CHAPTER III

HISTORICAL BACKGROUND AND SOCIO-CULTURAL INFLUENCES

INTRODUCTION

Chapter Three describes the environment and circumstances of healing practice through history. It commences with a broad historical picture outlining the diversity of influences upon the region, before exploring in greater depth more recent events. The chapter demonstrates healing practice integrated within a wider sphere of acculturation and connects it with the more recent phenomena of ethnicity and ethnic identity. Continuing to the present, the chapter also describes contemporary issues for both healing practice and ethnic identity. In doing so, it presents answers to the subsidiary questions stated in Chapter I.

Chapter III is divided into three sections:
The early period – the age of commerce;
Reform and the colonial era;
From 1975 to the present day.

Each section presents both historical and sociocultural features of the era, and links to the role and location of healing practice. Where textual evidence permits, the role of the healer is presented and an analysis of practice is paralleled with the influences of the times.

In the final section of the chapter issues of socio cultural change over the past 30 years are discussed, focusing on key components of ethnic identity - religion, culture and language. At the same time, healing practice in the northern Malay states and in particular Kelantan, will be analysed.

THE EARLY PERIOD

1. A BRIEF HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF THE REGION

Although the geography of the peninsula stretches from Nakhon Sri Thammarat in the north to Singapore in the South, the discussion in this chapter aims to illustrate and focus on the culture and history of the narrower bridge of land where the southernmost provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat and Yala in Thailand and the northern Malay States of Kelantan, Trengganu,

Kedah and Perlis lie, and which is termed the 'isthmus' of the peninsula. The waves of socio-cultural influence through history cover a far greater area owing to the rise and fall, expansion and contraction of empires and kingdoms, stretching from Vietnam, through the archipelago of Indonesia. Being located on trade routes between India and China, the area was susceptible to and absorbed the influences of those regions. Given such an 'exposed' location, the history of the Peninsula is thus highly complex, "one of its distinctive attributes being a kaleidoscopic turnover of political alignments, disagreements, and separation movements" over time, not just in recent history (Zulkifli 2002). One of the more contemporary events in the peninsula that we shall turn to later, was the agreement in 1909 between the British and the Thais to divide the kingdom of Patani between Thailand and Malaysia. The Malaysian Non-Federated States of Kelantan, Trengganu, Kedah and Perlis were created at the northern border. In Thailand, Pattani, Yala Narathiwat and Satun were established in the South.

A brief overview of the tides of fortune illustrates the great ebb and flow of empires whose influence and effect was felt in the region. Kingdoms are believed to have existed in the Isthmus from at least the first century, according to Chinese records. From the third to the sixth century the area came under the Hindu kingdom of Funan. The Malay regained their independence around the middle of the sixth century with Tambrilinga, or Ligor (Nakhon Sri Thammarat) at the northern limit.

It is around this time that the legendary kingdom of Langkasuka is believed to have been established, and may have occupied the full width of the isthmus, stretching south from Ligor to the present day Malay border. Recent research confirms the location in the area around Yarang (Hergoualc'h 1997). By the seventh century the Malay Isthmian rulers of this prosperous and cultured kingdom were practising Buddhism, with Brahman priests also installed at court.

From the sixth to the fourteenth centuries the culture and the peoples of the isthmus were influenced from the north by the Khmer kingdom, and by the kingdoms of Sukothai and Ayudyha from Siam. From the South came the spread of the Sri Vijaya, Saliendra and Majapahit kingdoms from Sumatra and Java, and from the west, the Chola empire in India.

The Sri Vijayan empire stretched from the seventh to the 14th century, occupying different locations and at times exerting control over the Malay peninsula. Around the eighth century, the influence of the Saliendras kingdom from Java was also felt on the Malay Peninsula. A

rival kingdom, it was also linked with Sri Vijaya. The east Javanese Majahapit dynasty from 1292 to around 1500 is also considered to have had influence on the Malay Isthmian states during that time. The 10th and 11th century saw the closest association between the Khmer and the Isthmian Malays with records showing the marriage of a Malay ruler from Ligor with a Khmer princess in the second half of the 10th century. As Reid says, "Paradoxically, it is the diversity of Southeast Asia and its openness to outside influences which is its pre-eminent defining characteristic" (1999: 4)

2. THE COMING OF ISLAM

Persian-Arab traders and seamen had been visiting ports and establishing colonies in Southeast Asia en route to China for a long time before Islam was born, however, in the early years of the religion they were generally not successful in converting people. The new faith neither attracted a large, permanent number of believers nor established a solid base in the region. (Scupin 1980; Sar Desai 1997) Milner suggests that the early orthodox form of the religion would not have been attractive nor brought particular benefit for the rulers of Southeast Asia at that time. The dissemination of Islam during medieval times, however, was more attuned to the socio-political culture of Southeast Asian rulers. (Hooker 1983: 3)

To discuss this later spread of Islam in Southeast Asia, both route and method need to be discussed. With regard to the route that Islam took to get to Southeast Asia, the evidence is not conclusive (Hooker 1983: 3). However, it is known that trade was the defining factor as the vehicle for propagation of the religion. Indian shipping dominated the maritime trade and had done so since the 11th and 12th centuries. By the middle of the 13th Century, Gujarat was further increasing its trade links with Southeast Asia to meet the demands of the growing European market. Towards the end of that century the people of Gujarat and the Coromandel coast converted to Islam. The area had a long history of trade with Southeast Asia and had been partly responsible for carrying Indian culture to the peninsular. However the link between Gujarat and the conversion of Southeast Asia to Islam is not clear. Although the population of the Coromandel coast followed the Shaa'fi school, dominant also in Southeast Asia, Gujarat adhered to the Hanafi school (Hooker1983).

Increased trade meant increased mobility. Local traders were attracted to the new religious forms that the foreigners brought with them as their beliefs were not tied to specific locations, which was the case with native forms of worship. As traders started traveling more to other areas they required protection from the cosmic forces found in other, distant environments. As

Reid suggests, they needed a faith of a "broader application."(1999: 27). Furthermore, local inhabitants were impressed by the wealth and power of foreign traders. From this viewpoint based on indigenous beliefs, the foreigners were perceived as having access to superior spiritual power. Thus it was that Islam was considered as an alternative, potentially advanced, form of religious belief.

The arrival of Islam coincided with the rise of the great port Malacca (and the further dissemination of Islam throughout the peninsula has been linked to the relocation of traders after Malacca's fall) Where trade was concerned, it was politically good sense to adopt the religion: it offered good connections for commerce and was a means of attracting Muslim merchants to the port.

As a court phenomenon, which was where trade was conducted, the conversion of rulers to Islam was a way of bringing them into the "Muslim galaxy which must have seemed to encompass the greater part of the civilized world". Rulers needed to appear modern and informed. Furthermore, "The acceptance of certain Muslim doctrines would have allowed archipelago rulers to describe their ancient functions in terms which Muslim traders – potential subjects of the polity – could understand" (Milner 1983: 45). Thus by converting to Islam the Malay rulers were adapting themselves to the requirements, the terms of reference of a new world. Not a new paradigm exactly, more a paradigmatic shift.

Yet the adoption of Islam also offered them greater personal gain. Prior to Islamicization, the spiritual role of pre-Islamic Malay kings was sometimes likened in literature to that of a bodhisattva, a saintly individual on earth, whose purpose was to guide others in their spiritual journeys. The Malay rajas were perceived as the owners of all the land in their territory, and were the primary object of loyalty by their people. According to Milner (1983) the rulers' conversion to Islam offered two main benefits to their leadership. The Malay rulers would have responded to the Persian notion of kingship which gave the Sultans (an Arabic title adopted by all rulers over the archipelago) divine status on earth, ie 'one who governed on earth in place of God'. This might not have altered the ruler's status in the eyes of his subjects, but it would "have strengthened his relationship with the foreign, Muslim, community in the port"(1983: 36) thus responding to the Islamization of the Indian ocean trade route, and reorienting the political culture of his kingship.

