The Government's Role in the Implementation of Religious Tolerance Practices in Southeast Asia

Fiki Khoirul Mala
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, Indonesia
fikikhoirulmala@gmail.com

Muhammah Ikhlas Supardin
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta
ikhlassupardin@gmail.com

Muhammad Aminul Wahid
UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta
Muhammad.aminul20@mhs.uinjkt.ac.id

Abstract

The dynamics of Islam within the framework of Islamic majority and minority groups cannot be separated from the government's role in maintaining religious tolerance. Minority groups such as Moro Muslims in the Philippines, Patani Muslims in Thailand, and Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar have illustrated the government's minimal role in resolving conflicts between the majority and minorities. Therefore, this paper discusses the Muslim majority and minority groups in several countries and their relationship with the government to implement the practice of religious tolerance. This article uses a library method with a content analysis approach from relevant articles related to the government's role in implementing religious tolerance practices in Southeast Asia. The study shows that the existence of Islam as a belief of a person and the people who are part of the state and government cannot be separated from one another. In other words, the state's support for its people of various ethnicity, cultures, and religions will contribute to the peace of the state and the creation of state stability. The position of the majority and minority in the religious process will also influence religious institutions socially, economically, and culturally. Showing the expression of diversity in religious practices in the Southeast Asia region will create a new order in creating peace.

Keywords: *Government's role, tolerance, Southeast Asia.*

Abstrak

Dinamika Islam dalam kerangka kelompok mayoritas dan minoritas Islam tidak lepas dari peran pemerintah dalam menjaga toleransi beragama. Kelompok minoritas seperti Muslim Moro di Filipina, Muslim Patani di Thailand, dan Muslim Rohingya di Myanmar telah menggambarkan minimnya peran pemerintah dalam menyelesaikan konflik antara mayoritas dan minoritas. Oleh karena itu, tulisan ini membahas kelompok mayoritas Muslim dan minoritas di beberapa negara dan hubungannya dengan pemerintah dalam menerapkan praktik toleransi beragama. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kepustakaan dengan pendekatan analisis isi dari artikel yang relevan terkait pengaruh pemerintahan dalam upaya menegakkan toleransi keagamaan di Asia Tenggara. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahwa keberadaan Islam sebagai keyakinan seseorang dan rakyat yang merupakan bagian

dari negara dan pemerintahan tidak dapat dipisahkan satu sama lain. Dengan kata lain, dukungan negara terhadap rakyatnya dalam berbagai suku, budaya, dan agama akan memberikan kontribusi bagi ketentraman negara dan terciptanya stabilitas negara. Kedudukan mayoritas dan minoritas dalam proses keagamaan ternyata juga akan mempengaruhi institusi keagamaan baik secara sosial, ekonomi maupun budaya. Dengan menunjukkan ekspresi keberagaman dalam praktik keagamaan di kawasan Asia Tenggara, maka akan tercipta tatanan baru dalam menciptakan perdamaian.

Kata Kunci: *Peran Pemerintah, Toleransi, Asia Tenggara.*

INTRODUCTION

In general, associations between countries in Southeast Asia did not start from the establishment of ASEAN. Still, previously there have been several name changes that have been linked with associations of countries in Southeast Asia, such as SEAC (Southeast Asia Command), which was formed during the war. The second world then changed its name to SEATO (the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization), which was formed after the second world war, especially during the cold war in 1954. And finally, the name changed to ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations) in 1967.[1]

The ASEAN Declaration or Bangkok Declaration is a historical momentum for regions in parts of Southeast Asia to unite the core objectives of the regional area to establish relations and cooperation in enhancing country stability. This declaration was signed on August 8, 1967, by some five foreign ministers from major ASEAN countries such as Adam Malik from Indonesia, Narciso R. Ramos from the Philippines, Tun Abdul Razaq from Malaysia, and S. Rajaratnam from Singapore and Thanat Khoman from Thailand. Other countries in Southeast Asia, such as Myanmar, Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, began to join in the next few decades.

Bangkok declaration provides an agreement to establish ASEAN (Association of Southeast Asian Nations). It has core objectives in various fields, both economically by emphasizing cooperation in economic growth and regional development; and in the area of regional peace, which includes the ASEAN region in particular, and the world in general, namely through the United Nations (United Nations). Therefore, the existence of Southeast Asia in its identity cannot be separated from efforts to implement aspects of togetherness in maintaining peace.[2]

In a different view, the existence of ASEAN is part of efforts to maintain nationalism. In another sense, nationalism is an effort to develop the country and preserve the peace of the country. It is primarily in the effort to fight against colonialism in the ASEAN countries that also did not escape from colonialism for several decades or even hundreds of years.

---

[1] Donald K. Emmerson, "Southeast Asia : What's in a Name ?," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 15.1 (1984), 1–21.

[2] Emmerson.David Martin Jones, "Security and Democracy : The ASEAN charter and the Dilemmas of Regionalism in South East Asia," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944)*, 84.4 (2008), 735–56.

