRC stands for People's Democratic Reform Committee. It was an ad-hoc organisation supported by Yellow Shirt group (or known as People's Alliance for Democracy), pro-coup, anti-Thaksin, pro-ultra-royalist, and Democrat Party supporters. Most of the protesters are Bangkokians, urban middle-class dwellers, and southerners who supported the Democrat Party.

the anti-election group, and the group of Malay Muslims who wanted to have an election in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat. The rally included religious leaders, local bureaucrats and politicians, local community leaders, and many other Malay Muslims. They all assembled in front of the Pattani Central Mosque and demanded that the 2 February 2014 election be free and fair. Despite the dominance of PDRC in the southern provinces of Thailand,[309] numerous Malay Muslim citizens united to protest against the PDRC cohorts, who had held their anti-election rally at Hadyai central post office on 29 January 2014. The Malay Muslim group demanded that the PDRC protestors stop blocking the ballot papers from being distributed to the Deep South. Large posters were printed carrying messages such as "Respect my vote. Muslims needs to vote" and "If you love the King and want to attain democracy, you have to let us vote."[310]

If we choose to judge the act of vote-buying from a legalistic and institutional perspective, villagers are indeed engaging in a corrupt and irresponsible practice. Moreover, this practice also undermines the quality of democracy.[311] When we base our discussion about election participation on ethical and legal terms, undoubtedly the money receivers would feel some tension and guilt on their part when accepting money offered by vote-buyers. Vote-buying is not simply a matter of 'give and take', however. It is not only about political candidates handing out money to voters and voters returning the favour by voting for them. One villager in Takbai, a district near the Malaysian border, remarked that "all politicians are corrupt!" He believed that after the politicians got elected, they would forget their promises to the villagers and become corrupt once they enter parliament. The villager whom I was interviewing said that it would be best for him to take his share of the money now, or else he (the villager) would get nothing. In his eyes, taking vote-buying money was a fair trade because he could not rely on programmatic politics. He also believed that the government's distribution of public goods was inefficient. Hicken argues that the Thai political system makes it difficult

[309] The southerners who are the strong supporters of the Democrat Party mainly start from Chumpon province and go all the way down to Songkhla province. These provinces are from the northern section of the whole southern region of Thailand. I would not count the southernmost provinces like Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat as loyal supporters of the Democrat Party.

[310] Khaosod English (31 January 2014). "Deep South Muslim Group Rallies for 2 Feb Election" [Khaosod English, news from online]. Retrieved from http://www.khaosodenglish.com/detail.php?newsid=1391168938&section=11&typecate=no

[311] Frederic Charles Schaffer (2007). "Why Study Vote-buying?" In *Elections for Sale: The Causes and Consequences of Vote-buying*, ed. Frederic Charles Schaffer et al. Colorado: Lynne Rienner Publishers, pp. 1–16.

for candidates and voters to depend on promises of pork barreling or patronage once candidates enter parliament. The uncertainty of promises and the dysfunctional Thai political system render the practice of vote-buying more attractive to candidates and voters.[312] Furthermore, vote-buying is a fast-lane process during electoral campaigns. Voters will get immediate material rewards, and the political candidates will gain their votes without putting too much effort into an election campaign.

Vote-buying is not simply a matter of legalistic and institutional conceptualisation of democracy but also has a cultural dimension for rural inhabitants. William Callahan argues that if we focus only on the Western nations' definitions of vote-buying and corruption, it would hinder our understanding of the Thai legal and structural problems, as there is considerable complexity to cultural and socio-economic issues.[313] A narrative of the top-down perception of good governance by some of the educated elite and urbanised citizens on vote-buying is irrelevant to understanding what takes place in rural areas. In particular, it is more difficult when villagers have to live in a climate of violence and conflict that requires them to weigh the costs and benefits before casting their votes. Villagers are neither stupid nor reckless when it comes to voting; money is not the main issue. Vote-buying does play a role in election campaigning in the Deep South, but it is not the major mechanism that effects how the Malay Muslim electorate make their decision when it comes to voting. Early in 2014, during an anti-democratic rally at Rajdumnern Road in Bangkok, Dr Seri Wongmontha, a right-wing university academic said: "300,000 high quality votes from people in Bangkok is better than 15 million low grade votes in the country side areas."[314] Another provocative statement made by Dr Sombat Thamrongthanyawong, former rector of the National Institute of Development Administration (NIDA) said: "One man-one vote is not yet suitable for Thai people."[315] Ramkhamhaeng University's political scientist Chaichana Inkawat also said: "These people will accept quick money because they don't think about the future of the country. But the middle

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[312] Allen Hicken (2002). "The Market for Votes in Thailand", paper presented at "Trading Political Rights: The Comparative Politics of Vote-buying." International Conference, Center for International Studies, MIT. 26–27 August.

[313] William A. Callahan (2005). "The Discourse of Vote-buying and Political Reform in Thailand". *Pacific Affairs* 78 (1): 95–113.

[314] Boon-niyom TV. (19 November 2013). Dr Seri Wongmontha at Rajdumnern stage on 19 November 2013 [Video file]. Retrieved from https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QtXegiwAUz4

[315] Tan Hui Yee (Friday, 27 December 2013). "A Power Struggle Between Old and New Middle Classes [Asiaone, news online]. Retrieved from http://news.asiaone.com/news/asia/power-struggle-between-old-and-new-middle-classes

class will think because they have more education. They think much more than the poor."[316] Some of the high-profile elites like Chitapas Bhirombhakdi, Singha beer heiress and the spokesperson for the PDRC movement, claimed that many Thais, "especially in the rural areas," lacked a "true understanding" of democracy.[317] The remarks by these well-known Western-educated and rich urban dwellers have sparked a public debate over the credibility of poor and uneducated people who live in a rural area, whether or not they are capable to vote, let alone understand the principles of democracy. Overall, the educated and urban dwellers perceive voters who were paid to vote as illiterate, poor, ignorant of democratic values, naïve, and irresponsible. Accordingly, when political candidates bribe their constituents with money or gifts, these voters would cast their votes in return for the favor. Anek Laothamatas's famous book, "*Song Nakhara Prachathippatai*" (สองนครประชาธิปไตย) or "A Tale of Two Democracies", blames rural villagers who make up the majority of the nation's vote for allowing unprincipled politicians to form a government. According to Anek, the vote counts of the well-educated urban middle class are not enough to allow political candidates whom the educated urbanites regarded as "well-educated and moral politicians" to enter parliament because the urban population's electoral votes are less substantial than the rural villagers' votes combined.

Anek further argues that the urban middle class nonetheless has a stronger influence over government policy-making. Rural villagers may constitute the majority of voters in the country, but the government hardly takes rural villagers' problems into consideration, whereas it always seriously responds to political appeals from the urban middle class. In Thailand, the urban educated middle class and upper class have always had stronger influence on the government's political decision-making. A mob by the group called the Assembly of the Poor cannot incentivise government responses or actions as much as a mob ruled by the middle class and elites. The Bloody May protest is a good case in point. In 1992, thousands of university students and the educated urban middle class demonstrated in Bangkok against the military government. Many protesters were killed, injured and arrested in the clash and the military crackdown that followed. King Bhumibol stepped in to stop the fighting and demanded a peaceful resolution to the conflict. The demonstration toppled the military government and pressured military leaders into returning power to civilians. Another example is a rally that

[316] Ibid.
[317] Per Liljas (13 January 2014). *Time.* http://world.time.com/2014/01/13/thai-protests-extend-to-beer-boycott/

occurred in late 2013 and early 2014. Led by Suthep Thuagsuban, a political veteran of the Democrat Party, this large-scale PDRC anti-government demonstration consisted mainly of middle-class people in Bangkok and southerners who were strong supporters of the Democrat Party. A year-long campaign of PDRC 'whistle blowing'[318] in Bangkok created a power vacuum and gave the military an opportunity to launch a coup against Yingluck Shinawatra's elected government.

Anek's famous phrase "a tale of two democracies" was coined to illustrate the disparity and inequality between the world of the urban population and the world of rural villagers. According to Anek, rural villagers are not purely selfish nor are they predisposed to political ignorance and lacking in public accountability when they cast their vote. It is the long tradition of patron-clientelism embedded in the rural society that makes vote-buying inevitable. The relationship between the patron (political candidates) and client (villagers) routinely forces villagers to vote in return for the favour. Similarly, politicians have to continue their role as patron by supplying their clients with gifts and money to win votes for the next election.

Yet the false perception created by 'a tale of two democracies' or the idea of two parallel worlds of rural villagers and urban society would not have emerged if only Anek had accepted the principle of the majority rule. In fact, there would always have been one single tale of democracy in Thailand had the educated urban middle-class and upper-class elites of Thailand admitted their loss of majority rule to the rural villagers instead of reconstructing a false understanding of what they believe to be a sound democratic transition process.

When there is an occurrence of daily small-scale chronic violence, it obscures voters' decision-making because violence can hamper voters from accessing information. In Chapter Five, I have noted that violent incidents clouded Deep South voters with fear, insecurity, and doubt. Voters need information to determine their voting choice—whether it is the political candidates' personality when interacting with villagers; candidates' charisma; policy packages and promises offer to villagers; candidates' past political performance in the parliament; candidates' past performance with community service contribution, and so forth. When voters have limited information about their political candidates, they are easily swayed by their

[318] PDRC used 'whistle blowing' as a symbolic theme for their rally to drive all of the Thaksin Shinawatra's clan out from handling Thailand's political power.

relatives, friends, or even vote-canvassers. Hence, information is important for voters to weigh their vote preferences.

A single catastrophic incident, on the other hand, causes a different effect. A single catastrophic incident gets more play in the news and in word-of-mouth conversations than smaller-scale chronic violence. As a result, the incident figures prominently in the minds of voters and leads to decisive voting behaviour. Voters can perceive whether political candidates were attentive or not to the single catastrophic incident when it occurred. For example, Wadah politicians were criticised for remaining silent after the Kruesae and Takbai incidents in 2004. Villagers and some of the active insurgents that I have interviewed were disappointed with Wadah's indifferent response to the incidents.

Three points will be used to assess how and why voters behave the way they do. The first point is the comparison of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani election results collected from the general elections of 2001, 2005, 2007 and 2011. General analysis of voting behaviour requires an observation of the national election data over a period of many years to determine the voting pattern. The presented data will show the changing nature of the voting behaviour, for example, we can see how people switch their votes between parties, or to examine how voter turnout increases or decreases over time.

The second point is the frequency and magnitude of violent incidents that occurred almost daily from 2004 until 2011. When cross-checking statistical data between incidents of violence and national election results that happen yearly, we shall see how voting pattern relates to violence across time. My research suggests that the voting pattern of the southernmost provinces' electorates does correspond with the magnitude and frequency of the violent incidents that have occurred in Thailand's Deep South since 2004. I have developed a model in this chapter to elaborate on voters' preferences in the Deep South when they are in the context of violence. The third point is the social identity factor. In addition to violent occurrences and national election results, I have examined additional indicators, such as ethno-religion, language, gender, level of education, urban voters, and rural voters, to assess whether or not that social identity has an effect on how southernmost provinces' electorates are voting. While it is widely believed among scholars, high-ranking authorities, and national politicians

that religion and ethnicity play a crucial role in determining vote outcomes,[319] the results from my findings in fact suggest the opposite.