Milner suggests the second benefit, which offers a shift away from too much of an emphasis on notions of trade relationships, addressed the spiritual enhancement of the Malay Raja's role. It would be appropriate for the Raja to adopt the most contemporary spiritual techniques and practices. The Sufi notion of the Perfect Man could thus have contributed to the appeal of Islam for Malay kingship. This notion was disseminated by the Sufi mystics 'Abd al-Qadir l-Jilani (1077-1166 CE) and Ibn al-'Arabi (1165-1240 CE) in the 14th century and 15th century, and their work was certainly known in the 16th century Malay world. The notion of the Perfect Man, which has a higher status than a *wali* or saint, represents an individual who has 'fully realized his essential oneness with the Divine Being' and acts as a this-worldly guide to his followers. Sufism is returned to later in the chapter

Part of the appeal of Islam had been in its method of propagation. On the whole, it came to the region peacefully and accommodated indigenous beliefs. To gain widespread acceptance of Islam, missionaries retained – or at least did not question - the previous Hindu and indigenous beliefs. Advocates of the new religion did not demand that people abandon their Hindu-Buddhist cultural heritage. Islam was able to take root in Southeast Asia largely as a result of the accommodating approach of its Indian missionaries, and it is for this reason that the religion possesses a different character from Islam in Arabia (Milner 1983).

The fall of Baghdad in 1258, which led to an exodus of Muslim scholars and missionaries to South, Southeast and East Asia, also contributed to the spread of Islam (Scupin 1980; Reid 1988). Zulkifli (2002), however, suggests the connection between, in particular, Pattani and Baghdad could have been made earlier; he links the spread of Islam to *mubaligh* (messengers) of the Saljuk Caliphate (1055-1194). The pondok system for which Pattani is well-known throughout the region is said to possibly derive from the *fondok* (in Arabic) teaching system created in Baghdad, which would thus have been propagated by the messengers at this time.

Prior to the Islamization of the area, Kelantan and Patani were already established and powerful kingdoms. Generally the beginning of Peninsula Malay civilization is dated from the start of the Malaccan Sultanate in 1402, but this applies mainly to Malays in the south and west coast of the peninsula and does not accommodate the kingdoms of the isthmus.

Considering that Patani had the second most important port in the region (the estuary covered a far greater area then than it does today), it is possible that Islam had a hold in the

region at around the same time as Malacca; there is some speculation that Patani was converted prior to the entrepot. It is generally acknowledged that Muslim traders had settled in the area in the 13th century, however, at this time the religion may have been in the 'quarantine' stage (Reid 1988: 133). Records show that Trengganu had adopted the new religion by 1387, and Surin notes that by the time colonial powers reached the peninsula, Patani was already producing Islamic scholars. (Surin 1985)

The Islamization of Patani is more generally understood to have occurred in the early 1500s. The legend often quoted from the Hikayat Patani is of King Phaya Tu Nakpa, the ruler of Patani, being cured of a serious skin disease by the Muslim, Shaikh Sa'id, from Pasai. Although offered the hand in marriage of the ruler's daughter, Shaikh Sa'id had requested that if cured, the ruler should convert to Islam. Broken promises, relapses and further cures followed until the ruler finally became a Muslim (and was renamed Sultan Isma'il Shah Zillullah fi al-'Alam) (Madmarn 1990).

As Patani consolidated its connections with the Malay world further south, west and east through the archipelago, conflict was increasing with the kingdoms of Siam in the north. The 1345 attack by Siam on the isthmian states resulted in the *bunga maas* tribute ('trees' of gold and silver) being made to the Kingdom of Sukothai for the first time. The isthmian states experienced repeated conflicts with the kingdoms of Siam, and were beholden to pay tribute until the region was formally divided at the beginning of the last century.

However, Pattani flourished under the strength of its Malay relationships, and owing to its position as an important trading center, these relationships extended to the Arabian world. By the early 17th century it was developing as a center of Islamic learning. However, it was not until the period from the middle of the 18th century to the early 19th century, by which time scholars from Pattani were well established in Mecca, that Pattani was truly the 'cradle of Islam'. It was this position, this status and no doubt this sense of responsibility that fuelled and strengthened the people's of the Isthmian states strong sense of identity (Surin 1985).

Even before the advent of Islam, as mentioned earlier, there was a "shared common cultural bond that knitted states and royal houses into a flexible whole." However, ties between the Malay states, between peoples under different forms of government became stronger through inter-marriage linked by Islam. A heritage was consolidated which transcended state boundaries and created a dynamic flow of influence throughout the region, stretching even

as far as Mindanao. "Islam reinforced a pre-existing cultural unity for political protection and economic survival" (Zulkifli 2002)

3. THE ROLE AND ADAPTATION OF HEALING

Prior to and during medieval times, healing practice existed within the greater pantheon of the cosmic forces in the known environment of indigenous peoples. Ailments and problems were a result of disturbed or malevolent spirits, forces in and of the natural world.

In the pre-Cartesian world man and his natural environment could not be separated. The four elements, earth, wind, air and water, represented the essential components of what it meant to be a human being. In a sense, nature infused man, man infused nature. In the broader view, there was no distinction between a religious and a secular dimension to life; in the narrower view, there was no distinction between the chemical and the metaphorical in the qualities of the elements, the herbs, and the materials used in rituals and remedies. The natural world was suffused and infused throughout by spiritual forces, forces that could be both kind and malevolent. Survival depended on knowing how to appease and manipulate them. The role of the shaman was thus practical, but powerful and valued. He could communicate with the spirits through ritual and propitiation, find the cause of the problem whether it was crop failure, illness, infertility, or whatever and divine the appropriate action take.

Golomb (1985) illustrates these points in his discussion of the earlier establishment of Hinduized states in the region. He describes how a local chief, prior to Hinduization, was likely to have had dual roles as ruler and shaman. It would have been his responsibility not only to govern his community, but also to protect it. His role would have been both leader and healer.

Within Hinduism there was also a tradition of shamans, ie non-Brahmanical practitioners. These were curers exorcists and healers, and were often consulted by Brahmans for advice regarding deities and spirits. Many of these shamans came from the lower classes. Thus, not all Hindu curative practices filtered from the elite to the local culture. There were also peddlers and small-time traders who would exchange beads and magic amulets for medicines and antidotes against plague and poison (Golomb 1985).

However, it was the close contact with the Brahmin priests propagating the religion that enhanced the spiritual status of the ruler. (As both Golomb and de Casparis note, there is

some doubt, though, as to the authenticity of these priests. Brahmins are generally prohibited from overseas travel - Golomb 1985: 50; de Casparis 1992: 287). This connection was further materially improved by facilitating trade agreements with Indian merchants; the increased trade enabled the ruler to levy a tax or exact tribute from traders. The spiritual and material gain witnessed at this time has certain parallels with the later coming of Islam.

However, success in the material world was more effectively attributed to the support, collaboration or manipulation of spirits. According to Reid "The effect of this was not fatalism but an intense competition for status and success, in which spiritual means were at least as important as physical" (1988: 137). In Southeast Asia all power was considered to come from a spiritual source, and the most powerful chief or ruler would be considered the one who best controlled the cosmic forces. Existing as the top of social structure, the ruler would be considered the ultimate source of this power in his land (Reid 1988).

The debate about the notion of kings as gods notwithstanding (de Casparis 1992: 322-328) de Casparis describes the essence of the divinity of a king: "Divinity was a quality of the sacred world that lies unseen and implicit in the things of the world, like electromagnetic radiation or gravity. It could make itself accessible and potent through ritual. Kingship was itself a kind of ritual, serving to center the kingdom on an individual, just as a shrine could center it on an icon; in each case the spiritual energy of the gods in the sacred world would be manifested" (de Casparis 1992: 326). In this analogy, the rulers' could be perceived in some ways as a lightning rod, directing and charging the divine power.

The absorption of Hindu religious formulae and magical rites although enhancing the status of some did not critically change the major features of the local belief system. Many practices remained intact, and spirits in fact "received additional names and were now propitiated with Hindu incantations as well as older indigenous ones" (Golomb 1985). Watson Andaya adds an additional perspective to the continued tenacity of and reference to indigenous spirits, considering that it occurred because of their continued relevance to human existence. "Whereas the great religions were concerned with the future . . . the attention of spirits could be drawn to the most mundane matter whether it concerned illness or warfare, a trading venture or childbearing "(1992: 512)

4. SUFISM

Islam as a universal religion offered a competitive advantage to those in power. Without negating or denigrating the local forces and spirits, it facilitated a broader, more powerful dimension with which to enhance the potency of the rulers. Within this additional paradigm, as before, the local system of cosmic forces was able to survive by adapting, co-existing or being absorbed into the new. In fact the success of Islam in becoming established in the region depended not only on accommodating indigenous beliefs, but also on elaborating and enhancing them. "In a sense an alliance was struck between the new 'deities' and the 'old'." (Watson Andaya 1992: 511).