In general, the culture surrounding the Southeast Asian region comes from the same race, ethnicity, and religion, but different cultures and religions surround Southeast Asia. Even though it is located in a close area, in reality, the countries in Southeast Asia are not similar to one another, so it is not surprising that Southeast Asia is also known as a vis--vis region and religion.[3] Therefore, in this paper, we will generally discuss Southeast Asia as a regional study and religion as a research base and continue on the Islamic majority and minority in the area.

METHODOLOGY

This research is library research, using library data sources as reference materials and then analyzing them[4]. This study uses a content analysis approach, namely by conducting an in-depth study of the sources that have been obtained from the literature.[5] Sources of data in this study consisted of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are articles in books and journals that contain topics related to the government's role in creating religious tolerance. In general, the data collected in this study is in the form of e-paper. The steps taken in data collection are by conducting e-papers through several accredited journals with the keywords government and religion. After searching for academic texts relevant to the research, they must be downloaded and collected in the Mendeley Reference App. The collected data is then analyzed for its contents and classified according to the research theme into several folders. Data from the literature study are then presented as research findings. The findings are then abstracted to be presented as facts. These facts are analyzed by mapping and classification analysis and interpreted to produce new information resulting from research in useful new knowledge.

DISCUSSION
Southeast Asia Region

In general, regional studies are often associated with a group of countries that are in geographically close areas and have intensive interactions in realizing regional stability together in this case. It is often associated with nationalism, which includes the power to forge differences in communities, religions, and groups.[6] In another view, Russet defines that areas that are geographically close in general will have similarities in their cultural, social, and political aspects. Therefore, countries in Southeast Asia will have dependency

---

[3] M.B Hooker, "Towards a Legal History of Southeast Asia," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 51.1 (233) (1978), 110–21.

[4] Lexy J. Moleong, *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, 30 ed. (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012) h. 6; Atho Mudzhar, *Pendekatan Studi Islam Dalam Teori dan Praktek* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011). h. 13

[5] Harold H. Kassarjian, "Content Analysis in Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4 no. 1 (1997), 8–18; Walter Lippman, "A Content Analysis," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 14 No. 2 (1950), 296–302; Satu Elo dan Helvi Kyngas, "The Qualitative Content Analysis Process," *Jurnal of Advanced Nursing*, 62 No. 1 (2008), 107–15.

[6] B.C Upreti, "Nationalism in South Asia: Trend and Interpretations," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 67.3 (2006), 535–44.

side between countries with each other both in the economic, communication, political and social fields.[7]

Geographically, Southeast Asia is an area that lies between China, India, Australia, and the Pacific Ocean. So that in its division, the Southeast Asia region is divided into two parts, namely the mainland Southeast Asia region and the archipelago. Suppose Cambodia, Vietnam, Myanmar, Laos, and Thailand are part of mainland Southeast Asia. In that case, apart from that country, they are included in the category of archipelago Southeast Asia consisting of Singapore, the Philippines, Indonesia, Malaysia, Timor Leste, and Brunei Darussalam.[8]

Southeast Asia is directly bordered by several regions, such as China, the Pacific Ocean, the Indian Ocean, the Bay of Bengal, and the World Subcontinent. The total land area of the Southeast Asian region is around 4,500,000 km2, and the water area is 5,060,100 km2, with details that Indonesia is the largest country in Southeast Asia and Singapore is the smallest region in Southeast Asia.

The theory put forward by Russet states that adjacent areas will indirectly have the same cultural, social, and political homogeneity. But in reality, the region in Southeast Asia does not have similarities in the scope of culture and religion, so it deserves to be said as one region. In further reading, Tigore, an Indian writer, traveled across Southeast Asia to prove the influence of China and Sanskrit. After researching, Tigore said he saw India Everywhere but found it nowhere. This statement implies that although Southeast Asian people have influence and come from other races, cultural acculturation in this area has occurred for hundreds of years.[9]

Culture is a set of values and practices that give meaning to society, usually manifested in literature, art, education, film, music, and food. Even the existence of culture is always affected by the policies made by a country. Therefore, personal interaction, visits, trade, or knowledge can spread culture or values.[10]

According to Stuart Hall, various ways of producing and exchanging cultural meanings exist. Among them are (1) personal and social interactions; (2) Group identity and group differences; (3) rituals and practices of daily life; (4) mass media and global communication; (5) rules, norms, and conventions; and (6) community narratives or stories. Of the various factors surrounding the spread of culture above, it also indirectly affects the process of diversity in the religious field of an area.[11]

The spread of religion in Southeast Asia is also inseparable from diversity. Various religions also contribute to the cultural formation in the Southeast Asian region. Islam is the majority religion of the Indonesian people with 90%, Brunei Darussalam with 67%, and Malaysia. With 58%. Other countries, such as the Philippines, where the majority religion is Catholic, and Thailand, Vietnam, and Myanmar are dominated by Buddhists, although in

---

[7] Amelia Joan Liwe, *Makna Strategis Kajian Wilayah Asia Tenggara dari Sudut Pandang Hubungan Internasional* (Jakarta, 2019). h. 40

[8] Jones.