In the following section of this chapter, the collected data will be presented in tables and charts along with explanatory details. This chapter proceeds in five parts. The first part will discuss the methodology of the in-depth interview and aggregate data approach that was used for this research. The second part illustrates cross-checking data sets of violent incidents and national election outcomes of the years 2001, 2005, 2007, and 2011. Within this same section, I also explain a model of voting preferences that was created to illustrate the probability of southernmost provinces electorates' voting behaviour when they are in the context of chronic violence and massive violence. The third section discusses the scenario of political participation in this area and mainly observes the attitude and feeling of the electorate toward political participation when there are violent incidents. The fourth part examines the social identity factor in the context of violence. The fifth part of this chapter examines the impact of violence on voting decisions and voter turnouts.

Methodology

Conducting research on electoral politics in the Deep South was a difficult task because researchers have to be conscious that the levels of trust among villagers are low and their concerns for safety and security are heightened due to the continuation of violence. Violence diminishes trust among villagers and breeds wariness. Some villagers might side with authorities against the insurgents, or side with one political party against another. In essence, many of these villagers are wearing different hats: one person might work as a spy for the state authorities, while another person in the same village might be an infiltrator for the insurgents, not to mention that some of these villagers are also vote-canvassers or local politicians who might affiliate themselves with either the Wadah group or the Democrat Party. It is important for researchers not to lose sight of the complexity of socio-political dynamics in the Deep South. Specifically, the use of snowball sampling techniques can result in one-sided information because the researcher is working within a particular network or set of relationship.

[319] I have come across numerous opinions during my fieldwork interviews on how religion and ethnicity play the major role in Thailand's Deep South electorate voting pattern.

Survey sampling methodology thus becomes a beneficial tool for empirical study when we want to collect data from an array of angles. Distributing questionnaires randomly from village to village not only contributes statistical numbers for analytical purposes, but it can also serve as an effective way to cross-check the data that I have collected, and also to attain a broader range of material from different interviewed sources as much as possible.

There have been a number of studies on the 1986 national election campaigning and vote-canvassers in Pattani province by Kaosamran, Naksevee, and Baru;[320] however, very little attention has been paid to voting behaviour in the southern border provinces after the outbreak of violence on 4 January 2004. Several studies on voting behaviour can be found from the Prince of Songkhla University research database, though these are mainly small scale. One study, for instance, examined voting behaviour at the municipality level, namely Pattani city election (1998, Piya Kijtavorn)[321] and Sungaipadee municipality election (2001, Surapol Krasaerat).[322] A thesis entitled "Political Participation of the Muslim Intellectuals in the Southern Border Provinces" (1999, Cholada Sangmanee)[323] analyses the political participation of Muslim intellectuals and elites in the southern border provinces, including Satun and Songkhla provinces, but the sample group accounts for only 300 people (N=300). My research, however, focuses on voting behaviour from the grassroots level and perspective. The most recent research on voting behaviour and electoral politics in the southern part of Thailand was conducted by Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana (Mahakanjana 2006). Based on data gathered from survey questionnaires in three sub-districts and one city-level municipality in Pattani, her research on decentralisation and local politics in the Deep South suggests that the southern conflict stems from a strong state-centric bureaucratic system controlled by the Thai state.

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[320] See Pichai Kaosamran, Somjet Naksevee, and Woravit Baru (1988). *Kaan lueak thung Pattani phee 2529 Sueuksa koranee kaan ha siang lae rabobe hua khanaen* [The study of election campaigning and vote-canvassers process of the 1986 general election in Pattani province]. Foundation for Democracy and Development, Bangkok.

[321] See Piya Kijtavorn (1998). *Pruett thi kam nai kan chai sitthi ok siang lueak tang samachik sapha thet sa ban sueksa koranee tethsaban muang Pattani* [The study of voting behaviour of the municipality level election: the case study of Pattani city municipality]. Prince of Songkhla University, Songkhla.

[322] See Surapol Krasaerat (2001). *Kaan mee suan ruam khong prachachon nai kaan lueak thung sueaksa chapoh koranee tetsabaan tumbon paluroo umphur sungaipadee jangwat Narathiwat* [The study of political participation and voting: the case study of Sungaipadee municipality]. Prince of Songkhla University, Songkhla.

[323] See Cholada Sangmanee (1999). *Kan mee suan ruam thang kanmueang khong panyachon muslim nai jangwat chai daen tai* [Political Participation of the Muslim Intellectuals in the Southern Border Provinces]. Prince of Songkhla University, Songkhla.

However, the study primarily dealt with the attitudes of local politicians and bureaucrats towards the centralised Thai state.[324]

An article by Albritton published in 1999 on "Political Diversity Among Muslims In Thailand" revisits his own data on the 1992 parliamentary elections, combined with observations of arrays of political and social cleavages in the southern part of Thailand. Although his article was a study of the Muslim population of Thailand in general, his analysis centered on the Malay Muslims of the Deep South. The study was based mainly on quantitative methodology.[325] Another study by Albritton and regional scholars Pham-Ngam, Noree, Manop, Sunandpattira and Arin, "Electoral Participation by Southern Thai Buddhists and Muslims,"[326] undeniably carries more weight in the study of electoral politics in this part of Thailand. The methodology of this study was both quantitative and qualitative. It can be said that after this research, Albritton has become a pioneer in the study of electoral politics and voting behaviour in the southernmost provinces of Thailand.

In the field of socio-politics, defence and strategic studies, and electoral politics in the southern-most provinces of Thailand, M. Ladd Thomas is the pioneer in using qualitative methodology to study conflict and violence in southern Thailand. His article, "Political Violence in the Muslim Provinces of Southern Thailand,"[327] primarily discusses the southern conflict in the early 1970s. McCargo's groundbreaking book, *Tearing Apart the Land: Islam and Legitimacy in Southern Thailand*, offers a more solid understanding on the different types of socio-political conflict and violence that have plagued this region for decades. Even though McCargo's substantive research and analysis covered the entire Deep South of Thailand, my objective is to specifically study electoral politics, parliamentary elections, and villagers' voting behaviour.

Qualitative methodology alone cannot examine the pattern of parliamentary elections across time without having statistical data involved. Likewise, quantitative methodology alone

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[324] Chandra-nuj Mahakanjana (2006). "Decentralization, Local Government, and Socio-Political Conflict in Southern Thailand". *East – West Center* 5: 1–55.

[325] Robert, B. Albritton (1999). "Political Diversity among Muslims in Thailand". *Asian Studies Review* 23 (2): 23–246.

[326] Robert B Albritton, Pham-Ngam Gothamasan, Noree Jaisai, Manop Jitpoosa, Sunandpattira Nilchang and Arin Sa-Idi (1996). "Electoral Participation by Southern Thai Buddhists and Muslims". *South East Asia Research* 4 (2): 127–156.

[327] M. Ladd Thomas (1975). "Political Violence in the Muslim Provinces of Southern Thailand". *Institute of Southeast Asian Studies,* Northern Illinois University.

cannot capture individual voter's emotions and feelings. Thus, by combining qualitative and quantitative analyses, the present research attempts to fill the gap where quantitative analysis cannot fully explain the outcome of the findings, and vice versa. The survey sampling method that this research employed is the probability sampling method. The method is to calculate the proportion of the sample size of the local population in the region to the number of villages and constituencies. As an experiment to validate my questionnaire, I conducted a pilot survey twice. I then distributed questionnaires to a sample group, ten people for both rounds of pilot survey conducting and only in the Pattani municipality area. After some adjustments and changes, on my third attempt, I finally carried out a large-scale distribution of 880 questionnaires to the whole region of the Deep South.

With three of my research assistants, I visited villages nearly every day for five months to gather data on villagers' opinions on voting decisions. Out of the total 220 villages, we visited 144 villages together. The experience generated quite rich information on voting attitudes. I was able to not only collect quantitative data from my sample group but also have first-hand interactions with villagers. I found that the strategy of dispersing the questionnaires randomly throughout the region gave me the advantage of snowballing my opportunity to have more in-depth interviews through several different sources and networks, such as local politicians, local government officials, and NGOs. Questionnaires were conducted from sample groups through survey samplings in eleven constituencies. Pattani has four constituencies (12 districts, 115 sub-districts, and 642 villages),[328] Yala has three constituencies (8 districts, 58 sub-districts, and 379 villages),[329] and Narathiwat has four constituencies (14 districts, 77 sub-districts, 623 villages).[330] I selected twenty villages in each constituency, and four sample groups from each village, hence the total of sample group is equal to 880 questionnaires. The riskiest and most violent areas for my survey sampling gathering, ranking in order from less risky to the riskiest, were in the districts of Mayor, Yarang, Banangsata, Rangae, and Ruesoh. I was able to collect 820 questionnaires, which accounted for about ninety-three percent return from my sample group.

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[328] See Province of Pattani official webpage at http://www.pattani.go.th/pattani/SiteMap/Manageare a_Data.html

[329] See Province of Yala official webpage at http://www.yala.go.th/webyala/SiteMap/Manageare a_Data.html

[330] See Narathiwat Election Commission Official webpage at http://www2.ect.go.th/about.php?Province=narathiwat&SiteMenuID=1580

Each form of the questionnaire given to our sample group contained 117 questions. Participants usually took between 20–60 minutes to complete the form. Many of them wanted to discuss and chat with us additionally to the questions they had answered. They were very active with their questioners. Our research team befriended many of the villagers at the end of the day.[331]

Several questions from the questionnaire raised sensitive topics such as "Do you agree with Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat becoming a Special Autonomy Region?" and "Do you agree that separating Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat from Thailand is not appropriate?". Not surprisingly, some of the responses reflected the participants' discontent and resentment. Most of these responses were from well-educated Malay Muslims and Thai Buddhists, or people from the Democrat Party strongholds such as Pattani city, Mai-kaen district, and Yaring district. One of the questions in the questionaire asks "Which Prime Minister do you feel most dissatisfied with regarding their policies and work?"[332] This question aims to test the bond that Malay Muslims might have towards the central government and to examine villagers' attitudes towards Thaksin and Abhisit, both of whom were ex-prime ministers of Thailand from opposite political parties. The question turned out to be one of the most delicate for some villagers. Nearly 13.5 percent of the sample group did not answer this question. By and large, many of the villagers were reluctant to answer this particular question mainly because the Prime Minister was perceived as someone occupying a highly authoritative position; therefore, some of these villagers were being extra cautious or simply did not wish to criticise a member of the elite.

Obstacles during fieldwork

The most difficult task was to obtain data in areas with high levels of violence. The violence did not take place inside the villages, however. It was the roads between villages that represented a high risk for commuters. Improvised explosive devices or roadside bombs[333]

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[331] Many villages are very poor but they were so kind that they provided us with food and desserts. On one day we were visiting a village that had a wedding ceremony, and the next day we were visiting a village that had a Masjid fundraising event. Some houses gave us their homemade desserts. Some villages would give us local fruits like durians and long-gong. It was a memorable experience with the villagers.

[332] All of these respondents gave informed consent to filling in the questionnaires. I told them that they were free to abstain from answering any questions they felt uncomfortable to do so.