Although Sufism is an intensely philosophical and esoteric form of Islamic belief, a more popular and accessible form appears to have been used to propagate the religion and convert people to Islam in this era. Like the Hindus before them the Sufis demonstrated magic and miraculous healing as a means to attract people. Whether prior Hindu beliefs already extant in the Malay peninsula enabled Sufism to be appreciated more easily or whether Sufism was more flexible in accommodating and absorbing Hindu beliefs is difficult to say exactly. Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, to what degree Sufism was either received in Southeast Asia from Persia following the fall of Baghdad, or transmuted through Hindu beliefs on the South Asian continent prior to its arrival in the archipelago is again, impossible to know exactly. Suffice to say, there was a mutuality between the two, and it is highly likely that the religion was reaching the area from more than one location simultaneously – these factors alone would have facilitated interest. (Watson Andaya 1992: 514)

Although mystical thought was a part of Southeast Asian Islam from early times, contemporaneous textual sources did not appear until the 16C. The mystical schools, *tariqa,* had developed during the 13C (Watson Andaya 1992: 521), and by the end of the 15C the Qadiriyya (founded by 'Abd al-Qadir I-Jilani), Shattariyya, and Naqshabandiyya orders were well established in India. It was these orders which became the most popular in Southeast Asia. Their founders were learned visionaries seeking a direct path to union with God. In particular, it was Ibn al-'Arabi (1165-1240 CE) who formulated the slightly more controversial doctrines of the Unity of Being (*wahdatu'l wujud*) where a "myriad of aspects were revealed as the manifold forms of creation", and the concept of the Perfect Man, "the microcosmic figure who represents in himself the perfect attributes of the Divine Being." (Watson Andaya 1992: 522)

The essential core of these philosophies stemmed from the Islamic belief of *tauhid*, the unity of God. God is in everything, and everything is God; among the diversity of life God exists in the cosmic unity of all. Thus one's purpose is to lose oneself, to blend into this unity in order to experience God. The Sufi used ecstatic, self-induced trances to eliminate the awareness of individuality and lose himself in the universe of God. Those who were considered to have achieved this were regarded as saints and were thus also understood to possess supernatural powers. (Endicott 1981:43)

The teachings, propagated through a leader or *Shaykh*, were communicated through a spiritual genealogical chain which connected students through previous teachers directly to the founder of the order. The relationship between teacher and student was close and intimate, in the same manner as parent and child, or elder and younger. Given that kinship ties are an integral part of Southeast Asian societies, this feature also made Sufism more tenable. (Watson Andaya 1992: 523).

Further popular methods used to achieve unity with God included, "dancing, singing, music, drumming, meditation, the recitation of *zikir* 'magic' words in the form of Koranic passages or formulaic prayers" (Watson Andaya 1992: 522). These forms of religious practice were already familiar to the indigenous population of the archipelago and Malay peninsula. As Golomb suggests, local healers would have been willing to take Islamic vows in order to gain access to the ritual knowledge they witnessed in the Sufi rituals (1985: 58) and to enhance and develop their knowledge.

The common interpretation of this link to spiritual power appeared as visits (*ziyara*) to tombs of holy men for spiritual communion (*muraqaba*). It was believed that the venerated man's soul lingered at his tomb or places connected with his life on earth and that offerings and requests could be made at such locations (Reid 1988:162). Golomb (1985) suggests that saint veneration at this time was condoned within Islam as saints were perceived as "familiars of the Lord". He further links this notion to the Sufi-inspired belief that miracles that occurred would be a manifestation of God's power through particular chosen 'vessels'. The definition of 'vessels' ranged broadly and the Sufis used the word *kramat* or *keremat* – which had formerly been used for miracles performed by saints – to cover these "essential elements of the Malay animistic world: the nature spirits, animal spirits, ancestor spirits, and perhaps of most consequence, legendary living and deceased practitioners of magical animism" (Golomb 1985:59). Thus the interpretation of *kramat* shifted, and was thus used to describe a force

apparent in a location or an individual dead or alive. Thus, there was great potential for successful local healers to be considered as possessing *kramat*.

Connections have been made between the Sufi's fundamental belief in the spiritual unity of God within the environment and the Malay notion of *sĕmangat*. Both ideas carry the idea of an essence "diffused throughout creation" which is "more or less individualized in the myriad of things" (Endicott 1981: 45). In his own analysis, Endicott relates the concept to the notions of *rûh* and *nyâwa* and considers that they "represent successive stages in the differentiation of the soul material of man".

To the Patani Malays *nyâwa* is understood to be the "breath of life" as its removal is tantamount to death. *Rûh* has been described by them as the thing that leaves man while he is asleep; it is particular to man,. Endicott suggest it be considered to represent identity; Laderman suggests 'soul' (1991:41).

Endicott's analysis presents a means of looking at the relative positions of three different concepts, which can be useful, yet even he acknowledges that the terms have been used interchangeably Linking us to Berger's observation in Chapter II, Cuisiner's definition of *sĕmangat* (as explained by Endicott) offers a pre-modern postmodern explanation: " . . .most valuable in Cuisiner's discussion is the treatment of sumangat as an idea in people's minds that is defined and redefined in different situations according to different needs and conditions . . . sumangat is not amenable to the most complex physical analogy" (Endicott 1981: 40).

The power of the saints, the technique (*ilmu*) for studying the *tauhid*, the unity of God, the oneness with the Divine Being, the different paths that were followed, all illustrated man's desire to be able to control his environment, to be able to manipulate the forces that normally dominated his existence in an erratic and unpredictable manner. It is worthwhile pausing briefly to try and imagine, in order to fully comprehend the point, to what a degree the life and power of man could not be separated, divided or isolated from his environment. The healer's power rested in his ability to understand and manipulate these forces – whether it be through the knowledge to treat a disorder, a supplication to the spirit of an ancestor, or the application of herbs with magical properties. The rulers sought the same essence too in their spiritual quest and this manifested in the desire for invulnerability. "The Perfect Man could

be expected to be absorbed in the knowledge of *tauhid*, even in the midst of battle, and his saintly powers would protect him 'amid a hail of bullets'" (Milner 1983: 41).

So far this chapter has focused on a broader analysis of the integral role magic played in shaping the identity of trade and propagating religion. Focusing on texts from the colonial period, we now move on to consider a closer analysis of content, and this allows us to observe more closely the weaving of different aspects of healing practice.

REFORM AND THE COLONIAL ERA

1. REFORM

During the 18th and 19th centuries there arose a movement within Islam for reform. The movement sought to remove the 'surplus' from the religion and strengthen the governing of the *umma* – the Islamic community – by adhering more closely to the *sharia*, "the one divinely revealed law, a doctrine which left no room for human intercessors between man and God" (Milner 1993: 45). Reform was considered necessary to purify the religion and free it from the taint of local practices, moving instead toward creating a universal, unified religion. Within the peninsula, this implied a return to the word of God and a move away from the Raja-centred states (Ellen 1983).

The move for reform grew out of the scholarship and preaching of Muhammad ibn Abd al Wahhab in Najd, Saudi Arabia (however, the ideals can be traced back to 14th century thinker ibn Taymiya). He was concerned with the way people engaged in practices he considered polytheistic, such as praying to saints, making pilgrimages to tombs and special mosques, venerating trees, caves and stones, and using votive and sacrificial offerings. Thus Wahhabis forbade grave markers or tombs in burial sites, and the building of any shrines that could become a locus of *shirk* - polytheism.