[9] Liwe. h. 45

[10] D. G. E. Hall, "On the Study of Southeast Asian History," *Pacific Affairs*, 33.3 (1960), 268–81.

[11] Struart Hall, *Representation: Cultural representasions and signifying practice* (London: Sage Publication, 2003).

certain areas, such as the Southern Philippines, Southern Thailand, and Western Myanmar.[12]

Southeast Asia as a multicultural country cannot be separated from the dynamics that develop in each country, especially those related to the Islamic religion. The dynamics of the development of Islam in Southeast Asia are as follows:

Islam and Cultural Acculturation Efforts in Southeast Asia

In the course of history, before the Bangkok declaration in 1967, regions in Southeast Asia had implemented the tradition of preserving culture and promoting the aspect of religious tolerance. It can be proven regarding the history of the peaceful entry of Islam into Southeast Asia. Azyumardi Azra further stated that entering Islam in Southeast Asia is never called *fath* or liberation, which is often associated with Islamic military power, as happened in the Middle East and Africa.[13]

The facts show that Southeast Asia, as a regional base, is very heterogeneous and thick with culture and has a high demand for Islam. The impact of the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia, especially Indonesia, reached 209.1 million people, equivalent to 13% of the total Muslim population in the world.

In further reading, Southeast Asia is a strategic area for trade routes from China, Arabia, and Persia; therefore, Islam is widely spread through trade routes, resulting in acculturation and cultural assimilation through marriage and trade. Thus, most areas located at the level of archipelagic Southeast Asia are dominated by Islam compared to other religions. Islam is the religion of the majority population in Southeast Asia, consisting of three countries: Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam. As for these three countries, if they are part of an archipelagic Southeast Asian country with the largest population in Southeast Asia.[14]

The Gujarat theory states that Islam was brought by traders from Gujarat, India, and spread to Indonesia through the Straits of Malacca. In contrast, this theory explains that the arrival of Islam in Indonesia in the 13th century was through contact with traders from the Samudra Pasai kingdom. This theory is reinforced by the discovery of the tomb of the sultan Samudra Pasai Malik al-Saleh with a Gujarat pattern in 1297. This theory was put forward by Snouck Hurgonje and J. Pijnapel.[15]

G.R. Tibbetts also put forward the development of the theory of the entry of Islam into Indonesia by stating that Islam entered the archipelago through traders from Persia and Iran. This theory predicts that Islam entered Indonesia in the 13th-15th centuries. This theory is proven by the similarities between Indonesian and Persian traditions, such as the 10 Muharram celebrations with a commemoration called Tabuik or Tabut.

---

[12] Vincent J.H. Houben, "Southeast Asia and Islam," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 588 (2003), 149–70.Martin Van Bruinessen, "New Perspectives on Sotheast Asia Islam?," *Bijdragen tot de Taal*, 143.4 (1987), 519–38.

[13] Azyumardi Azra, *Renaisans Islam Asia Tenggara, Sejarah Wacana dan Kekuasaan* (Bandung: Rosdakarya, 1999). p. xvi

[14] Houben.

[15] Anthony H. Johns, 'Islam in Southeast Asia: Reflection and New Directions', *Indonesia*, 19 (1975), 33–55.

Slamet Mulyana and Sumanto al-Qurtuby initiated the theory of the early arrival of Islam to the archipelago. They stated that Islam entered the Chinese Muslim community in the 9th century A.D. It is corroborated by the evidence that Raden Patah is of Chinese descent, the writing of the title of the king of Demak is in Chinese terms, as well as notes stating that it was Chinese traders who first occupied ports in the archipelago. In contrast, other evidence he found apart from the Brunei Darussalam area was stone. Tombstone of a Chinese Muslim in the Rangas area, Jalan Tutong, Bandar Seri Begawan. From this tombstone, it is known that the Pu family is a Chinese Muslim from the Chuan-chou family during the Sung dynasty (960-1279 AD).[16]

The last theory states that Islam in the archipelago was brought directly by travelers from Arabia who were passionate about spreading Islam throughout the world in the 7th century Hijriyah. It is reinforced by the existence of an Arab village in Barus, South Sumatra, as well as a well-known school in Samudra Pasai, namely the Shafi'i school, a famous school in Arabia. This theory was introduced by Van Leur, Anthony H. Johns, T.W Arnold, and Buya Hamka.[17]

In general, history has explained that the process of entering religion into an area cannot be separated from the aspects of culture and values that surround the area. In other words, if a site has the same values as the religion being propagated, then the level of acceptance will be greater and higher. Tolerance efforts can be encouraged better.[18] Islam to Southeast Asia through a series of trade trips is not enough to provide a role and influence on the development of Islam in Southeast Asia. It takes time and a process of adaptation to the surrounding environment so that Islam can be accepted by the wider community and blend with previously developed traditions.