[333] For safety while conducting my research, I was told by my informant to wear hijab, and to lower the window on the driver side down only halfway while driving between villages. The reason was to send a signal

were known to be planted along the small roads between villages, not to mention ambushes that happened on a regular basis. Thai villagers in a predominantly Buddhist village in Bannangsata district lamented that they were living in constant fear because people from their village were regularly ambushed and killed by the insurgents when they were commuting from their village to the city. There was only one road that allowed them access to the main highway, and their village was located at the very end of that one small road, right next to the Budo Mountain.[334]

In addition to the risk of encountering violence while conducting research, asking strangers to cooperate and complete a survey was not a simple task. Finding a way to approach the sample group in the Deep South region was extremely challenging because of the low level of trust between people in the village and outsiders. Upon entering a village, the first person we met was the village headman, who would usually be suspicious of the reason for our visit. Later, I learned that villagers would report to their headman when they saw strangers coming. At times, while my assistants and I were driving between villages, we would spot a guy on a motorcycle following us.[335]

Violent incidents and Voter's Preference Model

General analysis of voting behaviour requires an observation of the national election data over a period of many years to determine the voting pattern. The presented data will show the changing nature of the voting behaviour; for example, we can see how people switch their votes between parties, or how voter turnout increases or decreases over time. What marked the difference between the 1996 general election and the 2001 general election is that the latter was the first general election to be held after the 1997 constitutional reform. It was the first general election in which the Thai people had an opportunity to experience a new electoral system. The old system was based on a plurality system in which a candidate won an election with a simple majority. This rule was applied to both single and multiple member constituencies. However, the electoral system in the 2001 general election was different. Thailand adopted the "Mixed-

to the insurgent groups if they were ambushing nearby the road, that I am aware of their customs and to make myself known to them that I am a woman.

[334] This majority Thai Buddhist village is located in Tum Nasua sub-district, Banangsata, Yala.

[335] This incident happened in Huay Krating district (Yala), Yaha district (Yala), Banangsata district (Yala), and Rangae district (Narathiwat)— a high violence area.

Member Majoritarian" system (MMM), which is a combination of plurality and proportional system. I have based my observation solely on the single member district because 'one man, one vote' is a direct voting interaction between voters and candidates.

In this section, two indicators will be examined. The first indicator is the comparison of Yala, Narathiwat, and Pattani election results collected from the general elections of 2001 and 2005. A table of the election results comparing 1975 and 1976 will also be used to support my argument that voters would opt for "Party-based" selection, or the opposition party, when there is massive violence preceding the election. The second indicator for my analysis is the frequency and magnitude of violent incidents that occurred daily from 2004 until 2011. My argument is that the magnitude of the violence has a huge impact on voters' preference, whereas frequency of violence has less impact on voters' preference.

This chapter categorises violence into two aspects. The first aspect is the chronic daily violence or small-scale violence that happens daily (frequency of incidents). The second aspect of violence is the massive violence or single catastrophic incident (magnitude of incidents), a major clash, especially between the Thai state and the local Malay Muslims. The events such as the 1975 mass demonstration, the Kruesae killings and Takbai massacre in 2004 are what I consider to be a single catastrophic type of incident or 'massive violence'.

Table 6.1: Numbers of deaths, injuries, and violent incidents in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat one month before and one month after the Election Day.[336]

Year	Death	Injury	Violent Incidents
2005	76	272	303
2006	106	168	335
2007	99	144	143
2011	64	164	126

[336] The raw data was collected by Deep South Watch organisation, an affiliate organisation with Department of Political Science, Prince of Songkhla University.

Table 6.1 shows the number of casualties and injuries in the months before and and after voting day. The number of deaths and injuries are high, but the outcome of the voting results was not as decisive as the 1976 and 2005 general elections, the year after the major violence like the 1975 Pattani demonstration and the 2004 Kruesae and Takbai killings. There were split votes between the divided new parties, and the results suggest that voters were inclined towards candidate-centered voting. As I have argued previously, the frequency of violent incidents has less impact on voters' decision. According to a statistical report by Deep South Watch organisation, the level of violence during 2007 was unusually high (1,198 injuries and 715 deaths).[337] The voting outcome was candidate-centered based voting that mixed the ruling party and the opposition party. There were also many new faces who run for the election. The Democrat Party won five seats, Puea Pandin party won three seats, PPP (Thaksin's new party) won two seats, and Chart Thai party won two seats. However, there is an exception to my argument. The 2007 general election had a different electoral system from the 2001, 2005, and 2011 general elections. In 2007, the acting government of General Surayud Chulanont (the coup government since 2006) adopted the multi-member district for the electoral constituency to prevent Thaksin's political party from returning to power. The size of the district was also adjusted. Nonetheless, we can clarify that the general election year of 2007 may not suit our hypothesis due to the coup in 2006 at the national level. The military coup disrupted the democratic process and created a "vacuum of power" in which there was neither a ruling party nor an opposition party. It resulted in a dilemma for individual voters since they lacked clear information that would help them calculate their costs and benefits, or decide who to vote for and which political party to rely on.

Table 6.2 shows a comparison of the national election results of the year 1975 with those of the 1976 national election. Table 6.3 shows the results of the 2001 national election and the national election in 2005.

[337] Deep South Watch (DSW), Center for Conflict Studies and Cultural Diversity (CSCD), Prince of Songkhla University, Pattani campus, access at http://www.deepsouthwatch.org/sites/default/files/southern_violence_from_jan2004_to_feb2012english.pdf

Table 6.2: A comparison of voting results of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat between 1975 and 1976.

Year	Province	Elected Candidates	Party
1975	Yala	Prasat Chaiyatho	Social Justic (SJP)
	Pattani	Thawisak Abdunlabut	Chart Thai (CT)
		Kamthorn Latcharoj	Chart Thai (CT)
		Sudin Phuyuthanond	Social Nationalist (SNP)
	Narathiwat	Siddik Sarif	Democrat (DP)
		Tavorn Chaisuwan	Social Justic (SJP)
1976	Yala	Usman Useng	Democrat (DP)
	Pattani	Sudin Phuyuthanond	Democrat (DP)
		Surapong Ratchamookda	Democrat (DP)
		Den Tohmeena	Democrat (DP)
	Narathiwat	Vachira Marohabutr	Democrat (DP)
		Siddik Sarif	Democrat (DP)
		Siri Abdulsalae	Democrat (DP)

Table 6.3: A comparison of voting results of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat between 2001 and 2005.

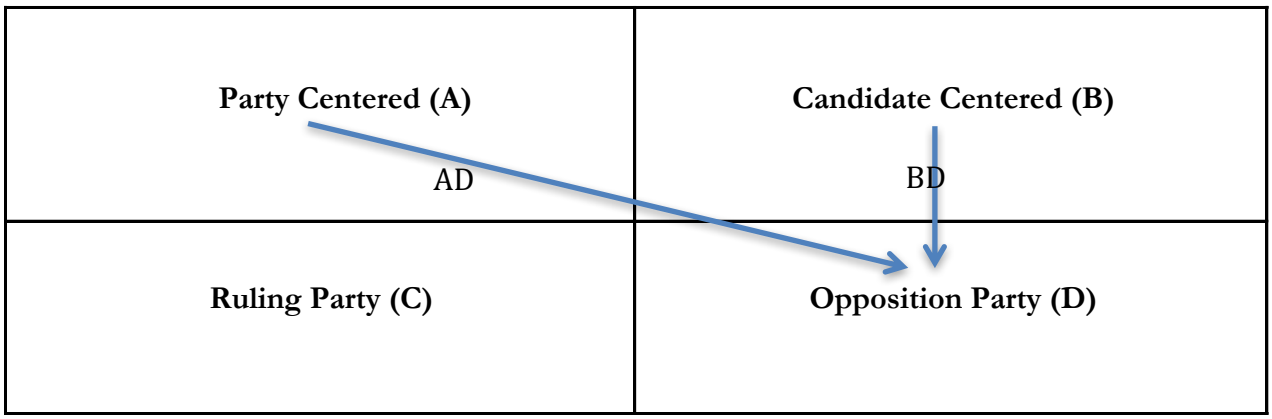
	2001 (Elected Candidates)	Voting Result	2005 (Elected Candidates)	Voting Result
Narathiwat	Pornpit Pattanakullert (DEM)	34, 135	Jeh Aming Tohtayong (DEM)	33, 927
	Attapol Mamah (TRT)	(N/A)	Surachet Wae-asae (DEM)	36, 653
	Najmudin Uman (NAP)	23, 454	Ku-heng Yawohasan (CTP)	28, 858
	Areepen Utarasint (NAP)	(N/A)	Abdul Sahibatu (DEM)	39, 497
Pattani	Wairoj Pipitpakdi (DEM)	24, 553	Anwar Saleh (DEM)	28, 554
	Jeh Isamaair Jehmong (DEM)	26, 041	Isamail Yidorohmae (DEM)	41, 968
	Sommart Jehna (DEM)	24, 902	Mohamadyasri Yusong (DEM)	33, 385
	Muk Sulaiman (NAP)	29, 317	Sata Awaekuji (DEM)	28, 769
Yala	Prasert Pongsuwansiri (DEM)	32, 995	Prasert Pongsuwansiri (DEM)	33,393
	Paisan Yingsaman (NAP)	33, 943	Abdulkarim Dengrakina (DEM)	23, 212
	Burahanudin Useng (NAP)	25, 386	Narong Duding (DEM)	38, 040

Table 6.3 shows that the Democrat Party won four seats, while Wadah, under the New Aspiration Party, won five seats. The voter turnout was approximately sixty percent. Most of the winners were incumbent politicians who won the seats in 1996. There were several small-scale violent incidents during 2001.

In Table 6.4, I correlate the results from the 1976 and the 2005 national elections with massive violent incidents, making a cross analysis between the pattern of voting results and the type of violent incidents that will reveal voters' preferences. I have also developed a model to

explain voters' preference when they have to vote in the context of violence. As Blattman, Kibris, and Höglund have argued, the more violence occurs, the more likely people will vote to replace the incumbent politicians. Along the same line of this argument, the model in Table 6.4 can demonstrate voters' preference when there is massive violence in the southernmost provinces.

Table 6.4: Voter's preference when affected by massive violence



Scenario I: When under massive violence

1. Party–Centered/Opposition Party (AD)
2. Candidate–Centered/ Opposition Party (BD)

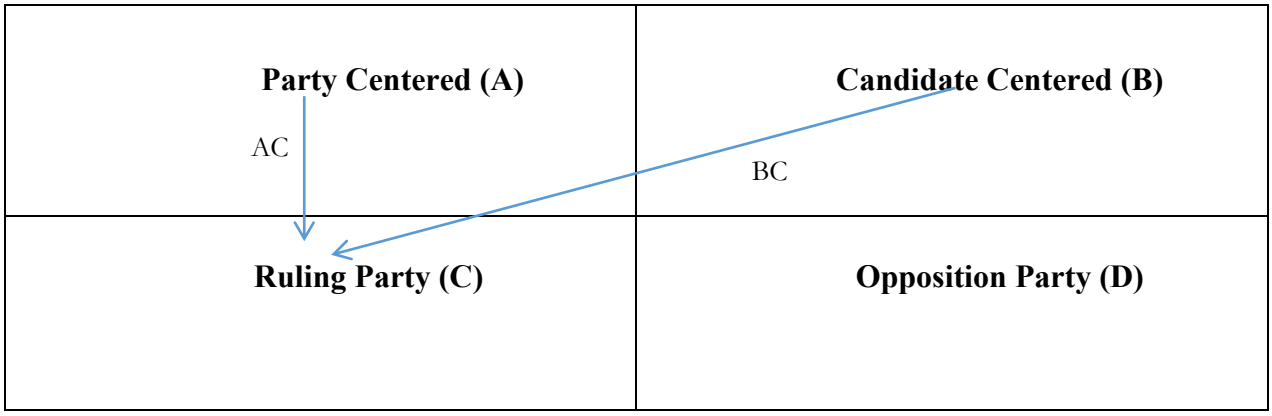
Both 1976 and 2005 national elections were preceded by incidents of massive violence. The Pattani Mass Demonstration occurred at the end of 1975, and the Kruesae killings and Takbai massacres occurred in 2004. The results from both tables show that voters' first preference is a "party-centered" vote, that is, for the opposition party (AD) rather than the ruling party (AC). The voters' second preference is "candidate-centered", that is, for the opposition party (BD). In Table 6.2, the Pattani MP Sudin Phuyuthanond was elected both times in 1975 and 1976. Sudin switched to the Democrat Party, which was the opposition party for the 1976 national election, and he won the seat. In other words, voters were more inclined to vote for the opposition party than the ruling party.