Wahhabism thus advocated a return to more appropriate behaviour: prayer was to be performed punctually and correctly, dress was to be modest, music and dancing was forbidden, as was loud laughter and weeping. External appearance and behaviour thus became a visible expression of internal faith. With the emphasis on conformity and orthodoxy, Wahhabism encouraged a sense of a common identity, seeking to rise above local loyalties. The awareness, knowledge and practice of Wahhabism was propagated through the Malay peninsula via the pilgrimage of the Haj, and through Arab settlers, traders and travellers. (Wahhabi Theology, Internet source: Dec 2002)

Fundamentalism created a stronger allegiance to the Pillars of Islam and at the same time fostered a more developed notion of individual responsibility. The aim was to develop a stronger desire to rely upon the self and the relationship with God, and move away from the misplaced attention to rites and rituals that could, in fact, distract from that relationship. The focus returned to recreating a sense that it was individual choices and actions that could lead to success or failure in life, and thereafter, heaven or hell. The unifying trend of reformism presented a collectively expressed emphasis on spiritual reward for self-help (Ellen 1983).

Wahhabism in the mid 18th century was, in a sense, the first wave of reform to come out of the Arab world and have an impact on the Malays. The modernist movement, arising as the second wave out of the first, was started in the 19th century by scholars such as Sayyid Djamal al-Din al-Afghanai and Muhammad 'Abduh of Egypt. (Mohamed Taib Osman 1985) Modernism was a commitment to shape historical Islam to suit modern needs. The emphasis was more on pragmatism and rationalism. For example, the requirement for males to be circumcised was explained in contemporary terms of hygiene rather than ritual, ie adopting terms scientifically appropriate for modern life.

Although the modernist movement derived from Wahhaibism, some differences arose between them. Whereas Wahhabi doctrine advocated a return to interpretation of the Qur'an and hadith of earlier times, the modernist movement sought to reinterpret parts of the Qur'an and hadith to match standards set by the West.

As noted before, the streams of reformist belief and practice can be determined in two ways, that of Wahhabi fundamentalism and Islamic modernism; however, it has been noted that the two forms change in content and proximity, and that, as Ellen observes, "in the final instance local reformist responses can only be understood in the light of local conditions" (Ellen 1983).

Hasan Madman illustrates this point in his PhD thesis (1990) when he describes not just the differences between the *Kaum Tua* – the old group – and *Kaum Muda* – the modern group in the Malay-speaking South, but just as importantly the differences between the Malay-speaking group in the South of Thailand and the Muslims in Bangkok (consisting of the same two groups but with different names: *Khana Mai* – the reformists, the new group, and *Khana Kau* – the old group). According to Madman, the new group in Bangkok considered that Islamic,reformism required a return to deriving rules of conduct from primary sources of the

Qur'an and the hadith, but was also a means to instigate socioeconomic and political change. The reformists in the South, however, were more concerned with religious issues (although these issues did involve matters of marriage and divorce). The reformists in Bangkok advocated egalitarianism and were against the authority of the Chularajmontri. They wished to change the form of the Thai polity in order to promote the interests of Muslims within the social and political domain.

Among the Malay-speaking Muslims in the South of Thailand, Madman informs us that the three main issues of religious reform concerned activities conducted at death, at prayer and in marriage. The issues had nothing to do with the administrative structure of the community. Chavivun Prachuabmoh also touched on this point in her PhD dissertation (1980) commenting that philosophical issues had little relevance to the lives of the villagers in the Malay-speaking South. It was the practice – or change in the practice – or rites and rituals, especially those concerning the dead, that had greatest impact. She adds that "even though reformism in the southern provinces of Thailand cannot be viewed as politically inspired, it can be seen as ethnically and culturally motivated; that is, it seeks cultural detachment from the Thai" (Chavivun 1980: 163). Furthermore, although there was evidence of some friction between the two groups, as Chavivun states, "the integrative function of Islam still overwhelms the disintegrative" (Chavivun 1980: 163).

Ellen considers that the *adat* or custom of Malay culture and Islam have an almost quantum-like relationship, an unstructured 'mingling' (1983: 64) in that both features, although conceptually opposed, offer integrated perspectives on actions. They represent "complementary versions of a unitary concept of the right and the proper"(1983: 68) and the appropriate perspective depends on the intent and requirement, "By using the competing idioms of *adat* and Islam specific interests may be given greater importance, through their association with broad generalities" (1983: 68). Chavivun however, tends suggests that Muslim identity appears to be overriding Malay identity, and may turn out to be the main source of identity overall (1980).

The point here is to acknowledge the potent and lasting effect reform has had on the communities in the Malay-speaking South; the terms *Kaum Muda* and *Kaum Tua* continue to be used at the present time and continue to stimulate discourse, prompting situational perspectives. Reform has affected change, yet it has in turn been affected by other changes. The dynamic of situational 'oscillating' identity thus becomes more apparent.

The rulers of the 14th and 15th centuries had adopted Islam believing that Islamic political thinking reflected rather than undermined their own political ideology. However, by doing so they changed the terms in which political life was perceived. In pre-colonial times, sharia law and the kadi, the court system, had not been effective or important aspects of life. Yet as Islam became increasingly established in Southeast Asia, so did the necessity, amid some strong opposition, for the need to acknowledge and implement God's law. By 1900 the change was noticeable enough on the Peninsula "for a British official to observe that 'the native' was becoming 'less of a Malay and more of a Mussulman'"((Milner 1983: 45). In a sense, according to Milner, by adopting Islam to further both trade and personal interests, the rulers became vulnerable to the "Trojan horse" (Milner 1983:46) of reform that was to come.

At the turn of the 20th century, not only was the kingdom of Patani experiencing Islamic reform, it also had to contend with the European paradigm of the nation-state, ie a community determined by fixed boundaries, and governed in a secular manner. This presented a struggle of three political ideals: the Muslim raja-based state, the Islamic umma and the western nation-state.

2. SEPARATION AND THE THAI NATION STATE

Prior to the colonial era, the Patani kingdom had been able to maintain a great degree of autonomy through the tributary system. The system required a triennial payment of tribute – *bunga maas* – in the form of 'trees' of gold and silver to Siam. As long as the payment was made, there was less overt reason for conflict. At an earlier time, when Patani was in direct competition with the entrepôt of Malacca the relationship had also given it a greater degree of economic flexibility and commercial self-interest (Scupin 1980: 60). Hence Patani, at the furthest reach of the Siamese kingdom was able to maintain relations with the kingdom while actually having a greater cultural and religious allegiance to the states of the Malay peninsula. For Siam, initially, as long as her authority was acknowledged, her countrymen did not interfere in the internal affairs of its vassals.

However at the turn of the 20th century, Thailand was becoming sandwiched between the advancing colonial powers of France in the East and Britain in the West and South. Thus, as an issue of national security, King Chulalongkorn introduced administrative reforms which aimed for a clearer definition of boundaries, and greater 'integration', and thus by

implication, a more coherent identity of the state. This led to the division of the Patani kingdom.

In 1902, the Malay raja and nobility of the seven principalities in the region were removed from power and replaced by Thai-Buddhist bureaucrats from the north (Surin 1985). The denigration of the royal families had severe repercussions for the area throughout the 20th century. Family connections had sustained the nobility for centuries in an environment where arranged marriages were a common means of consolidating power and developing political alliances. For the families of the Malay states this practice had a greater degree of intensity and strength as choices were restricted to Malay noble families. For example, during the 17th and 18th centuries a succession of kings ruled Pattani known as the Kelantan Dynasty. However, through marriage their reign and kinship extended throughout the Malay Peninsular – even as far as Johore (Surin 1985: 44-47; Zulkifli 2002). Thus it was that at the turn of the century, these kinship networks acted to nurture support and strengthen the turn to rebellion and resistance, "Their shared experience of independence from and subjugation by Siam had moulded them into a people united by fate and history" (Surin 1985: 46).

In 1909 under the Anglo-Siamese Agreement, Thailand acquired Patani, and Kedah while Kelantan, Trengganu and Perlis were ceded to Great Britain. Further shifts occurred and the four Malay-Muslim provinces of Narathiwat, Pattani, Satun and Yala were created. Nowadays though, Satun is no longer categorized with the other three provinces. (Che Man 1990; Surin 1985).

Although the Thai government attempted to adopt the same development strategies as the British in the creation of an infrastructure in the newly created southern provinces (to increase security by lessening dissent and dissatisfaction), the Malay nobility were angered by the interference. There was a marked contrast in the attitude toward the governing of the populations in the South by the Thai and in the North by the British, which added to the frustration of the Thai Malays. According to Surin, the British "were very clear in their mission and served more as advisors, which they were, than the colonial rulers . . . '(1985: 38). Whereas the British could be more confident in their relationship with the Malays and less focused on issues of security and political backlash, the Thai government was now dealing with a dissenting, unwilling minority. The major difference was the objective. The Thais were seeking to assimilate their Malay population; the British were not.