Van Leur's view suggests that those who have an essential role in spreading Islam in Southeast Asia are rich merchants supporting people's lives. Another perspective states that the process of Islamization in Southeast Asia tends to be accepted. It is because Islamic teachings are correlated to Sufism. The process of fast acceptance by the people of Southeast Asia and Indonesia in particular, considering that the background of the belief that existed before Islam came was animism and dynamism. Therefore the existence of Islam and its Sufism was more readily accepted at that time.[19]

Azyumardi Azra and Abdurrahman Mas'ud also stated that the propagators of Islam were wandering Sufis who also worked as traders. The success of the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia cannot be separated from the efforts to present Islam with attractive packaging, namely by adapting Islam to old traditions or continuity, rather than providing drastic changes to religious practices with new religions. It's like curing various diseases that people suffer from and balancing them with magic.[20]

---

[16] Awang Mohammad Jamil al-Sufti, Tarsilah Brunei: Sejarah Awal dan Perkambangan Islam, Bandar Seri Begawan, (Jabatan Pusat Sejarah,1991) p. 87

[17] Anthony H. Johns, 'Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflection and Reconsiderations', *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 26.1 (1995), 169–83.

[18] Ronald Inglehart dan Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," *American Sociological Review*, 65.1 (2000), 19–51.

[19] Johns, 'Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflection and Reconsiderations'.

[20] Johns, 'Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflection and Reconsiderations'.

The Sufis' existence, success in spreading Islam, and knowledge are also based on the educational process applied. Among these processes is that the Sufis established educational institutions for every circle. Even these institutions are constantly developed by forming and preparing a cadre of Islamic teachers *(mubaligh)* to be able to teach and spread Islam widely. Besides that, the Sufis did not forget to write various works as an intermediary in spreading Islam in the archipelago, including Shaykh Hamzah Fanshuri, who wrote the book Asrar al-`arifin fi bayan `ilm al-suluk wa-al-tawhid, and 'Abd al-Rouf al-Sinkili who wrote the book Ithaf al-Dhaki.[21]

The description of the journey process and the development of Islam in the archipelago shows Islam's existence since the entry process was pursued by peaceful means. Therefore, in the development of Islam in the archipelago, especially in Indonesia, it has always been at the level of Islam, prioritizing aspects of religious tolerance.

The Dynamics of Majority Islam in Southeast Asia

In data compiled by The World Central Intelligence Agency in 2017, it is stated that Islam is the majority religion in Southeast Asia in three countries: Indonesia, Brunei Darussalam, and Malaysia. Indonesia has a majority Muslim population of 87.2%, Brunei Darussalam 78.8%, and Malaysia 61.3%.[22]

The existence of Islam as the majority religion in Southeast Asia has provided an example of a peaceful Islam, considering that of the three countries that occupy the position as Muslim-majority countries, there have never been major social problems related to social aspects. Among the reasons for maintaining the aspect of togetherness, the most important is the formation of Islamic differences associated with the nature of the spread of Islam for the first time and the process of Islamization that took place peacefully. Therefore, if we refer to the process of developing Islam in Indonesia, we will find that efforts are to maintain the values of togetherness and intolerance.

In general, the Islamic tradition in Southeast Asia is inseparable from the process of cultural acculturation, which includes marriage, politics, and culture. The evidence of the acculturation process can be seen from the approach taken by Walisongo in spreading Islam in Java. The genealogy of the king of Brunei, who married Princess Johor in 1368 and embraced Islam, gave birth to a sultanate area that indirectly replaced the territory of the Hindu-Buddhist kingdom which has developed before.

The further development of Islam can also be seen in various things such as science. At the same time, it cannot be separated from the influence of scholars who have close links with muftis or teachers in Arabia, among prominent Islamic scholars in developing Islam in Indonesia in Indonesia. Nur al-Din al-Raniri, Khatib al-Sambasi, Abd al-Rauf al-Sinkili. Meanwhile, in the field of culture, which includes Islamic heritage, it can be seen from the mosque building, Kraton, and tomb complex, as well as ancient manuscripts that

---

[21] Johns, 'Sufism in Southeast Asia: Reflection and Reconsiderations'; Martin Van Bruinessen, 'Studies of Sufism and the Sufi Orders in Indonesia', *Die Welt Des Islams*, 38.2 (1998), 192–219.

[22] Farkhunda Burke, "Muslim Minorities and Majorities of Southeast Asia: Focus on Realities," *Pakistan Horizon*, 57.2 (2004), 37–49.

read Arabic but speak Malay, better known as Jawi writing.[23] In further reading, Islam, the majority religion in Indonesia, also has an essential role in the process of independence for the Indonesian nation, as evidenced by the many fighters from Muslims in Indonesia.