Because of the Kruesae and Takbai incidents in 2004, local Malay Muslims in the southernmost provinces turned out to vote against the Thai Rak Thai party, the ruling party that controlled the government at the time. The voter turnout was approximately eighty percent in the 2005 general election. The Democrat Party, which was the opposition party, swept almost every constituency. None of the representatives that ran for the Thai Rak Thai party were elected, including those from the Wadah and Darussalam factions. Ironically, the Darussalam faction had defected from the Democrat Party prior to the election. Clearly, people in the southernmost provinces were sending a resounding message that they were against Thaksin Shinawatra, the Prime Minister of Thailand and the leader of the Thai Rak Thai party, and his administration's hardline policies in the Deep South. The 2005 election saw a twenty percent increase in voter turnout compared to the 2001 election.

Another incident of massive violence that caused confrontation between the Thai state and Malay Muslim locals was the 1975 Pattani mass demonstration. I have argued in Chapter Three that the demonstration was the defining event that shaped electoral politics in Thailand's Deep South to this day. The voting results of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat from Table 6.2 show that all the incumbent politicians from the ruling coalition were defeated in the 1976 national election. However, the incumbent politicians from the opposition party (Democrat Party), such as Sudin Phuyuthanond and Siddik Sarif, were re-elected. The Malay Muslim electorate punished the incumbent politicians from the ruling coalition party by voting instead for candidates from the opposition party.

The scenario of chronic daily violence generates a different picture. As shown in Table 6.5, if the chronic violence in the region happens regularly, the first preference for voters is to vote "candidate-centered" from the incumbent party (BC). The second preference for voters is to cast their vote for "party-centered" that is from the incumbent party (AC).

Table 6.5: Voter's preference when affected by chronic daily violence.



Scenario II: Small-Scale Daily Chronic Violence

1. Candidate-Centered/ Ruling Party (BC)
2. Party-Centered/ Ruling Party (AC)

Table 6.6 shows that the Democrat Party won most of the seats in 2011, supporting my argument for Scenario II. The Democrat Party was the ruling party from 2008 until 2011. The Democrat Party already has their stronghold districts, so their voting results are unlikely to fluctuate. If we look at Table 6.6, the Democrat Party barely won more than fifty percent in each of the constituencies. Only Yala (1), and Pattani (2) delivered more than fifty percent of the vote shares. The breakup of the Wadah faction created a split vote among Malay Muslim voters. Therefore, it appears as if the Deep South region is voting on a "party-centered" basis in the 2011 national election.

Table 6.6: Voting results of Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat in the 2011 national election.

Year	Province/Const.	Elected Candidates	Results
2011	Yala (1)	Prasert Pongsuwansiri (DEM)	70%
	(2)	Abdulkarim Tengkarina (DEM)	36.82%
	(3)	Narong Duding (DEM)	46.97%

	Pattani (1)	Anwar Salae (DEM)	37.91%
	(2)	Ismael Ben-ibroheem (DEM)	58.29%
	(3)	Anumat Susaroar (Matubhum)	35.56%
	(4)	Sommut Benjaluck (BTP)	32.67%
	Narathiwat (1)	Ku-asem Kujinaming (DEM)	46.69%
	(2)	Surachet Wae-a-sae (DEM)	34.07%
	(3)	Rumree Mama (DEM)	30.19%
	(4)	Je-aming Tohtayong	30.82%

Political Participation in Thailand's Deep South

The Thai political reform efforts that started in 1996 prior to the Asian Economic Crisis culminated in the 1997 Constitution. The constitutional reforms introduced a fundamental change in the Thai electoral sy. The new electoral system was designed to decrease vote-buying and to strengthen the political parties, as well as executive power. [338] Furthermore, voting was made obligatory under penalty by the new electoral rule (Section 72),[339] which explains the increase in voter turnout. Failure to vote is subject to the revocation of political rights as follows: (1) the right to petition elected MPs, senators, local administrators, members of local assembly, and village/sub-district headpersons; (2) the right to become a political candidate for MPs, senators, local administrators, members of local assembly, and village/sub-district headpersons; (3) the right to appeal to the National Assembly for consideration of new laws; (4) the right to appeal to the local assembly for the issuance of local ordinances; (5) the right

[338] The term "bureaucratic polity" was coined by Fred Riggs. He discovered that the Thai polity, the bureaucracy system, is composed of military and civil servants. They function as the core characteristic of Thai political structure.

[339] Comparative Constitution Project (June 6, 2017). *Thailand's Constitution of 2007*. "Every person has a duty to exercise their right to vote in an election. The person who attends an election for voting or fails to attend an election for voting without notifying the appropriate cause of such failure shall receive or lose such rights as provide by law. The notification of the cause of failure to vote in an election and the provision of facilities to vote thereof shall be in accordance with the provisions of the law." See https://www.constituteproject.org/constitution/Thailand_2007.pdf , accessed 9 August 2017.

to appeal to the Senate for a resolution to remove a person under the organic law on counter corruption; and (6) the right to appeal the local assembly to remove a member of the local assembly.[340]

The 2011 national election was held in accordance with the 2007 Constitution. In addition to the penalty in Section 68 of the 1997 Constitution, Section 26 of the 2007 Constitution[341] further stated that if any citizens failed to vote, the person will lose their rights to engage in any electoral process. For example, the person who failed to vote cannot file a complaint to any of the MPs, Senators, local administrators, members of local assembly, and village/sub-district headpersons, if they find those candidates unfit to run for the office. However, many villagers have limited knowledge of the revocation of their political rights if they fail to vote. From my interviews with villagers, I found that many were not aware of the types of penalty for failing to vote without a valid and sufficient reason. All they knew was that it was illegal not to vote; hence, the higher voter turnout.

In contrast, the elites in the village, who were well informed of all the penalties enforced under the 2007 Constitution, were much more concerned about their rights being revoked because it might adversely affect their future political career as candidates for MPs, Senators, local administrators, members of local assembly, and village/sub-district headpersons. Some of my informants who were insurgent members consistently turned out to vote because they wanted to maintain their political rights to run as a candidate for local elections. Many of the insurgent members advocated politically both above ground and covertly and became part of the state authorities to protect their secret identity as insurgency members.

Despite the continuation of violence in this region, people still took part in politics. Based on survey data, the following tables confirm that besides electoral participation, the population in the Deep South of Thailand are also interested in national politics.

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[340] Orathai Kokpol (2002). "Electoral Politics in Thailand". In *Electoral Politics in Southeast & East Asia*, edited by Aurel Croissant. Singapore: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, p. 285. http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/iez/01361009.pdf., accessed 15 June 2015.

[341] Political and Electoral Development Institute (2011). "รวมกฎหมายเกี่ยวกับการเลือกตั้ง ฉบับปรับปรุง พ๒๕๕๔ศ. . (Compilation of Electoral Act, revised edition 2011)". Election Commission of Thailand, second edition (2011):179, accessed 19 June 2015, http://www.consular.go.th/main/contents/files/services-20121003-104109-760642.pdf

Table 6.7: Do you follow political news?

Do you follow Political News?	Percent
Very much	31.3
Somewhat interested	60.5
Not interested	6.1
Missing	2.1
Total	100

The question, “Do you follow political news?” stems from my discussion with urban dwellers who held the view that because people in the southernmost part of Thailand, especially those living in remote villages, were distinct from the rest of the country by virtue of their religion and ethnicity, they hardly paid any attention to national politics. However, as the result shows in Table 6.7, the number of people who are very much interested in political news accounted for 31.3 percent; somewhat interested in political news accounted for 60.5 percent; and not interested in political news accounted for only 6.1 percent. Among those who were not interested in following political news, the main reason was that they did not have time; some of them also said that they did not understand Thai political news.

Table 6.8: Gender * You follow Political News (Crosstabulation)

			You follow Political News			
			Very interested	Somewhat interested	Not interested	Total
Gender	Female	Count	75	319	30	424
		% within "Gender"	17.7%	75.2%	7.1%	100.0%
		% within "You follow Political News"	29.5%	64.4%	60.0%	53.1%
	Male	Count	179	176	20	375
		% within "Gender"	47.7%	46.9%	5.3%	100.0%
		% within "You follow Political News"	70.5%	35.6%	40.0%	46.9%
Total		Count	254	495	50	799
		% within "Gender"	31.8%	62.0%	6.3%	100.0%
		% within "You follow Political News"	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%

Asking what politics meant for them is also important. Villagers understood the word '*kan muang'* (In Thai - การเมือง), which means 'politics'. Table 6.8 shows that males are more interested in following political news than their female counterparts: 70.5 percent of males said

they were very much interested in politics, whereas only 29.5 percent of female answered that they were interested in political news. However, 75.2 percent *within females* answered they were somewhat interested in following political news. From the same table, the percentage of *within those who are following political news*[342]also shows 64.4 percent of female that are somewhat interested in following political news, which is considerably high. These numbers show that many of them do not completely ignore political news. One of the women who resided in Mayor District explained to us that it was not that they had no interest in political news, but as housewives they hardly ever left the house. Consequently, they often relied on their husbands for political news, or their male relatives who mainly received news and updates at the mosque. Traditionally, Patani-Malay culture tends to have a strong male-dominated society. It is seen as more appropriate for housewives to stay home and take care of the domestic duties, while males work outside the home. Predominantly, Malay Muslim males are the ones who go to the mosque. Mostly, mosques in the Deep South also serve as the community center for Malay Muslim males to exchange news and information.

From the survey sampling data, the majority of villagers learn about national political news from watching television, listening to radio, and hearing the news from other people in their village community. The sources of information that they trust the most are television news broadcasts, which is about seventy percent. The second source of news that they trust is from their neighbours, friends, and relatives within their village community, which accounts for about forty-one percent. The third source of news that they believe to be trustworthy is news from the mosque during Friday prayers, thirty-one percent. About twenty-seven percent trust sources from radio stations.

[342] The 6.8 crosstabulation table shows the horizontal result of the percentage within 'gender', which is a calculation result only from within that gender (i.e., for female, 17.7% plus 75.2% plus 7.1% equals to 100%). Whereas the vertical result of the percentage within 'You follow political news', is a total result of both gender combined (i.e., both gender who are very interested in following news, female is 29.5%, where male is very interested in following news at 70.5%, thus adds up to 100%)

Table 6.9: Do you vote every time?

Do you vote every time?	Percent
Every time	96.6
Sometime	2.7
Never vote	0.2
Missing	0.5
Total	100

Table 6.9 shows that 96.6 percent of people in the Deep South region said that they voted consistently. Those who never voted accounted for only 0.2 percent, where those who did not vote consistently accounted for 2.7 percent. People who never voted claimed that they did not have time and some of them said that they did not understand politics.