At the implementation of these changes, the paradigm shifted and the population of the former Patani kingdom became metamorphosed into an ethnic minority within the modernising nation-state, ". . . (I)t seems clear that the formation of the separatist movement is at least in part an indigenous response to processes associated with the terms, 'Westernisation' and 'Modernisation' (Wilson 1989: 54).

This assimilation continued with the creation of the Thai nation state. Whereas citizenship of a nation is generally conceived in terms of the right of democratic participation, in the development of the Thai nation it was seen more in terms of national integration, ie the development and promotion of a 'Thai' identity (Christie 1996: 176; Reid 2001: 296).

The secessionist and separatist movements grew stronger and more ardent as a result of increased government controls, which reached a peak during the Phibul government. Pan-Thaism was aimed not only at absorbing the indigenous minorities, but also at promoting new ideals and values for Thai culture. These 'new ideals and values' were predominantly 'western' in appearance, ie in aspects of dress, and although they were aimed at emphasizing national loyalty, (any reference to 'northern Thais' or 'southern Thais' was officially disproved), the focus, in fact was on Central Thai values and ideology. Nationalist policies of the 1930s demanded that the Thai language be spoken and Thai customs be adopted (Scupin 1986:125). In 1944 the regime went further and abolished Islamic laws relating to family and inheritance which further fuelled intense distrust and resentment among the Muslim population (Che Man. 1990). However, although the British Government was petitioned using newly the created international principles of human rights and self-determination of the United Nations, the 'fate' of the Patani kingdom was 'sealed'. The British felt they could not respond to a petition presented by the inhabitants of a foreign country (Christie 1996: 181)

Other incidents exacerbated distrust, for example in the attitude of Thai government officials appointed to administer the region. A posting to the Southern provinces was unpopular, and officials generally made little effort to build relationships with local people, learn the language or follow social mores. (Thomas 1985). Furthermore, although steps were taken by the Thai government to apply a new 'integration policy' in the form of socio-economic development, the underlying "implication for the Malay-Muslim in the South was that unless and until their unique identity could be transformed and merged into the national one, they would be considered a national security threat" (Surin 1985: 168). The more the Thai government sought

to apply pressure to the Malay Muslim population, the more religious belief, during this period of reform, strengthened their identity (Chaiwat 1993, 1994; Surin 1988).

As Thongchai Winichakul discusses in Siam Mapped, the notion of 'Thainess' is defined by what it is not. The notion of 'what it is not' represents 'otherness': a potential threat, a potential enemy. For the Malay Muslims, former subjects of the kingdom of Patani, although their location remained the same, their position, their status changed. Not opting for "Thainess", meant they were labeled '*Khaek*'. It is a term which "covers the peoples and countries of the Malay peninsula, the East Indies, South Asia, and the Middle East without any distinction" (Thongchai 1994:5). It also means 'guest' or 'visitor'.

Through history the Isthmian kingdom of Patani had asserted a strong power based within the region, had displayed a cohesive and coherent cultural base, yet having acted as a buffer zone between Siam and British Malaya was never able to achieve the status of a separate nation. The ardour of separatism chanelled through conduits of kinship turned into acts of violence. The violence manifested the frustration of the culture and its sense of economic and administrative powerlessness.

Surin Pitsuwan considers the efforts of the Thai government to assimilate the Malay Muslims acted as a catalyst for the Da'wah movement (1985: 245). Their primary concern was the propagation of morality and the religious values of Islam -values which they considered were being eroded as a result of the rapid changes introduced by the Thai government. Although a religious movement, not a political one, discussion would often point t the political situation as the root cause of the problem. Religion can generate great moral strength for communities which consider themselves to be vulnerable or in danger. As the religious and traditional institutions continued to be threatened by assimilationist policies, communities reinforced support for the separatist movement. According to Surin Pitsuwan, the tariqah movement was connected with the separatist movements and political groups of the 1970s and 1980s.

This movement in its original form was Sufi and thus an esoteric order which focused on the development of an individual's interior spiritual life, as described earlier: the aim of a follower was to achieve spiritual perfection. However, the existence of the order in Southern Thailand had led to its fusion with the prior beliefs of the Malays ie, the study and practice of sorcery, witchcraft and black magic. The Malay beliefs were retained but incantations were replaced

with verses from the Qur'an. Devotees were believed to have the power to find lost objects, heal ailments, and create charms to protect themselves from enemy attack.

The interest in esoteric knowledge meant that some *to'guru* pursued an interest in the order. The Thai government was already highly suspicious of the operations of the *pondok*, centers for Islamic study. Some followers of the movement were also considered to have connections with and be supporting members of the separatist movement and other political groups. The fact that members were persecuted during the era of Phibul Songkram, with leaders being arrested or killed demonstrates the degree to which the movement was perceived as a threat. The group's religious definition, however, made it inadvisable for the government to outlaw its activities; interference could have prompted the wrath of fundamentalist groups from other countries. (Surin 1985: 251-256)

3. THE MALAY MAGICIAN

In his book the Malay Magician, Winstedt acknowledges the accommodation of external influences by the peoples of the Malay peninsula

> "For people's adaptability to a changing world could hardly be better illustrated than it is by the history of the Malays who during the last 2,000 years have accepted the ideas of two great civilizations, the Hindu and the Muslim, without abandoning their own prehistoric paganism"(1982: 4).

and further notes how these influences have manifest in their practices

> "What is of great interest is the ingenuity shown in the assimilation and reconciliation of old and new beliefs. . . But it is startling to find that at a Kelantan séance the Malay shaman of today still copies Tantric ritual in his opening recital of the story of the creation, in his subsequent worship of gods, and in his concluding asseverance, now in Sufi terms, of man's union with God"(1982: 4).

In his analysis, Winstedt keenly differentiates between different types of practice throughout the Malay peninsula, offering comparison and contrast between the regions, yet also emphasizing the common strands and major influences in the work of the magicians.

Generally practitioners or to use Winstedt's colonial term, 'magicians', were referred to altogether as *pawang*, yet there were differences among them (Winstedt 1982: 7). Skeat notes that although the term *pawang* generally appeared to have a broader application, as the practitioner dealt with the whole realm of rituals and ceremonies in the life of the community, and *bomoh* a narrower one, used for human ailments only, both terms were in

fact used interchangeably (Skeat 1984: 56). Additionally, Winstedt viewed the practitioners from a slightly different perspective; he considered they fell into two 'classes'.

Within these two classes, described as the 'village pundit' and the 'neurotic seer' (1982: 7), the former is seen as an acquired position requiring initiation whereas the latter refers to a hereditary position having greater power and a stronger connection to the cosmic forces. He uses the term *bĕlian* for these shamans, ie those who were able to "invoke ancestral spirits, and act as an intermediary between man and heaven" (1982: 7). Winstedt considers that the main tasks of the Malay shaman were healing and divination, and that his familiar, ie the spirit who possesses him, will reveal "the name and demands of the spirit causing an epidemic or afflicting a patient with disease . . ." (Winstedt 1982: 11). The notion that the gods and spirits would descend to possess the medium's body came from India. Formerly the healer's familiar would aid his ascension to heaven while in trance in order to commune with the gods – as was the practice in the rest of the Far East (Winstedt 1982: 13).

Skeat's research also adds to the hereditary aspect, noting that if not directly hereditary the position is at least confined to members of one family (Skeat 1984 57). He also describes a process that individuals must go through in order to access the spirits, to ask to be initiated. This requires summoning them from the realm of the cosmic forces and asking, "for a little magic" (Skeat 1984: 64).

The acculturation of Islam manifested within rituals and ceremonies as a shift from practices coloured by Indian influences to those of Sufism and other aspects of Islam. Tantric traditions of fasting, and secluded meditation to cultivate supernatural power and *tapa* – ecstatic fervour (Winstedt 1982: 28) – acted as a foundation for Sufi practice. Acquisition of knowledge formerly attained by keeping vigil beside an open grave or dark forest to wait for the arrival of the tiger familiar was replaced by fasting and repeating the name of Allah 5,000 times until hysteria and nightmare visions gave way to an induction in mystical practices by angels and saints (Winstedt 1982: 73). The acceptance of the role of disciple, the honouring and obeying of a master during the period of initiation stemmed from the prior Hindu tradition of the relationship with and respect for Siva (Winstedt 1982: 73). Furthermore, within Islam the Hindu God Siva became chief of the infidel genies subservient to Allah. (Winstedt 1982: 32).