Southeast Asia's success in promoting togetherness in diversity can be proven by the synergy between the state and the Muslim majority community in Indonesia. It has a harmonious relationship with the state or government, such as Nahdatul' Ulama and Muhammadiyah, which also help counter radical ideas like NII, JIL, FPI, J.T., and so on.[24] Likewise, the efforts made by the Malaysian government by establishing The United Malays National Organization (UMNO) to control the process of Islamization, especially in countering radical or fundamentalist ideas.[25]

In further reading, Islam and togetherness in the Malay state (a term used by Malaysia before) provides criteria for someone to be said to be a native of them. First, they must be Muslim, speak Malay fluently, practice Malay customs, and be born and descended from the Malay community. However, along with the times and places, namely the merging of the Sabah and Sarawak regions and the separation of Singapore from Malay, there was a constitutional amendment policy in 1971, article 153 paragraph A30, which stated that the term Malay was not only shown to Muslims alone but was expanded to include non-Muslim ethnicities. as well as pagan [26]

A tolerant majority of Islam with different groups can also be seen in the state of Brunei Darussalam. The existence of Brunei Darussalam as the only country with a sultanate form of government in Southeast Asia has a more precise pattern regarding its government rules. Although the ideology applied is Islam in the form of MIB (*Melayu Islam Beraja*), which contains Islamic principles and the practice of the Shafi'i school as fiqh and Ahlussunnah wal jam'ah as a theological school, Brunei Darussalam still provides space for religious practices from other religions as stated in Chapter 3 Article 1 Brunei State Institution 1959.

The various development processes regarding Islam as the majority religion in a country show that Islam still provides freedom in carrying out its worship. Muslims and non-Muslims can live side by side in social and religious activities. As for the development process, conflicts that often arise in countries where most of the population is Muslim are conflicts regarding spiritual understanding. It can be seen from the emergence of various new groups and ideologies contrary to the understanding rooted in Indonesia. So do not be surprised if Brunei Darussalam particularly applies stringent rules in religious practice.

Evidence regarding the development of Islam and its inherent conflicts can be shown in the MIB Brunei Darussalam, which consists of two principles: Islam as a guiding

---

[23] Uka Tjandraasasmita, Sejarah Nasional Indonesia jilid 3, (Jakarta: Depdikbud Balai Pustaka,1984) p. 25

[24] Liem Soci Liong, "Indonesian Muslims and the State: Accomodation or Revolt?," *Third World Quarterly*, 10.2 (1988), 883–8885.Greg Fealy, "Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia: The Faltering Revival?," *Southeast Asian Affair, Utheast Asia Affairs*, 2004, 104–21.

[25] Mona Abaza, "The Discourse on Islamic Fundamentalism in the Middle East and Southeast Asia : A Critical Perspective," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 6.2 (1991), 203–39. Houben.

[26] Kikue Hamayotsu, "Islam and Nation Building in Southeast Asia: Malaysia and Indonesia in Comparative Perspective," *Pacific Affairs*, 75.3 (2002), 353–75.

principle and Islam as a form of a fortress. While these two foundations then fortify themselves. The cultivation of Islamic values in the context of the state is by applying the Shafi'i school as the official state school and the Ahlu al-Sunnah wa al-Jama'ah creed as the official state theological school.

The various explanations above show that the condition of Islam in Muslim-majority areas tends not to have major problems, mainly related to relations with the state. In contrast, some problems that often arise are regarding group differences and understanding of Islam.[27]

The Dynamics of Islam as a Minority Religion

If a study is conducted on minority Muslims in Southeast Asia, the group will include countries that are not included in the three Muslim majority countries mentioned earlier. So the countries referred to in the Muslim minority countries are the Philippines, Myanmar, Thailand, Laos, Vietnam, Singapore, and Timor Leste. In these countries, it can be classified that Buddhism is the majority religion in Thailand, Myanmar, Laos, Vietnam, and Kmabojo. As for the Philippines and Timor Leste, most of the population is Christian.[28]

Discussions on developing Muslim minority communities in Southeast Asia will be directed to Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand. The selection of a sample of Islam as a minority religion in the three countries cannot be separated from the socio-political conditions that force Islam in the country to adapt to all changes and policies. In addition, the presence of Muslims in the three regions indirectly uses different laws from the central government. Like Thailand and Myanmar, which use Indian law, the Arakan and Pattani areas use Islamic law, the Philippines uses Spanish-American law, while the Morro area uses Islamic law. [29]

Muslim problems in Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand have the same characteristics. Muslims in the country experience problems related to politics and state law. It is the most significant factor in gaining identity compared to other Muslim minority countries in Southeast Asia. Among the Islamic groups in question are Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, Pattani Muslims in Thailand, and Morro Muslims in the Philippines, who are experiencing problems in the social and political fields.

Myanmar Muslims

Muslim groups in Myanmar are represented by the division of groups based on ethnicities, such as Burmese Muslims, Rohingya Muslims, Muslims of Indian descent, Azerbaijani Muslims, and Huihuu (patthay) Muslims. Furthermore, the division of this group has an impact on its relationship with the government. Indigenous Muslim groups in the Myanmar area are often referred to as Burmese Muslims. The existence of these Burmese Muslims is considered genuine citizens who, from the beginning, lived and occupied the area of the old kingdom around Mandalay and mingled with the majority Buddhist Burmese

---

[27] Abaza.

[28] D. G. E. Hall, 'Looking at Southeast Asia History', *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 19.3 (1960), 243–253.