Table 6.10: You think that voting is important

You think that voting is important	Percent
Yes	88.5
No	11.1
Did not answer	0.4
Total	100.0

The figures in Table 6.10 show that 88.5 percent of the sample group believed that voting was important. Within each religion, 96.7 percent of Thai Buddhists held the view that voting was important, and 87.2 percent of Malay-Muslims voters shared the same view. Table 6.11 lists the results from asking villagers about the factors that motivated them to vote. What is striking about the figures in this table is that almost three-quarters of the participants (74.7 percent) indicated that they wanted to vote for a candidate who had the potential to resolve conflict and violence in the Deep South. Those who felt voting was a responsibility of good

citizens comprised 64.1 percent of respondents, while 37.5 percent were concerned that it would be illegal not to vote. A smaller percentage (26.6 percent) felt they had the right to be more involved in politics because of the conflict. Other factors include intimidation by vote-canvassers, a sense of obligation to return the political candidate's favour, and political disaffection that led people to vote against an unpopular party.

It is worth noting that the first four reasons in Table 6.11 are considered to be the moral and legal obligations of good citizens to exercise responsibility when they actively engage in politics. The fourth question "Does violence in Deep South make you want to participate more in politics?" was designed to assess villagers' thoughts on how they would react to electoral politics in a climate of conflict and violence, and to observe whether they would prefer to opt for a free ride or engage more actively in politics. Although the fourth reason shows a quite low result of 26.6 percent, this factor implicitly supports the first vote motivation factor, which is the local people's wish "to vote for a candidate who has the potential to solve the deep south conflict." These results indicate that people in deep south of Thailand want to engage more actively in electoral politics because of the violence, and that it is important to vote for a candidate who has the potential to solve the conflict.

In contrast to the first four reasons from the same table, I have designed the last four questions to ascertain whether the Deep South electorate voted out of self-interest. The last four reasons that motivate people to vote are inextricably *intertwined* with villagers' security and safety concerns. From many of my interviews, I discovered that many of the villagers were reluctant to share information about vote-buying or even to criticise any candidates or political parties. At least the results shown in Table 6.11 signify that the majority of our sampling participants, to a certain degree, felt a sense of moral and legal obligation when it came to political involvement. In short, voters in the southernmost provinces of Thailand realised that it was important to participate in the electoral process.

Table 6.11: What motivates you to vote?

What motivates you to vote?	Percentage
Want to vote for candidate who has potential to solve southern Thai conflict	74.7%
The responsibility of a good citizen	64.1%
Concerned that not turning out to vote is illegal	37.5%
Violence in Deep South makes you want to participate more actively in politics	26.6%
Obliged to return the favour of a political candidate because he/she has helped you/your community before	8.2%
Turning out to vote because you have received money from a political candidate	7.9%
Turning out to vote because you want to vote against the party that you dislike/hate	5.5%
Turning out to vote because voting-canvassers asked you to do so	2.3%

When asked whether they have been intimidated or pressured into voting for any particular candidate, the majority of the sample group (93.3%) answered “no”. About 2.4 percent left the question unanswered.

Table 6.12: Have you been intimidated/pressure by anyone to vote for any particular candidate?

Have you been intimidated/pressured by anyone to vote for any particular candidate	Percent
Yes	4.3
No	93.3
Did not answer	2.4
Total	100.0

Over a quarter of participants who answered "yes" in Table 6.12 said they were usually pressured by their relatives or friends. Insurgents ranked second as those who intimidated or coerced villagers into voting for a particular candidate, followed by MPs of their constituency. Some said that they were coerced by state authorities, ranging from the village headman to high-level bureaucratic officials, but their number was relatively small. There was no intimidation by any security officers according to the result from the survey sampling. However, I received a different answer when conducting an in-depth interview with villagers. In fact, the role of security officers in the Deep South region during an election campaign does have coercive effects on voters' decisions. The gap between the survey data and interviews clearly signifies that fear continues to prevail in the region during an election campaign.

During the 2011 national election campaign, many high-ranking military officers in the Deep South were also vote-canvassers. In-depth interviews revealed that these military officers were divided into two factions:[343] one faction supported the Democrat Party and the other supported Matubhum Party. I was told that the military officers who supported the Democrat Party often used their authoritative power to prevent vote-canvassers from Matubhum Party leaving their houses on the night before election day. Another tactic was to blacklist many of the Malay Muslim vote-canvassers for Matubhum Party as alleged separatists to prevent them from gaining more votes on the day before the election. Military officers who supported the Democrat Party would threaten these alleged separatists with arrest warrants under the emergency decree. The main goal was to block the vote-canvassers of their opponent party

[343] For safety and security purposes, seven of the high-ranking military officers whom I interviewed want to remain anonymous.

from conducting their last round of vote-buying. Besides, high-ranking military officers in the Deep South region have always had a closely linked relationship with influential politicians from the upper south region and central Bangkok. These influential politicians are the major donors for vote-buying practices in the Deep South. They are the patrons to the candidates in Yala, Pattani, and Narathiwat.

Table 6.13: People who intimidated you to vote

People who intimidated you to vote	Percent
Relatives/Friends	1.3%
Insurgents	0.85%
MP of your constituency	0.60%
Subdistrict Chief/Village Headman	0.24%
Mafias/Influential Groups/Gangs	0.24%
Bureaucratic Officials	0.24%
Religious Leaders/Religious Teachers	0
Security Officers (Military/Paramilitary/Police)	0

As shown in Table 6.14, only 39.6 percent of participants ranging from 25 to 58 years in age have ever attended an election campaign event. Participants explained that they were able to learn more about political candidates by listening to their campaign speeches. Whether a political candidate was sincere in their desire to help the villagers or whether the candidate was a determined and goal-oriented person with a clear political objective, together these factors become a source of information for villagers to make their voting decisions. If the political candidate were charismatic when giving a talk, voters would find it more persuasive to vote for that particular political candidate.

Table 6.14: Have you ever joined in/listened to an election campaigning speech (on stage/in public) given by any political candidate?

Have you ever joined in/listened to an election campaigning speech (on stage/public) given by any political candidate	Percent
Yes	39.6%
No	60.0%
Did not answer	0.4%
Total	100.0%

Most staged campaign speeches would take place at night after evening prayers, which is around eight to nine pm. However, after the outbreak of conflict and violence on 4 January 2004, villagers were reluctant to participate in publicly campaign events. They would rather not take part in election campaigning than risk being ambushed by insurgents, killed or injured by roadside bombs while commuting between villages. As discussed in Chapter Five, politicians changed their practice after 4 January 2004. For their own safety, political candidates preferred to talk at the mosque on Fridays instead of giving a public campaign speech.

The Impact of Violence on Voter Turnout and Voting

"From violence to voting", a case study by Blattman, suggests that victims of violence in northern Uganda are considerably more likely to vote and lead in their communities.[344] A number of studies have shown that victims and witnesses from war and violence can initiate personal evaluation—Yugoslav refugees (Powell et al. 2003), U.S. prisoners of war in Vietnam (Sledge, Boydstun, and Rabe 1980), U.S. World War II veterans (Elder and Clipp 1989),[345] for instance. According to post-traumatic growth theory, some individuals are resilient and able to come to terms with their past traumatic experiences. However, there is a gap between violence

[344] Christopher Blattman (2009). "From Violence to Voting: War and Political Participation in Uganda". *American Political Science Review* 103 (2): 231–247.
[345] Ibid., p. 244.

and voting that is difficult to decipher. In the case of northern Uganda, for instance, it is not conclusive whether the voter turnout was due to mobilisation by elites, weighing of costs, or altruistic preferences as suggested by theories of participation. Blattman admits in the article that there are limitations in his study because of the small sample size; therefore, generalisation of the findings may be problematic.

A study by Bellows and Miguel (2008) shows that, in Sierra Leone, civilians whose household experienced a killing, maiming or displacement are more likely to join political groups and to vote than their neighbours.[346] Since 1984, Turkey has suffered many attacks by the ethnic separatist organisation Kurdistan Worker's Party (Partiya Karkaren Kurdistan) or the PKK.[347] In a study which set out to determine the impact of terrorism on the electoral choices of Turkish voters in the 1991 and 1995 general elections, Kibris found that Turkish voters were highly sensitive to terrorism and that they blamed the government for their losses. Kibris also referred to a significant study by Gassabner, Jong-A-Pin, and Mierau which examined the relationship between terrorism and electoral accountability using a panel data set containing more than 800 elections from 115 countries over the period from 1968 to 2002. Their findings indicate that terrorism increases the probability that the incumbent government may be replaced by the opposition party.[348]

Returning to the case of Thailand's Deep South, besides terrorist acts, harsh government policies also played a role in fomenting the conflict. By far, the Kruesae and Takbai incidents in 2004 caused the most significant number of civilian casualties and marked the most severe crackdown by the government against Malay Muslim dissent. The upshot of the 2004 violence was the defeat of the Wadah group, the incumbent candidates, and Thai Rak Thai—the ruling coalition parties—in the 2005 national election. The voter turnout in the southernmost provinces of Thailand was about sixty percent in 2001. However, the voter turnout soared to eighty percent in the 2005 general election. Even though both elections were held under the same constitution, the voter turnout for the 2005 national election was considerably higher than that in 2001. The most likely explanation for the increase in voter

[346] John Bellows and Edward Miguel (2009). "War and Local Collective Action in Sierra Leone". *Journal of Public Economics* 93 (11–12): 1144–1157.

[347] Arzu Kibris (2010). "Funerals and Elections: The Effects of Terrorism on Voting Behaviour in Turkey". *Journal of Conflict Resolution* 55 (2): 220–247.

[348] Kibris, "Funerals and Elections," 226.

turnout is that the catastrophic violence in 2004 had affected voters emotionally, prompting more people to go the polls on election day. During the interviews, some of the active BRN members remarked that they usually did not want to get involved in Thai politics. It was a strategy to demonstrate their rejection of Thailand's political system; however, the Kruesae and Takbai incidents prompted them to mobilise against Thaksin and the Thai Rak Thai party. The BRN might have disliked the strictly nationalistic Democrat Party because of its rigid rejection of separatism, but Thaksin's oppressive policies towards the Deep South, turned Malay Muslim voters against him. The active BRN members said that they did not have to work hard on mobilising and they maintained not a single baht was paid to the villagers. The active BRN members told me that all they were saying was "Look at what they did to our brothers and sisters. Don't vote for them." The villagers were willing to come out and vote without much prompting.[349] This phenomenon in southern Thailand thus supports previous research by Blattman, Bellows and Miguel, and Kibris which also found that violence had a significant influence on voter turnout.

[349] Interviews with active BRN members at one of the safe houses in Yala, and in Pattani.

Table 6.15: What is the main factor that influences your decision to vote for any particular candidate?

What is the main factor that influences your decision to vote for any particular candidate	Percent
Political party platform	37.4%
Political candidate used to work hard for the community	32.9%
Political candidate helped your village/community before	6.3%
Vote because friends/relatives tells you who to vote for	5.7%
Not answered	5.0%
Admire the political party leader	3.4%
Political candidate is well educated	2.3%
Want to give new political candidate an opportunity	2.1%
Received money from political candidate	1.7%
Political candidate is the same religion as you	1.5%
Political candidate has personally helped you before	1.1%
The election campaign strategy by the political candidate	0.4%
Intimidated by mafias/ influential groups	0.1%
Total	100.0%

As can be seen in Table 6.15, when participants were asked what factor influenced their decision to vote for any particular candidate, 37.4 percent indicated that it was the political party platform, followed by 32.9 percent who responded that it was the political candidate's

track record in working for the welfare of the community. Only 5.7 percent said they were influenced by friends and relatives. A minority of respondents (1.5%) indicated that they would vote for any political candidate who shared their religion. Newcomers who never had any track record in helping the community or were not well known found it difficult to enter the political race in this region as only 2.1 percent of participants would vote for them.