Islam also presented the Malay practitioner with a new pantheon of archangels, angels and saints, "benevolent to the righteous, and innocent of the caprice of nature-spirits or of Siva . . .

creator, but even more obviously destroyer" (Winstedt 1982:81). This enlarged the practitioner's "repertory of spells" (Winstedt, 1982; 83). Vocabulary and terms altered: the Hindu spells termed *mantra* and the *jampi* became *do'a*, the Arabic word for prayer, and the Muslim confession of faith framed every spell and incantation (Winstedt 1982:83).

Analogous references and numerological links to the number four within incantations, although potentially blasphemous, were according to Endicott, "taken as expressions of and evidence for the all-pervading essence of God. . . The most vivid demonstration for the Malay of the one indivisible self of man and its identity with the universe in Allah is the prevalence of things in sets of four" (Endicott 1981: 44). Winstedt presents a broad range of incantations illustrating this idea clearly. He describes a Kelantenese magician's incantation for curing an illness noting that he calls upon the four winds of disease (considered to be possessing the patient's body) to leave the patients' body via "the four doors of the organs of the mystical life" (Winstedt 1982: 75).

> "Wind in skin and pores corresponds with the first of the four steps towards union with Allah, that is, with the observance of the law (*shari'at*), which is the outward mark of the religious and about which there is no secrecy. Wind in bones and sinew corresponds with the second stage, that is, the mystic path (*tarikat*) enjoined by his spiritual guide for the Sufi novice. Wind in flesh and blood corresponds with the third stage, the plane of truth (*hakikat*). Wind in the breath of life and the seed of man corresponds with the plane of perfect gnosis (*ma'rifat*)"

In another incantation, uttered at the close of a Tantric ritual used by Kelantanese shaman to exorcise spirits, links are drawn between the four archangels and the creation of man:

> " . . .
> Skin and hair were created by Jibra'il,
> Flesh and blood by Mika'il,
> Bones and sinews by Israfil,
> Life and seed by 'Azra'il
> . . ."

The incantation progresses by asking where the spirits are lurking. Organs of the body named in the 'search' are described as the seats of the four Caliphs: Alu Bakar is found in the heart, 'Omar in the lungs, 'Usman in the spleen, and 'Ali in the gall bladder (Winstedt 1982: 85). Most pointedly, within this incantation is the reference to Allah and the Prophet

> " . . .
> Genies! if ye are in the feet of this patient,
> Know that by these feet walk Allah and His Prophet;
> If ye are in the belly of this patient,
> His belly is God's sea, the sea too of Muhammad;
> If ye are in his hands,

those hands are hands that pay homage to Allah and His Prophet;
..."

According to Winstedt "In man, the microcosm, the Malay's latest faith found equivalents for all that is both in the spiritual and material worlds" (Winstedt 1982: 85-86). However, although reference to Islam is made, in many cases other, prior adapted beliefs, linked to the influence Hinduism remain. The terms of exorcism used by a Kelantanese practitioner in his description of the patient demonstrates this, "his backbone corresponds to the pillar of God's throne (the *primum mobile*), his bile to fire, his phlegm to water, his blood to air, his belly to the ocean, his spirit to a bird" (Winstedt 1982: 85-86).

In his analysis of Malay medicine, Skeat notes that for the practice to be successful, "it must be based on the fundamental principle of preserving the balance of power among the four elements. This is chiefly to be effected by constant attention to, and moderation in, diet" (Skeat 1984: 409). This particular aspect is returned to later in this chapter. He notes how the application of this theory is supported through many sources including the Qur'an, which warns against excess in eating and drinking. The basis of the system was according to Skeat, "The mysterious sympathy between man and external nature" (Skeat 1984: 409). Living at the height of the Cartesian era, the link between man and nature would certainly have appeared mysterious.

Skeat divides the practice of the healer into two parts. The initial aspect, or 'diagnosis', consists of 'an inspection'. It requires divination, involving incense, coins thrown in a water jar and rice, to find the problem and its cause. Once known, the problem can be treated or, as described by Skeat, a "therapeutic ceremony" (Skeat 1984: 409) can be carried out. He classifies these ceremonies roughly into 4 types: I. Propitiary ceremonies, 2. "Neutralizing ceremonies – for destroying the evil principle, 3. Expulsory ceremonies (for casting out the evil principle – either by luring it into another object or by inducing a stronger spirit to enter him and assist him in casting it out from the patient), and 4. "Revivifactory" ceremonies - for recalling a sick person's soul. (Skeat 1984: 410)

In general, the ceremonies require water jars, rice, coins, bezoar stones ('stones' found occasionally in the bodies of animals, probably calcified matter), eggs, betel, and benzoin incense. The incense is burned in a censer, and the smoke is used to cleanse the pracititioner, and the water jars. Limes also serves as a cleansing agent, but for the benefit of the patient (Skeat 1984: 431) Rice is used in many forms and for many purposes. Parched rice thrown in

the water jars enables the practitioner to divine the problem. The outcome is based on the pattern it makes on the surface of the water. Coins are used for similar effect – their pattern and position on the bottom of the water jar indicating again the problem and its potential outcome. The egg is used to house the spirit once it is removed from the patient. Naturally, this short paragraph can only give a slight indication of the wider realm of techniques and practice.

In séance, the spirit guide, the familiar is usually the tiger spirit. Its origin is probably prior to Indian times although one of Siva's avatars was a tiger. The Malay lion is also considered to be a tiger and in some incantations there's a fusing, an analogy between Ali, son-in-law of Mohammad and the tiger. (Winstedt 1982: 30). During treatment the practitioner is possessed by the tiger and treats patient by rubbing, nuzzling and licking. Also, once he is conscious, the healer will also use his or her breath on the patient, and follow on with wiping or brushing motions.

The role and place of the practitioner in society appeared to depend on the nature of their practice. Although Winstedt notes, "Even now the shaman is so respected that in Kelantan if he is operating in a district all other medicine men are disqualified for the time being", he also notes "the pious Muslim who readily consults the ordinary magician, recoils from the spirit-raising séance and condemns the shaman as a follower of false gods." (Winstedt 1982: 8).

Skeat presents a similar paradox when he says that the practitioners had no connection with the official, orthodox practice of Islam; he or she was quite outside the system of the elders of the mosque who also had a strong role in the village community. The *pawang*, however, belonged to a "much older order of ideas" and could be considered to be the "legitimate representative of the 'medicine-man' or 'village-sorcerer' (1984: 56).

Winstedt notes that an 18th century document written by a family of Sayyids detailing the laws of Perak stated that, "A parish magician must be long-headed, suave, industrious and truthful, . . . If a person is sick he must attend immediately. His reward is that he escapes taxation and forced labour" and further contained information regarding the practitioner's fees for taking care of the village, the mine and the cultivation of rice. Maybe, as administrators, this family of both high social and religious standing were able to accommodate a practitioner existing on the edge of the community by focusing on the application of his practice rather than the content.

Thus there seemed to be a fine balance in the relationship between the practitioner and his community. A necessity within the village, the *pawang* was seen as a person of "very real significance" (Skeat 1984: 57) as his assistance was required in every aspect of village life. However, the dynamic of reform within Islam indicated a shift in the attitude towards and criticism of the content of the *pawang*'s practice. The Sufi influence, transformed from its prior Hindu heritage, meant that the relationship between Islam and magician could not be clearly delimited and defined. Although Islam infused the work of the practitioner and "led him often to try to emulate the living Muslim saint" (Winstedt 1982:72), at the same time his communion with spirits during the séance was considered an activity in the pursuit of false gods.

THE RECENT PAST - FROM 1975 TO 2000

1. ETHNIC IDENTITY

In her discussion of ethnicity and identity in the late 1970s, Chavivun Prachuabmoh points out that ethnic identity needs to be studied in the context of culture, that it cannot be separated. "Sharing an ethnic identity means also sharing a culture or elements of a culture that are distinctive from those of other ethnic groupings." (Chavivun 1989: 121). The Malay Muslims in the South of Thailand share cultural symbols such as dress and language and the cultural institutions of Islamic belief – *agama* - and Malay tradition – *adat*. It is often difficult to isolate a practice under one or other umbrella, however.