[29] Hooker.

community. In further reading, the existence of Burmese Muslims in Myanmar is the same as with other ethnic groups in Myanmar, namely getting their rights and obligations as members of the Myanmar territory.[30]

Myanmar's recognition is not only for Burmese Muslims but also for Muslims with a marriage background with indigenous people. Like the Zerbadi Muslims, who are old citizens of Myanmar who have mixed Indian blood, they are absorbed into the dominant Burmese community. Likewise, Huihui Muslims also decided to marry into the Burmese community and become part of the Burmese ethnic group.

In further reading, the presence of Muslims of Indian descent, in general, is rarely found in Myanmar. As for if there is, then these Muslims have mingled with the Burmese ethnicity in Myanmar because this group includes dynamic Muslims and easily blends in with the natives, considering that Indian Muslims are a group of successful traders and businessmen. One of the reasons for the departure of Indian Muslims from Myanmar was the coup carried out by General Ne Win in 1962 against the previous government, which recognized the Indian and Rohingya groups as Burmese. Still, the policy towards the population began to change after the coup and required them to migrate to another place.

Myanmar people's bigotry towards ethnicity can be seen in the legislative policies written by the Myanmar government, especially in the 1974 "Emergency Immigration Act" and the second 1982 "Burmese Citizenship Law." In 1974, the 'National Certificate of Registration' (NRC) ethnic identity card system was introduced. This system excludes Rohingya from the ethnic Myanmar race. The Emergency Immigration Act of 1974 has discriminated against them by making them only eligible for Foreign Registration cards; In addition, many schools and institutions do not recognize the NRC, so the Rohingya are left out of education and job opportunities.

If history is traced, the problems of the Rohingya have been long with their struggle to become an autonomous region in Myanmar, especially the North Arakan region. Although it has been in decline since 1961, the seeds of hostility between different ethnicities continue until there is a policy that discriminates against it even until the end of this year. [31]

The problem of Rohingya as a non-indigenous ethnic group is not only about minority and majority issues but also a long history involving the economy and government. Therefore, it is difficult to solve the problems that occur in Myanmar. Furthermore, from the description above, it can be seen that three main factors have made the Rohingya conflict unresolved; first, the low tolerance of the majority-minority in sustaining religious and ethnic relations; second, the tenuous relationship between the state and minority communities; third, the state's lack of response to social conflicts.[32]

---

[30] OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Thailand," *U.S. Departement of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/thailand/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021].

[31] OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Burma," *U.S. Department of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/burma/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021]..

[32] Amresh Gunasingham, "Buddhist Extremism in Sri Langka and Myanmar," *Counter Terrorist Trend and Analyses*, 11.3 (2019), 1–6.

Muslims in Thailand

Thailand is one of the countries in Southeast Asia which is geographically located between the continents of Australia and China. Buddhist groups dominate the existence of religion in Thailand. As for Islam as a minority religion that developed rapidly after China, in general, Islamic groups in Thailand come from various ethnicities and live spread out, except for Malay Muslims who decided to occupy the southern region of Thailand, which subsequently became the basis of the Malay-Muslim community.

Throughout its history, the Muslim community in Thailand consisted not only of Muslims from the Malay group but also from other groups such as Thai Muslims from Huihui and South Asian descent and Muslims from South Asia such as Cam, Indonesian, and Persian. The Muslim community groups in Thailand, apart from the Pattani Muslim group, choose to live in Bangkok, mingle with the surrounding community, and adapt their daily routines.

The problems of Muslims in Thailand in a series of history have links with ethnic problems, as happened in Myanmar. However, in Thailand, the problem that occurs is the effort to eliminate ethnic Malay Muslims in Thailand who do not want to adapt to the principles applied by the Thai government. They tried to make Thailand a secular state as part of the impact of the Islamic movement in the Middle East, which declared an anti-Western movement that further promoted the term reformist Islam.[33]

In general, the Muslim conflict that occurred in Bangkok began when there was a reform program carried out by the Myanmar government, which started in the 1960s. The reform program in question includes reforms in the traditional education system, such as Islamic boarding schools and madrasah schools which are converted into private schools and integrate general and religious education. The Thai government's development of reforms can also be seen in the prohibition of opening new cottages.[34]

The development of private education in Thailand in the process of being restricted by the government resulted in the number of Islamic boarding schools being stopped or forced to follow changes without serious implementation to attend higher levels of state education.[35]

The reforms carried out by the Thai government are not only in the field of education, but this has also spread to the cultural level. In general, the policy of cultural assimilation that was first applied to the government of General Phibul Songkhram's regime has influenced various policies in Thailand, one of which is the Malay-Muslim culture which must be eliminated and replaced with the Thai culture. The effect is also the prohibition on using names, languages, and other Islam in social life. The ideology of "nation, king, and religion" developed by the white elephant state indirectly influences state

---

[33] Raymond Scupin, "Interpreting Islamic Movements in Thailand," *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asia Studies*, 3.2/3 (1987), 78–93.

[34] Syed Serajul Islam, "The Islamic Independence movements in Patani of Thailand and Mindanao of the Philipphines," *Asian Survey*, 38.5 (1998), 441–56.