It can be argued that after the 2004 violence, Malay Muslim voters in Thailand's Deep South began to express interest in party policy platforms. Not that they had been indifferent about platforms in the past, but there were no substantive policies to offer to the Malay Muslim villagers. Generic policy platforms such as providing more education or more job opportunities were seen by voters as too vague and often appeared to villagers as empty. Under the New Aspiration Party government in 1996, the Wadah faction had concrete policy platforms to offer to their electorate; for example, allowing women to wear a veil to government offices and their workplace, and establishing an Islamic Bank. One of the villagers in Ban-nangsata district, Yala province, commented that since the New Aspiration Party lost power in the parliament, he never heard any such promising policy platforms again.[350] Although villagers did not mention technical terms like medical welfare or retirement pension, they reported a pressing need for better education and infrastructure, improved security, drug-control policy, more job opportunities, higher prices for rubber, and so forth. What they wanted was concrete and realistic policies, not empty promises. Table 6.16 shows that 83 percent of the survey sample are concerned about drug problems in their village, followed by 44 percent about unemployment, and 31 percent about the conflict and violence in the region.

[350] I interviewed several villagers after their prayer time outside the mosque. They were enthusiastic to exchange their views with me. They mentioned that "Khwam Wang Mai" or the New Aspiration Party have helped the southernmost region so much that they wish Khwam Wang Mai party can rule the government again. They do not remember the name "Wadah group", but they remember the name "Khwam Wang Mai".

Table 6.16: What is the main problem in your community?

What is the main problem in your community?	Percent
Drug problems	83%
Unemployment	44%
Conflict and Violence	31%
Poverty	30%
Injustice by Thai government officials	21%
Conflict within the community	19%
Land ownership problem	18%
Crime	0.08%
Corruption among the community Leaders	0.05%
Mafias/ influential groups	0.04%
Illegal trades	0.02%
No problem	0.01%
Problems of natural resource management	0.01%
HIV/AIDS epidemic within the community	0.01%
Total	100.0%

One villager mentioned that one of the political candidates in Pattani never had any personal contact with villagers. "All he did was just pay and pay. He has lots of money. He never gives a public campaign speech. I wonder if he is capable or not to give a public campaign speech,"[351] the villager remarked. Besides the 1996 general election, the 2011 election campaign was the only campaign in which political parties had any concrete policy platform to

[351] Interview with one villager, a village chief assistant, in Nam Dam sub-district, Tung-Yang-Daeng district, Pattani. The villager referred to one of the candidates who hardly ever meets up with his electorate, but mainly conducts his election campaign through vote-buying. However, it is worth taking note that Nam Dam sub-district is a red zone, a high-risk area in Pattani. The candidate might consider it too risky to enter the area, so vote-buying via his vote-canvassers is a safer tactic.

offer. All the competing parties in the Deep South (except the Democrat Party) launched a campaign calling for autonomy. Different parties proposed different policy platforms for an autonomous region. Only the Democrat Party stood firm in opposition to the idea of granting autonomy to the Deep South.

Table 6.17: What is the main factor that influences your decision not to vote for any particular candidate?

What is the main factor that influences your decision not to vote for any particular candidate?	Percent
Not satisfied with incumbent who has no work results	28.8%
Don't like political party platform	28.5%
Not satisfied with the incumbent's government work	13.5%
Don't like the political candidate who uses money to buy vote	7.2%
Learn that the political candidate engages in corruption	6.2%
Not answered	5.0%
Were intimidated by mafia/influential group/gangs	3.5%
Incumbent politicians rarely come back to their constituency	3.3%
The political candidate has a different religion/ethnicity	2.1%
A new face/unknown political candidate	1.0%
Political candidate refused to help you (personal)	0.9%
Total	100.%

When asked about the main reason for not voting for a political candidate (Table 6.17), 28.8 percent of participants said it was because they were not satisfied with the incumbents who had a poor track record. This was closely followed by those who disliked the political party platform (28.5%), and those who were dissatisfied with the incumbent government (13.5%). The fourth reason for not wanting to vote for a particular candidate was because that candidate used money for vote-buying (7.2%). Bae Soe, a retired teacher in Saiburi district, said that villagers would take the money offered by vote-buyers nonetheless, but voters might defect at the polling booth. Bae Soe said that some of the villagers reckoned that politicians who practiced vote-buying were corrupt.[352] There was fierce competition between two candidates in one of the constituencies in Pattani. Both engaged in vote-buying. One candidate paid 1,500 baht per registered voter, while the other candidate paid 500 baht. The candidate who paid 500 baht per voter won the seat.[353] As I have noted in Chapter Five, vote-buying is not the dominant factor in winning votes.

People certainly wanted to vote for candidates who had the potential to solve the conflict and violence in the southernmost provinces of Thailand. As shown in Table 6.18, participants who agreed accounted for 74.8 percent compared to 25.2 percent who said no.

Table 6.18: Want to vote for candidate who has the potential to solve southern Thai conflict.

Want to vote for candidate who has potential to solve southern Thai conflict	Percent
No	25.2
Yes	74.8
Total	100.0

[352] Bae Soe is considered as spiritual leader in his village. He is well respected because he taught many generations of villagers in that village.

[353] I have crosschecked with villagers in that same constituency regarding the money that was paid by both candidates.

Table 6.19 illustrates the lasting impact of massive violence on people's voting decisions. Almost seventy percent of participants answered "a lot" and "the most" when asked whether an event of massive violence that occurred many years ago still had a significant impact on their vote decision-making.

Table 6.19: A massive violence that happened a while ago still impacts your vote decision-making

Does the massive violence that happened a while ago still impact your vote decision- making	Percent
The least	7.3%
Little	29.0%
A lot	40.9%
The most	20.7%
Did not answer	2.1%
Total	100.0%

From Table 6.20 we can see that 41.6 percent of people believed that continued violence in the region considerably lessened government credibility and competence, while 26.1 percent believed that violence discredited government ability to govern the most.

Table 6.20: You view that the ongoing violence in your area decreases government credibility

You view that the ongoing violence in your area decrease government credibility	Percent
The least	5.1%
Little	24.9%
A lot	41.6%
The most	26.1%
Did not answer	2.3%
Total	100.0%

Table 6.21 reveals that 40 percent of voters considered that violent incidents affected them "a lot" compared to 20.5 percent who answered "the most". The results from Table 6.21 thus confirm that violent incidents in the area exert a significant influence on people's voting decision as argued by Kibris (2010) and Gassabner, Jong-A-Pin, and Mierau (2008).

Table 6.21: Violent incidents in the area has an effect on your vote decision-making

Violent incidents in the area has an effect on your vote decision-making	Percent
The least	9.8%
Little	28.5%
A lot	40.0%
The most	20.5%
Did not answer	1.2%
Total	100.0%

The results shown in Table 6.22 support the argument that violence tends to encourage voter turnout. Those who think that violent incidents discourage voter turnout the least accounted for 34.4 percent of respondents, while those who think that violence does not discourage them that much stand at 39.6 percent. Only 19.9 percent said they were very discouraged from voting, and 4.1 percent considered daily incidents of violence to be the most significant factor preventing them from coming out to vote. Comparison of the finding in Table 6.22 with those of Blattman (2009) and Bellows and Miguel (2008) thus confirms that the likelihood of voters who were affected by violence turning out to vote is higher than that of their neighbours who were not affected by violence.

Table 6.22: You view that daily violent incidents discourage you from turning out to vote

You view that daily violent incidents discourage you from turning out to vote	Percent
The least	34.4%
Little	39.6%
A lot	19.9%
The most	4.1%
Did not answer	2.0%
Total	100.0%

Social Factor: Ethno-Religious Identity

Having occasional casual discussions with many of the locals in Pattani municipality during the two years I was working there, including people in academia, as well as in-depth interviews with national politicians, gave me the impression that people were inclined to believe that vote-buying and religion-ethnicity played the most important role in influencing voting decisions. In the following section of this chapter, I examine the third indicator to determine whether religion-ethnicity is the most influential factor when it comes to voting decision.

Table 6.23: Do you think that the government is sincere with solving violence in the deep south

Do you think that the government is sincere with solving violence in the deep south	Percent
The least	38.2%
Little	39.8%
A lot	16.3%
The most	3.9%
Did not answer	1.8%
Total	100.0%

These results suggest that the electorate did not believe the national government was sincere in its efforts to find a solution for the Deep South conflict. Table 6.23 shows that 38.2 percent and 39.8 percent of participants who answered "the least" and "little" think that the government is not sincere. From the survey results, both Malay Muslims and Thai Buddhists shared the same opinion regarding this question. In fact, the Thai Buddhists were even more skeptical of the government's sincerity in solving the Deep South conflict than their Malay Muslim counterparts.

As shown in Table 6.24, Thai Buddhists were less interested in voting for candidates who shared the same ethnicity and religion as them than their Malay Muslim counterparts. Only 6.8 percent of Thai Buddhists thought it was the most important factor compared to 27.9 percent of their Malay Muslim counterparts.

Table 6.24: Religion * Would you vote for a candidate who was of the same ethnicity and religion as you

			You would only vote for a candidate who was the same ethnicity and religion as you				Total
			Not Important	Quite Important	Important	Very important	
Religion	Islam						
		% within Religion	9.03%	32.5%	30.3%	27.9%	100.0%
	Buddhist						
		% within Religion	30.8%	48.6%	13.7%	6.8%	100.0%
	Christian						
		% within Religion	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100.0%

Total							
		% within Religion	13.4%	35.5%	27.2%	23.9%	100.0%

In Table 6.25, the fact that a political candidate comes from a different religious background seems to have a strong influence on electoral decision-making. There is only a small gap between those who agree (52.1%) and those who disagree (47.2%) that religion has a strong influence on their decision to vote. Given that there are some sentiments between Thai-Buddhists and Malay Muslims, the result in Table 6.25 shows an interesting figure. The number of people who do not think that political candidates who have a different religion from them would have any influence on their decision to vote is pretty high. Nonetheless, it is hard to gauge if the respondents answered the questionnaire honestly.

Table 6.25: Does the political candidate who has a different religion from you have a strong influence on your decision to vote?

Does the political candidate who has a different religion from you have a strong influence on your decision to vote?	Percent
Yes	52.1%
No	47.2%
Did not answer	0.7%
Total	100.0%

However, in Table 6.26, when “corruption” was added to the question, those who said they were more inclined to vote for people from the same religion suddenly shifted their opinion. They turned against the corrupt political candidate despite sharing the same religious beliefs with them. Malay Muslims who answered the least favour to little favour combined came to a total of almost 86 percent.