Chavivun's description of ethnic identity (1989) sets out the different terms that are used to describe people, themselves and others. As she points out, identity is complex and, to add Nagata's term, appears to 'oscillate'. The term *nayu* is used for ethnic identity among Muslims of any gender or from any strata of society within the Malay group; it represents race, language, and religion. Thus *ore nayu* means adherents of Islam in Thailand. *Nayu* is obtained at birth and cannot be acquired by conversion. A Thai converting to Islam is thus called *ore siye masou' nayu* – Thai entering Malayu, ie becoming Malay. Thus *nayu* contrasts with *ore siye* – meaning Thai or Siamese people. Within Thailand, the terms are mutually exclusive as they are created from the same basis of race, language and religion.

Malays in Malaysia are sometimes referred to as *ore malayu* to indicate political identity, but are often included in *ore nayu* as they share a common cultural heritage, and quite often the individuals in question are related. Muslims of other races in Pattani, such as the Pathans, are

referred to as *ore kabo*. Muslims in Bangkok are referred to as *ore nayu bako* (Bangkok Muslim)

According to one informant *ore isle* is used to refer to those who are more religious, whereas *nayu* referred to people "who are not so religious and fully *isle*" (Chavivun 1989: 130). However, as Chavivun quotes further from this particular source, the complexity of self-identification arises. The individual, a Thai-educated Muslim states, "We have to know the situation to identify ourselves" (Chavivun 1989: 130). *Ore siyu* is sometimes used in Malaysia, "because they do not know that we are *nayu*" (Chavivun 1989: 130). If the Malaysians are aware of the Islamic status of their neighbour then *ore siye* is used, "indicating that we are from Thailand". (Chavivun adds that the use of *ore siye* in Malaysia is for legal purposes rather than sociological ones - Chavivun 1989: 131). In Bangkok, Muslim is used, but this is not well known, so Thai Islam is more often used "to identify us with the Thais". The intricacy of positioning does not occur with mono-cultural villagers who experience fewer 'situations' or contrasting interactions. They would not necessarily experience the same complexity of self-identification (Chavivun 1989)

Drawing a connection to the work of Nishii Ryoko (2002 – as mentioned in Chapter I), the notion that the original identity of converts can have some effects upon descendants is illustrated in the sickness of a child. Chavivun notes a situation where a sick child was taken to the local healer. The boy's mother was Muslim; his father had converted to Islam upon marrying. The bomoh was unable to cure the child and "told the parents to take him to a famous Buddhist priest for healing" (Chavivun 1989: 131). Again, there is a sense that the primordial marking of 'other' as proposed by the Comaroffs could also be applied, not just externally, but also, ironically, to an internal division of self.

Thai-educated Muslims can develop a Thai identity through the school system. It results in the compatible construction of a Thai Muslim identity – more acceptable to the Thai authorities – but inherently this identity is more political than cultural. The cultural identity still remains Malayu with which they have been imbued since they were born. (Christie 1996: 187) For the individual there is no contradiction; the difficulty, however, arises when labeled *khaek* by Thais.

Chavivun calls it a "double-identity" complex whereby Thai-educated Muslims working within the Thai education system, although labeled as outsiders by other Thais, consider themselves

to a possess Thai identity which exists alongside their *nayu* identity. In a sense, to return to Thongchai's thesis, the Thai-educated Muslim has acquired "Thainess", however the Thai will still regard the Muslim as "other", as *khaek*.

Chavivun's research suggests that Muslims not educated in the Thai system feel less Thai. However, it is difficult to confirm this more cogently without further research.

Chavivun's data offered a perspective on Thai-educated Muslims and in particular their sense of an acquired Thai identity. However, this is not necessarily affirmed by Thais in general. In a sense, Saroja's more contemporary research takes us to the next level to a current day perspective. Focusing, in part, on the "small community of elite Malays who have achieved higher socio-economic standing through high educational attainment or commercial success" (Saroja 2002), Saroja notes how many of these intellectuals had felt discriminated against within the Thai education system. Although predominantly speaking Thai and adopting western clothes rather than Malay dress, they had reacted to the discrimination by choosing to pursue their education in Malaysia. Both professional and personal links maintained with colleagues, friends and relatives across the border had sustained the notion that "Southern Thailand was part of the larger Malay world and the political boundaries are often porous in their perception" (Saroja 2002). In Saroja's view, "the discrimination they currently face in Thailand forces them to cling onto a Malay identity by looking towards Malaysia and trying to locate the Muslim south of Thailand within this bigger rubric of the Malay world" (Saroja 2002).

Her study also extends to include former members of separatist organizations who fled across the border and sought refuge in Malaysia rather than conform to Thai law and government. "Despite the fact that all my informants held Malaysian passports, none of them expressed any feeling of cohesion or brotherhood with Malaysian Malays" (Saroja 2002)). Many had found a profitable and popular business niche in the opening and managing of Thai seafood restaurants – known as Tom Yam restaurants. In fact, the "Thai-Malays who were forced to leave Thailand as a result of their links with separatist groups focused on marketing Thai food despite their separatist rhetoric of intense antipathy for anything Thai" (Saroja 2002). Saroja observes there was little evidence of patriotism for Malaysia. In fact, anger was expressed toward Mahatir's repatriation of Thai-Malay dissidents. This action was interpreted as less based on the 'inviolability of political borders and states systems" and more on the 'sanctity of economic borders', ie in light of the Asian financial crisis. (Saroja 2002)

The Thai-Malays working in Tom Yam restaurants - a job generally considered 'highly undesirable to local Malays' were young men seeking to earn and save enough money to be able to return to Thailand and get married. The most prized job (ie with the highest salary) was as a tom yam cook. Although none of these men cooked at home in Thailand

> " . . . they considered themselves the best tom yam cooks because they were Thais . . . It was as if national identity (being Thai) translated itself into a powerful cooking ability and transposed on the body of the individual. Young men working across the border are not only asserting their Thai identity to lay claim to high-paying jobs as tom yam cooks, but they are being made conscious of their Thai identity as well" (Saroja 2002)

Working as illegal immigrants, the Thai Malays felt separate from Malaysia and Malaysian Malays and this heightened their Thai identity. Although speaking Malay in Thailand, many Thai Malays spoke Thai among themselves in Malaysia, "the need to distinguish themselves from these people forced them to find solidarity in a national language that the Thai-Malays saw as an oppressive tool that posed as a threat to their Malay identity in the past" (Saroja 2002)

Christie discusses the strategy of the education system that sought to separate Thai national identity and Islam from Malay custom, tradition and dialect. He considers that the relationship between the two "has been and to a great degree still is, inextricable" (Christie 1996: 187). Yet there is evidence of change. The Pattani dialect of the Malay language does not have a written form and in a sense does not have the broader 'functionality' of the Thai language. This is becoming apparent in this age of global communication where the younger generation, especially, is participating in Internet culture and is using Thai to communicate. During discussion with informants while conducting fieldwork in Pattani, it was suggested to this author that more and more Thai terms were creeping into Pattani Malay, that no new words were being created. In an era where the written word appears to have precedent over the spoken, one wonders what the future will bring. The author was also informed that it was generally Central Thai, rather than the Southern dialect that was most commonly spoken in the town of Pattani, *amphur muaang*, especially among the younger generation, again. This was the language taught at school. The Southern Thai dialect, although prominent in Had Yai, an hour's drive away, was not as common. The author was told people did not like to use it, and felt that Central Thai was much 'nicer' and 'cooler'.

Another aspect that appeared to indicate a shift to a stronger adoption of Thai nationality/citizenship was a significant change in terms of addressing the king. Formerly, he would be termed *Raja Siye* – King of Siam, yet the author was told that it was increasingly common to refer to him as *Raja Kitta* – our king. A further, more informal indicator of the willing acceptance of Thai national identity was described to this author in terms of football. Apparently, in matches between Thailand and Malaysia, local people cheer Thailand. An informant explained that Thai citizenship is readily and comfortably acknowledged, and at the same time, a strong sense of Malay identity is also retained, in part through history. However, the informant added that the notion of Malay has changed too, that nowadays it stretched to include other countries in the region, and was taking on a more regional accent.