[35] Joseph Chinyong Liow, "Muslim Identity, Local Networks, and Transnational Islam in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces," *Modern Asia Studies*, 45.6 (2011), 1386–1421.

regulations. Even in government institutions, identity is considered so that the freedom of Malay Muslims in society raises a stigma of suspicion from the indigenous Thai ethnic group.[36]

The state's bigotry towards ethnicity, kingship, and religion has been far against the Patani Muslim culture in Thailand, especially in applying Islamic law, which has become a hereditary rule of Thai society. The efforts of the Pattani people in enforcing Islamic law amid the Thai government's intervention, especially in applying civil law, have an impact on resistance efforts by the Pattani people. The various existing problems regarding the resistance between the government and the community indirectly show a lack of awareness and tolerance in the religious aspect.[37]

In contrast to the Indonesian government, at the level of development of Islamic law, the Indonesian government provided the 1945 Constitution to resolve religious conflicts and created KHI (Compilation of Islamic Law) in Indonesia. From Indonesia, it can be seen that Thailand can learn a lot about concepts and efforts in synchronizing between state and religion.

Muslims in the Philippines

In general, the problems of minority Muslims in the Philippines, known as Moro Muslims, have long existed. In contrast, the issues that occur cannot be separated from the efforts of the Morro Muslim community, who are very strict in holding their Middle Eastern version of Islamic identity, Dar Islam, in carrying out their obligations as citizens. The Philippines. The intersection continued, especially when there was an effort to integrate the Moro community with the Philippine government. As for the result of government intervention in the religious process of the Moro people in the Philippines, there was a desire by the Moro people to separate themselves from the Philippines from 1960-1966 by establishing the Moro Nation Liberation Front (MNLF) in 1966.[38]

In general, the 1976 Tripoli agreement between the Philippines and the MNLF Leader ended the conflict between the state and the Moro people at that time, while the agreement's content is that the Moro people have complete autonomy over 13 provinces in the South. The Philippines. In addition, in 1981, the government established the Ministry of Islamic Affairs as a forum for the Moro people to integrate and play an active role in the development and state life.

In general, the presence of Muslim minorities in Moro no longer faces the demands and burdens of adapting to a government whose majority religion is Christian, as was the case several decades before. The synergy between the Philippine government and the Muslim minority community today and efforts to promote tolerance over hostility have

---

[36] Alexander Horstmann, "Etnohistorical Perspectives on Buddhist-Muslim Relations and Coexistence in Southern Thailand: From Shared Cosmos to the Emergence of Hatred?," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 19.1 (2004), 76–99.

[37] Alexander Horstmann, "Living Together: The Transformation of Multi-Religious Coexistence in Southern Thailand," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 42.3 (2011), 487–510.

[38] Houben.

resolved the government's and its people's vertical conflict. It impacts the harmonious relationship between Islam and Christianity in the Philippines.[39]

Along the way, the Moro people continue to show the dynamics of religion and good society in terms of their relationship with the government or other communities. In general, the Moro people always promote education for Muslims in the Philippines, including opening state universities that encourage Muslim students to continue their education without discrimination. Among the efforts made by the Philippines are the establishment of BARMM (Bangsamoro Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao) and NCMF (National Commission on Muslim Filipinos) as part of the country's efforts to maintain tolerance and peace.[40]

An explanation of the problems and the historical journey of the Muslim minority community in Moro with the Philippine government shows that the state has a role in carrying out state stability. In addition, the state's role and policies also affect the people's welfare and peace level. Therefore, providing more significant opportunities for minority Muslim communities to express their cultural and religious values has reduced the gap between Muslims and non-Muslims in the Philippines.

CONCLUSION

A study of the majority and minority of Islam in Southeast Asia shows that the existence of Islam as a belief of a person and the people is part of the state and government that cannot be separated from each other. In other words, the state's support for its people of various ethnicities, cultures, and religions will contribute to the peace of the state and the creation of state stability. The position of the majority and minority in the religious process also affects religious institutions socially, economically, and culturally. By showing the expression of diversity in religious practices in the Southeast Asian region, a new order will be created in creating peace.

This study concludes that the existence of Islam as a people's belief requires support. In other words, the state's support for its people of various ethnicities, cultures, and religions will contribute to the peace of the state and the creation of state stability. Indonesia, Malaysia, and Brunei Darussalam are countries that have a high level of tolerance, as evidenced by the lack of intolerance attacks carried out by one group against another. In contrast, the countries of Myanmar, the Philippines, and Thailand often split due to the lack of state influence to create an attitude of tolerance among citizens.

REFERENCES

Abaza, Mona, "The Discourse on Islamic Fundamentalism in the Middle East and Southeast Asia : A Critical Perspective," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 6.2 (1991), 203–39

---

[39] Kuis Q. Lacar, "Culture Contact and National Identification Among Philippine Muslims," *Philippine Studies*, 42.4 (1994), 431–51.

[40] OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Philippines," *U.S. Departement of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/philippines/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021].