Table 6.26: Religion * You prefer to vote for someone who share the same religious beliefs with you even though you know that he is involved in corruption

			You prefer to vote for someone who has the same religious beliefs as you even though you know that he is corrupt?				Total
			Not Important	Quite Important	Important	Very important	
Religion	Islam						
		% within Religion	44.1%	41.8%	11.2%	2.9%	100%
	Buddhist						
		% within Religion	38.3%	49.0%	10.1%	2.7%	100%
	Christian						
		% within Religion	0.0%	100.0%	0.0%	0.0%	100%
Total							
		% within Religion	42.9%	43.3%	10.9%	2.9%	100%

Adding “hard work” as another element (how efficient and diligent candidates work to serve their voters) to the context of the same religion-ethnicity also creates a shift in the Malay Muslim’s attitude towards voting. Even though the political candidate might share religion and ethnic identity with the voters, if the candidate has not been working hard, or has not been

working at all for their constituency, that political candidate would not stand a chance to win votes from Malay Muslim electorate. In Table 6.27, Malay Muslims who preferred to vote for someone working hard for their constituency although the political candidate might have different religious beliefs accounted for 49.6 percent, whereas their Thai Buddhist counterparts came in at 53 percent.

Table 6.27: Religion * Would you prefer to vote for someone who is working hard for your constituency even though he/she has different religious beliefs than yours (Crosstabulation)

			You prefer to vote for someone who is working hard for your constituency even though he share a different religious belief other than yours				Total
			Not Important	Quite Important	Important	Very important	
Religion	Islam						
		% within Religion	9.5%	25.3%	49.6%	15.6%	100.0%
	Buddhist						
		% within Religion	2.0%	15.4%	53.0%	29.5%	100.0%
	Christian						
		% within Religion	0.0%	50.0%	50.0%	0.0%	100.0%
Total							
		% within Religion	8.1%	23.5%	50.2%	18.2%	100.0%

Table 6.28 further weakens the argument that people in the Deep South region are more likely to vote for political candidates who share their religious-ethnicity identity. Between political candidates who have high morality/good virtue (คุณธรรม - *kun-ná-tam*) and those who share the same religious-ethnicity identity, the electorate would rather vote for candidates who have high morality/good virtue. The result is 80.5 percent against 18.7 percent.

Table 6.28: Between a high moral political candidate and a political candidate who share the same identity with you, who would you vote for?

Between a high moral political candidate and a political candidate who share the same identity with you, who would you vote for?	Percent
Political candidate with high morals	80.5%
Political candidate who shares the same identity with you	18.7%
Did not answer	0.9%
Total	100.0%

Conclusion

In Thailand, educated urban dwellers tend to regard voters who were paid to vote as illiterate, poor, lacking democratic values, and naïve. Hicken has observed that the Thai political system's instability and dysfunctionality make the practice of vote-buying more attractive to candidates and voters. Hence, it is unwarranted to blame rural villagers for failing to understand how to exercise their rights to vote. In fact, during my fieldwork, voters in villages raised the issue of political parties not offering them substantive policy platforms. These voters were smart. They were able to distinguish and identify what they stood to gain or lose from their voting decision. What the voters needed was information—whether information about the candidates' political performance in parliament, candidates' charisma, or how often the candidates met with villagers—to weigh the cost before casting their votes.

Violence in the southernmost region has not prevented people from participating in politics. Even when there is massive violence, voters are still likely to turn up to vote. A single

catastrophic incident like the 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani, the Kruesae killings, and the Takbai massacre can influence villagers to alter the way they vote. These incidents of massive violence prompted villagers to cast "a punishment vote" against the incumbent ruling party and opt for the opposition party. However, when there is a daily occurrence of small-scale violence, voters tend to vote based on "Candidate-Centered" selection and are likely to vote for the incumbent politicians from the ruling party or the opposition party.

Conclusion

The 2005 national election result was astonishing. All of the incumbents who were the long-time representatives in the Deep South were defeated. What caused this phenomenon? In the previous year, an attack by insurgents on the military camp in Narathiwat on 4 January 2004 marked a new phase of violence in Thailand's Deep South. It was soon followed by the tragic Kruesae Mosque massacre in Pattani (28 April 2004) and the Takbai massacre in Narathiwat (25 October 2004). To date, more than six thousand people have been killed in this conflict-ridden region. Research on the conflict in southern Thailand has been mostly restricted to strategic and security issues and anthropological studies that focus on cultural identity. Up to now, electoral participation and political behaviour in the Deep South has been under-researched. Voting is a low-stakes action and an expressive act. Therefore the primary motivation in voting or not voting depends on whether the citizen has something to express. In the context of violence in Thailand's Deep South, people are living in a climate of fear and mistrust. Local villagers have to consider the stances of both state authorities and the insurgents when they decide how to behave because one miscalculation can cause suspicion and possible retaliation from either side. Actively participating in politics, such as demonstrating in the streets, conducting boycotts, or filing a petition may invite retribution. It is less risky for people who live in a context of violence to express their opinion quietly, legally, via the ballot box. Haji Sulong's disappearance still sits in the memories of Malay Muslims as a horrific lesson of the potential costs of bravely stating their grievances in public. Hence, studying voting is one of the very important channels for political studies where one can understand the preferences of which political candidate, or which political party the citizens who live in the area of violence prefer to vote for or to vote against.

This Conclusion has been organised in the following way. First, I briefly recapitulate the central claims of my thesis. The subsequent section aims to elaborate on the Thai military's obsession with the country's stability, which led them to forcefully suppress whomever they perceived as a threat. The brutal suppression by military forces, in turn, gives justification to the insurgent groups to fight back. I then present the development of Malay Muslims' political participation through the story of Haji Sulong (from Chapter Two), the 1975 mass demonstration (from Chapter Three), and the involvement of the Wadah group (from Chapter Four), respectively. From this point onwards, I discuss how violence is intertwined with vote-

buying and how it affects the patron-client structure (from Chapter Five). Then, I analyse the relationship between massive violence and voting decisions (from Chapter Six). At the end of this chapter, I propose my prospects for future research on the interconnection of voting behaviour and violence research.

Recapitulation of Central Claims

When it comes to how electors are voting in a climate of violence, the evidence presented in this thesis supports two central claims. First, the occurrence of massive violence increases voter participation levels and opposition to the government. Because the impact is so immense, the information about the incident can easily reach a wider audience. The news, either from the media or by word of mouth from the witnesses or victims, comes directly to the electorate. People with the same ethnic affiliation tend to share the same grievances, so when massive violence occurs opinions tend to be commonly held within that ethnic community. Political candidates and vote-canvassers or middlemen will have less power to persuade or to influence voters because voters already know about the violence and the response of politicians and parties. The direct information empowers voters to make a clearer decision on whom they want to vote for. Voters, moreover, are then empowered to punish those standing for election with whom they are dissatisfied. Second, when violence is prolonged and becomes chronic, the patron-client system becomes more deeply entrenched in the electoral politics of the region. Chronic violence forces patrons in the southernmost provinces of Thailand into a vulnerable position. Because of safety concerns, patrons or political candidates are reluctant to travel to remote villages to meet directly with their constituents. As a result, political candidates have to rely more on their brokers, which gives the latter more leverage in bargaining for what they want. As long as the chronic violence persists in the most southern region, the traditional system of patron-client relationship will remain solid, and vote-buying will remain epidemic.

The Military' s Nationalism and the Fomenting of Insurgency

For more than a century, the Deep South's socio-political development has been curbed under the authority of the Thai state. Malay Muslims regard themselves as victims of Thai mistreatment and repression dating back at least to Siam's annexation of Patani in 1902. One

of the most infamous narratives that has been passed on for generations, reproducing hatred and grievances toward the Thais, is the story of how the Siamese used to sever the Achilles tendons of the Malay Muslim prisoners to prevent them from escaping. Legend has it that the Siamese soldiers chained the Malay Muslim prisoners together and forced them to walk all the way from Pattani to Bangkok in order to build the San-Saeb canal (คลองแสนแสบ), which is now one of the major canals in Bangkok. I heard this story repeatedly when I was a child from my father who was a descendant of the Malay Muslims in Narathiwat. After moving to Pattani in 2009 to take a teaching position at Prince of Songkhla University, I learned that the story is well-known in the region. Every local Malay Muslim also heard this gruesome story. There was no proof to the truth of the story but it is believed by locals.[354] The actual history was that the Malay Muslims were prisoners of war taken from Pattani to Bangkok in 1828 during the reign of King Rama III (1824–1851).[355] Unfortunately, there is little concern for historical accuracy regarding such popular stories. Indeed, the story of the Malay Muslim prisoners' tendons being cut was used as a weapon against the Thai state by the insurgents to recruit new members. It is a powerful story that can provoke people's anger and desire for revenge on the Siamese. The story provides justification to insurgent groups to carry on with their secessionist struggle. The unproven narrative is one of the many examples of how misinformation that is passed from one generation to another can feed conflict and political interests.

Differences in ethnicity, culture, and religious beliefs led the Siam State to fear that the Deep South could one day secede. For the military regimes, national security is their prime concern; they are sensitive to any activities or expression of ideas that might threaten the country's stability. The military's ultra-nationalism has prevented and impeded the peace process in this conflict region. Any mention of an autonomous region or attempts to have the Bahasa Malay dialect as one of the Malay Muslims' official languages is regarded as jeopardizing Thai national security. In the past, the underprivileged Malay Muslims had poor access to quality education. They lived in poverty, lacked proper infrastructure, and only had limited fundamental rights. In 1947, the British journalist Barbara Whittingham-Jones pointed out in her news article how *Rathniyom* or 'State Convention', the Thai nationalism campaign

[354] Taveepon Khummetha (2015). "*Chumchon Muslim kaw kae nai krungthep kamlang phachoen phawa lai rue*" [Old town Muslim Community in Bangkok are now facing an expropriation] Sunday, 1 November. *Prachatai* newspaper online. https://prachatai.com/journal/2015/11/62220

[355] Christopher M. Joll (2012). *Muslim-Merit Making in Thailand's Far-South*. Springer, p. 73.

led by Field Marshal Phibun, had to a great extent negatively impacted the lives of the Malay Muslims. Essentially a nation-building policy to restore Thai patriotism, *Rathniyom* contained a series of twelve cultural mandates announced from 1939 to 1942. The Malay Muslims have a distinctive cultural identity from the rest of the people in Thailand. These regulations, however, sought to coerce Malay Muslims into abandoning their identity. The Thai state consistently attempted to assimilate the Malay Muslims, compelling them to take on the customs and practices of the Thais. I have illustrated in Chapter Two and Chapter Three how military control has distorted the origins of the Malay Muslims' cultural identity, weakened the local community's sense of solidarity, and obstructed the growth of democracy in the region. The forced assimilation policy generated political dissent among many of the Malay Muslims and led them to revolt against the Thai government. They went underground and formed insurgent groups like BNPP (1959), BRN (1958), PULO (1968), MPRMP (1970),[356] to name a few.

Malay Muslim's Political Participation

This thesis distinguishes political participation into two major forms: the conventional form which includes voting, freedom of expression, participating in election campaigns and serving in public office, and the unconventional form which includes protests and demonstrations. My research suggests that the Malay Muslims' level of political participation is relatively high, although they are the minority of the country. The movement led by Haji Sulong is a prime example of the Malay Muslim community participating in the democratic process to demand their rights. Politically active from 1927 to 1952, Haji Sulong first tried to improve people's living standards in Pattani and Islamic education in the southern border area. He then went on to develop the seven appeals of autonomy and fought to free the Deep South from Thai control until his forced disappearance in 1954 with his eldest son and two of his friends. As an Islamic religious leader and a minority who lived in a strongly centralised Thai state, Haji Sulong demonstrated democratic tendencies during his leadership of the Malay movement. The price for openly protesting against the Thai government is high. Protesters are

[356] Prasit Chaitongpan (2008). *Khao ha wa (Sor Sor Najmuddeen) pen kabot plon puen*. [They accused (Member of Parliament, Najmuddeen) as the rebel who stole the guns]. Bangkok: Saiyai Prachatham Publishing, pp. 46–47.

faced with arrest, imprisonment, and possibly forced disappearance or extrajudicial killing by the state authorities. Haji Sulong's forced disappearance and death confirm that it is unlikely for an individual to succeed in achieving their political goal if they stand up against a strongly nationalistic state.