Azra, Azyumardi, *Renaisans Islam Asia Tenggara, Sejarah Wacana dan Kekuasaan* (Bandung: Rosdakarya, 1999)

Bruinessen, Martin Van, "New Perspectives on Sotheast Asia Islam?," *Bijdragen tot de Taal*, 143.4 (1987), 519–38

———, "Studies of Sufism and the Sufi Orders in Indonesia," *Die Welt des Islams*, 38.2 (1998), 192–219

Burke, Farkhunda, "Muslim Minorities and Majorities of Southeast Asia: Focus on Realities," *Pakistan Horizon*, 57.2 (2004), 37–49

Elo, Satu, dan Helvi Kyngas, "The Qualitative Content Analysis Process," *Jurnal of Advanced Nursing*, 62 No. 1 (2008), 107–15

Emmerson, Donald K., "Southeast Asia : What's in a Name ?," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 15.1 (1984), 1–21

Fealy, Greg, "Islamic Radicalism in Indonesia: The Faltering Revival?," *Southeast Asian Affair, Southeast Asia Affairs*, 2004, 104–21

Gunasingham, Amresh, "Buddhist Extremism in Sri Langka and Myanmar," *Counter Terrorist Trend and Analyses*, 11.3 (2019), 1–6

Hall, D. G. E., "Looking at Southeast Asia History," *The Journal of Asian Studies*, 19.3 (1960), 243–53

———, "On the Study of Southeast Asian History," *Pacific Affairs*, 33.3 (1960), 268–81

Hall, Struart, *Representation: Cultural representations and signifying practice* (London: Sage Publication, 2003)

Hamayotsu, Kikue, "Islam and Nation Building in Southeast Asia: Malaysia and Indonesia in Comparative Perspective," *Pacific Affairs*, 75.3 (2002), 353–75

Hooker, M.B, "Towards a Legal History of Southeast Asia," *Journal of the Malaysian Branch of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 51.1 (233) (1978), 110–21

Horstmann, Alexander, "Ethnohistorical Perspectives on Buddhist-Muslim Relations and Coexistence in Southern Thailand: From Shared Cosmos to the Emergence of Hatred?," *Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia*, 19.1 (2004), 76–99

———, "Living Together: The Transformation of Multi-Religious Coexistence in Southern Thailand," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 42.3 (2011), 487–510

Houben, Vincent J.H., "Southeast Asia and Islam," *The Annals of the American Academy of Political and Social Science*, 588 (2003), 149–70

Inglehart, Ronald, dan Wayne E. Baker, "Modernization, Cultural Change, and the Persistence of Traditional Values," *American Sociological Review*, 65.1 (2000), 19–51

Islam, Syed Serajul, "The Islamic Independence Movements in Patani of Thailand and Mindanao of the Philippines," *Asian Survey*, 38.5 (1998), 441–56

Johns, Anthony H., "Islam in Southeast Asia : Reflection and New Directions," *Indonesia*, 19 (1975), 33–55

———, "Sufism in Southeast Asia : Reflection and Reconsiderations," *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies*, 26.1 (1995), 169–83

Jones, David Martin, "Security and Democracy : The ASEAN charter and the Dilemmas of Regionalism in South East Asia," *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944)*, 84.4 (2008), 735–56

Kassarjian, Harold H., "Content Analysis in Consumer Research," *Journal of Consumer Research*, 4 no. 1 (1997), 8–18

Lacar, Kuis Q., "Culture Contact and National Identification Among Philippine Muslims," *Philippine Studies*, 42.4 (1994), 431–51

Liong, Liem Soci, "Indonesian Muslims and the State: Accommodation or Revolt?," *Third World Quarterly*, 10.2 (1988), 883–8885

Liow, Joseph Chinyong, "Muslim Identity, Local Networks, and Transnational Islam in Thailand's Southern Border Provinces," *Modern Asia Studies*, 45.6 (2011), 1386–1421

Lippman, Walter, "A Content Analysis," *The Public Opinion Quarterly*, 14 No. 2 (1950), 296–302

Liwe, Amelia Joan, *Makna Strategis Kajian Wilayah Asia Tenggara dari Sudut Pandang Hubungan Internasional* (Jakarta, 2019)

Moleong, Lexy J., *Metodologi Penelitian Kualitatif*, 30 ed. (Bandung: PT. Remaja Rosdakarya, 2012)

Mudzhar, Atho, *Pendekatan Studi Islam Dalam Teori dan Praktek* (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 2011)

OFFICE OF INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Burma," *U.S. Department of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/burma/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021]

———, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Philippines," *U.S. Departement of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/philippines/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021]

———, "2019 Report on International Religious Freedom: Thailand," *U.S. Departement of State*, 2019 <https://www.state.gov/reports/2019-report-on-international-religious-freedom/thailand/> [diakses 28 Maret 2021]

Scupin, Raymond, "Interpreting Islamic Movements in Thailand," *Crossroads: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Southeast Asia Studies*, 3.2/3 (1987), 78–93

Upreti, B.C, "Nationalism in South Asia: Trend and Interpretations," *The Indian Journal of Political Science*, 67.3 (2006), 535–44