Where Haji Sulong, who was the public face of the movement that stood up alone against the Thai State and failed, the 1975 Pattani demonstration offers a different perspective. The Pattani Mass Demonstration in 1975 offers strong proof that the more the minority unites to form a larger group, the more political leverage it will have vis-à-vis the state. The mass demonstration was sparked off by the murder of five villagers by Thai marines. It was then exacerbated by the bombing incident that resulted in twelve people killed and more than thirty people injured at Pattani City Hall. At its height, the demonstration saw up to 100,000 outraged protesters take to the streets. While most mainstream Southern Thailand peace and conflict scholars have based their arguments on the Kruesae Mosque killings and the Takbai massacre in 2004 as the beginning of the southern violence dispersal, I suggest a different timeline. From the perspective of electoral politics, I argued in Chapter Three that it was the 1975 Pattani demonstration that marked the emergence of the Malay Muslims' political participation because it had shaped the development of electoral politics in the Deep South which endured until this day. The anger and frustration generated by the brutal killings at Kor Thor Bridge, and the grenade that was thrown at the demonstrators in front of the Pattani City Hall, moved the Malay Muslims to join the protest against the government. In other words, the use of violence as a control-mechanism by the state authorities proved counter-productive and only succeeded in forcing the Malay Muslims to increase their political participation. Not only did the violence motivate the crowd to join the rally, it also encouraged people to come out to vote in the 1976 national election. People came to the polling stations to punish the ruling coalition by voting against them. Consequently, the ruling coalition lost all of its seats to the opposition party in that election. It can be argued, therefore, that Malay Muslim participation in this major political event progressively transformed the spectrum of how electoral politics in this region has manifested until this day. The 1976 national election was an example of how voters can punish the incumbent government for failing to handle massive violence. The incident also spawned a new generation of politicians like the Wadah group. It fostered political networking between political actors in the region and unveiled the power of civilians' collective action.

However, it also deepened the mistrust that the Malay Muslims felt towards the Thai government and led to the re-emergence of the insurgency.

Following the 1975 Pattani demonstration, a Malay Muslim political faction called 'Wadah' emerged. These representatives of the Muslim minority in the Deep South survived the political system of the strongly centralised Thai state for nineteen years (1986–2005). Some of the Wadah members like Den Tohmeena and Wan Muhammad Nor became well-respected politicians and are nationally well known. Besides their long involvement in politics and their long representation of their communities, some of the Wadah members have always been re-elected because of several other factors. They have strong support from the party leader, and in some cases, even the larger faction leader who not only supports Wadah's ideology but also provides Wadah with financial support for their local and national election campaigns. Everything seemed to be going well for Wadah until the eruption of the massive violence in 2004. Not only did the Wadah faction take a neutral stance during these incidents of massive violence, but it continued to run for national MP in the subsequent election under the name of the Thai Rak Thai Party, which was the incumbent party. With the memory of victims of the incidents still fresh in their minds, Malay Muslims voted against the incumbent political party and caused Wadah members to lose all of their seats in the 2005 national election.

In Chapter Four, I argued that violence did, in fact, undermine politicians' power within their own constituencies. The more massive the violence, the more likely incumbent politicians from government parties were to be ousted by their electorates in the subsequent elections. Wadah opted for a neutral stance as their political strategy in order to secure their cabinet posts and their MP seats. They were striving to maintain stability by carefully navigating between the Malay Muslim electorate and the political parties. However, Wadah's popularity plummeted because its MPs failed to reach out to their electorate and to acknowledge their grievances against Thaksin. Had the massive violence not erupted, this political strategy might have continued to benefit Wadah. The major violence situation was an intervening variable. It was the dynamic factor that interrupted Wadah's longstanding political strategy. This dynamic factor also led to Wadah's internal conflict, causing the group to split into different political parties.

How Violence is Intertwined with Vote-buying, and How it Affects Patron-Client Structure

Thailand is notorious for vote-buying during elections. Most of the educated urban middle-class perceive villagers as illiterate, poor, and lacking democratic values. Based on my interviews with villagers in the Deep South, however, most voters in this region of Thailand are rational and calculative. Villagers tend to deliberate carefully before deciding how to vote; they are also aware that their voting decision is based on the information they have in hand. Information that villagers take into account includes who the politicians are affiliated with, the source of the money given out by vote-buyers, potential threats from influential vote-canvassers, candidates' political platforms and charisma, the incumbent politician's competence, and so forth. All of these factors combined contribute enormously to how villagers make their voting choice.

However, there is a distinction between the Malay Muslim voters and voters from other regions of Thailand. In the Deep South there is an ongoing violence between the state security forces and the insurgents. People who live in the region inevitably disengage from violent activity. They were able to laugh at themselves with jokes about bombs and violence. The jokes in fact echoed a depressive outlook that people carried around with them every day. You would also hear some warnings, such as the best time not to travel around from village to village was during Maghrib.[357] The reason was that those who were traveling at that time were unlikely to be Muslims because 'real Muslims' were supposed to be at home or praying at the mosque. It also explains why the insurgents tend to launch their attacks during Maghrib time late in the afternoon, because they believe that they can avoid killing and injuring 'real Muslims'. Violence has become part of the norm in the Deep South community. Where people in other parts of Thailand need not fear a clash between the insurgent groups and the security forces, people in the Deep South have to adjust their life to live with violence.

Vote-buying cases in the southernmost provinces of Thailand can illuminate how complex the situation can be for the villagers when it comes to voting, especially when the context of violence is added to the spectrum. Despite the general understanding of the discourse on vote-buying, Thai elites and educated urban dwellers still believe that villagers would

[357] Maghrib is the fourth prayer time of the day for Muslims to pray. The time is around 6:00pm to 7:00pm.

simply take the money from vote-buyers and cast a vote in return for the favour. The electorate in rural areas, in fact, have considerable independence of mind when they vote. Villagers might comply with the vote-buyers, but they might also defect from the political candidate who offers them money.

Deep South electoral politics may not be all that different from the rest of the country. Programmatic politics and democratic institutions are weak, which in turn reduces politicians' capability to keep their promises to their constituents. Thus, vote-buying becomes a shortcut solution for politicians in Thailand to buy their way back to the parliament. The weakness of programmatic politics in the Deep South enables the entrenching of the patron-client system. However, the chronic violence and massive violence situation have further ingrained the traditional system of patron-client relationship in the Malay Muslim community. Although vote-buying practices are already widespread, the chronic violence in the Deep South opens up a window of opportunity for vote-canvassers to bargain for more material rewards from their patrons. The magnitude and procedure of vote-buying are indicators that can be used to gauge the role of vote-canvassers in the context of violence. Vote-canvassers have become more important because they are part of the strategic election campaigning to help their patrons win the seat. They have a closer tie with villagers or voters than the political candidate does. The information of voters' preference is what political candidates need to predict and speculate for their election campaigning plan in order to win the seat.

In the context of violence, it is not an easy task for political candidates and vote-canvassers to control or mobilise voters. To political candidates or patrons who are at the top tier of the patron-client pyramid structure, the obscurity of information because of the violence forces them to spend more money on vote-buying through their vote-canvassers. But voters have a mind of their own. Because of the violence context, voters are inclined to make voting choices using cognitive processes and the available information about the candidates. Voters will evaluate whether they ought to vote for or to defect from a candidate. Therefore, the voting decisions that these villagers make under the condition of chronic violence are all well thought-out. Thus, the longer chronic violence continues, the weaker programmatic politics and the nature form of democratic institutions will become, the more bargaining leverage vote-canvassers will have vis-à-vis political candidates, and the more vote-influence vote-canvassers will have over voters. Likewise, if there is an occurrence of massive violence in the region, the bargaining power of vote-canvassers over their patrons is elevated, but the vote-

influence that the vote-canvassers may have over voters would actually diminish. I suggest that the overall system of patron-client relationship, vote-buying, and vote-canvassers would not have happened if programmatic politics were strong and the forms of democratic institutions were stable. This means that the constant blame that the elites and urbanites direct towards the politicians and rural voters is without basis. It is not only the bottom-up political structure or grassroots and local political organisations that are to blame. Military intervention, an ineffective justice system, and weak political party platforms all play a role in undermining democratic institutions in Thailand.

The Relationship between Massive Violence and Voting Decisions

Violence in the southern region has not prevented people from participating in politics. Even when there is massive violence, voters are likely to turn up to vote. A single catastrophic incident like the 1975 mass demonstration in Pattani, the Kruesae killings, and the Takbai massacre certainly affected Malay Muslim voters emotionally. The information from seeing or hearing about the big violence caused by the Thai state suppression is so apparent that it can influence villagers to alter the way they vote. These massive violent incidents influence villagers to make "a punishment vote" against the incumbent ruling party, and instead, opt for the opposition party. However, when there is a daily occurrence of small-scale chronic violence, voters tend to vote based on "Candidate-Centered" selection, and are likely to vote for the incumbent politicians from the ruling party or the opposition party. Vote-buying and social factors such as religion, ethnicity, and gender, play a part in the voting behaviour of the electorate in the southernmost provinces. But it is primarily the occurrences of chronic violence and single catastrophic incidents that affect how the electorate votes. Hence, I argue in Chapter Six that voters will vote based on "Candidate-Centered" from the ruling party when chronic violence continues to occur daily (the national election of 1979, 1983, 1986, 1988, 1992, 1995, 1996, 2001, 2007). But when a single catastrophic incident occurs, voters are inclined to punish politicians from the ruling party by voting against them. Voters would vote based on "Party-based" and opt for political candidates from the opposition party (the national elections of 1976 and 2005).

Future Research Proposal

This thesis contributes an important finding to the literature on political behaviour. The case of Thailand's Deep South demonstrates that voters continue electoral participation despite ongoing chronic violence by insurgent groups and massive violence perpetrated by the state authorities. In accordance with Bateson's argument, crime victims participated more in politics than comparable non-victims.[358] Likewise, evidence from Blattman's survey has shown that people who experienced violence are likely to be more involved in politics; they are more likely to vote and play a leading role in their communities.[359] This thesis also offers an explanation for the relationship between politicians, vote-canvassers, and voters during the election process that takes place in a climate of conflict and violence. If we understand the relationship structure between voters, vote-canvassers, and politicians in the context of violence, it would then enable us to predict the outcome of national elections subsequent to the outbreak of massive violence. The model in Chapter Six was created to illustrate the probability of southernmost provinces electorates' voting behaviour when they are under the strain of chronic violence and massive violence.

In future I plan to further my research on voting behaviour amidst violence by exploring beyond the case study of the southernmost provinces of Thailand. There are several other cases that I wish to study, cases that occurred in other countries, such as Mindanao in the Philippines and Northern Ireland. By using different case studies in a comparative perspective, I can test the model that I have proposed and seek to develop a theory. In the meantime, Thailand is still under the control of the authoritarian military government. There is no firm indication from the military government on when the next election will be held. Though violence remains a major concern for local people, there have been only incidents of chronic violence in recent years. It is very highly likely that the election result of the next general election in the Deep South will be candidate-based or individual-based because there are no incumbent politicians for the voters to look up to.

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