Before moving on to discuss the role of healing over the past twenty five years, it is necessary to highlight some points from the above discussion of ethnic identity. The development of the Thai nation state acted to create the ethnic minority of the Malay-speaking Muslims. As borders were consolidated by the actions of governments and economies modernized and industrialized, so it would seem that former cultural groups became not so much severed as distanced, and started functioning within different boundaries, different terms of reference. Thus, as much as the evolution of ethnicity and ethnic identity has been derived from the asymmetry of power relations in economic terms (Comaroffs 1992), so too has there been an add-on effect on the relationship between the Malays divided by both a border and economic constraints.

However, as we have seen identity can 'oscillate' depending on variables such as time, location, and purpose - of both speaker and receiver. As mentioned in Chapter II, Berger (1999) considers that pluralism and relativity have been apparent within Asian culture for a very long time. And, thus it should also be acknowledged that just as on some levels there can appear a greater disparity between groups, on other levels there may be greater intimacy. Zulkifli's argument emphasizes the greater intimacy of the (formerly) non-federated states in the North of Malaysia with the three Southernmost provinces of Thailand – the 'Isthmian states'. He considers that the three cultural spheres of Malaysia: Borneo, The Southern Peninsula, and the Isthmus have different socio-cultural histories. Thus, Kelantan and Trengganu, known as staunchly traditional (and the two states in which, in the 1999 Malaysian General Election, Mahatir's ruling party lost power), may have a greater affinity with the three Southern Thai provinces (Christie 1996:188). According to my informants, strong religious links continue between Pattani and Kelantan. The opening of the mosque on the Pattani campus

of the Prince of Songkhla University on 24 July 2542 (BE) was attended by the Chularatchamontri, Mr. Muhammad Nor Mattha, and Nik Aziz Nik Mat of the PAS party and the present Chief Minister of Kelantan.

2. HEALING PRACTICE AT THE END OF THE CENTURY

The most noticeable change from the first quarter of the 20th century to the last is the shift of healing practice into a more interpersonal sphere. Golomb's research (1985) into healing practice was conducted during one of the most politically turbulent times in Pattani, and his research reflects and illustrates the issues that were current in the broader political environment. Although dependence on locally known healers is common among minority groups, he adds that he suspected that the loyalty to local practitioners was part of a broader socio-cultural reaction to assimilation policies of the Thai government (Golomb 1985: 171)

However, the author suggests that there is a broader frame operating here that should be acknowledged, that an adaptive shift took place within healing practice during the 20th century. Formerly, the paradigm presented man's interaction with the forces of nature. In a sense, this could be termed a chthonic integration. The change that can be seen in the content of Golomb's data suggests a subtle shift from the wild forces of nature acting upon man, to the socializing principle of a civilized society monitoring man's behaviour. It is almost as if, in the turn of a century, healing practice has shifted its location from metaphorically outside the 'city walls' to within. The spirits, the *hantu* and the *jiin* are still within the realm of practice, but there is more interpersonal cause and diagnosis. "Malay spirit-mediums regularly diagnose all sorts of physical and psychological disorders as the evil-doing of sorcerers' spirit-helpers or enchanted missiles . . . Sorcery accusations are the norm in Malay Pattani " (Golomb 1988: 437). In recent years, critical analysis within medical anthropology has discussed the notion of 'resistance' within studies of possession and hysteria. It has been interpreted as a reaction to threats or changes to an individual's identity, ie within the socio-cultural realm. Golomb's work presents that realm.

It is from this perspective that the social, cultural and political changes affecting the peoples of Pattani can be evidenced in healing practice. Although reformists frowned upon animistic practices, as Golomb wryly observes, sometimes the alternatives were severely limited.

> "Therefore villagers must make a choice between two evils: either they consult a traditional curer-magician or Sufi saint, and thereby acknowledge some pagan or mystical power other than the direct will of Allah, or they humble themselves before a Thai official, thereby admitting dependence on a government with which they are reluctant to identify." (Golomb 1985: 17)

Choosing a therapist became a moral issue. At this time Western-style medicine was strongly associated with Thai infrastructure and Thai identity, thus there was strong resistance to that particular option. The opposition to this type of biomedical treatment was compounded by the fact there were relatively few Malay Muslim practitioners for the area (Golomb notes one in 1978), and the cultural communication gap, not to mention possible language problems with a Western-style Thai doctor would be inhibiting, especially for rural people.

The relationship with the local healer and the fear of breaking face was also a factor in local people not choosing Western-style or biomedical treatments, and tied in with that was the sense of compromising their own "ethnic heritage" (Golomb 1985: 175). Golomb suggests that traditional healers capitalized on the 'intimacy' of their relationship with their patients to discredit and undermine biomedical services. He notes that local healers considered that local disease labels did not translate into other terms and criticized the lack of an identifying procedure in determining the cause of an ailment. The culture of Western-style medicine was thus perceived as a threat to local healers especially because it was associated with Thai authority.

To a certain degree the friction between Thai authority and local practitioners is still in evidence. In the following chapter, although the bonesetters' criticisms of hospital services and facilities demonstrate the difference in attitudes toward practice, they also indicate to some degree a broader distrust of government authority – a distrust that filtered through in interviews with other practitioners. In order to gain an insight towards and a broader perspective of these attitudes, the author interviewed a government official from the Department of Health with the objective of discovering local poiicy toward healers.

The reason for the wariness on the part of the healers, and their subtle, but distinct desire NOT to develop contact with or become well known to government officials became much clearer during the interview. The desire to modernize and upgrade local health practices was clearly evident throughout the discussion. Although the interview was originally set to discuss the *bomoh*, the official chose instead to discuss the situation of the traditional midwife, a practitioner not covered by the scope of this study. However, the attitude towards the midwife also applied to all forms of traditional practice and practitioners, and the villagers seeking their services, and is thus of relevance to this study.

After talking briefly about the feasibility of 'upgrading' and retraining midwives to follow more hygienic practices, the official presented the broader government policy of establishing health centers in villages. Within this context of these development plans, there was no room for traditional midwives, whether retrained or not, and later in the interview, he fundamentally stated there was no place for them in the future scheme of things.

According to him, the practices of local, traditional midwives were dirty and unhygienic; infections were common place as a result of the umbilical cord being severed with a bamboo blade. He knew the government had no right to prevent villagers from using the services of a midwife, but what it could do was, for example, visit the midwife and try and instruct her in methods of hygiene, or explain to the pregnant woman the disadvantages of giving birth at home using the local midwife, and stress the high risk involved.

Traditional midwives were still popular in Mayo, Gapor and Maikean districts. These areas were relatively isolated; there was no direct local transport to Pattani. According to research carried out by the Department of Health, the midwives were popular with these local women because they felt they could give birth at home with their families around them; they felt more comfortable and secure in that environment. They knew the midwife as she would probably have helped when other female members of the family were giving birth. The research noted that there was a reluctance among these women to give birth in hospital because there was no one to comfort them; they expressed they would feel lonely and isolated in hospitals where they would have to stay in a bed and be looked after only by an unfamiliar, unknown nurse.

The interview thus strongly indicated that the government was only interested in knowing who the midwives were in order to dissuade them from their traditional practice. Yet at the same time, it appeared that the communities were not quite ready to 'modernise' and leave their traditions behind them. The official indicated that the data regarding the use of the traditional midwives was not particularly important; it was covered by only one question on the questionnaire as it was not considered a major feature of mother and child development. The official strongly indicated that the government knew what was the best treatment for pregnant women. The implication of the official's words, viewed in light of the experience of the bonesetters and their interaction with hospitals as described in the next chapter, links to the issue of coercion mentioned in the introduction.

In a sense, to contrast with the modernizing policies of the Department of Health, another aspect of healing practice that bears relevance to the core themes of this thesis is discussion of *main peteri*. Although carrying out fieldwork at the same time as Golomb, Laderman's (1991) focus, in Kelantan and Trengganu, was *main peteri*, a form of ritual theatre, where healing and performance are most evidently conjoined.

The central purpose of the ceremony is the healing of human pain; this is acted out against a theatrical backdrop "complete with dramatic tension, stage, props and audience" (Zulkifli 2002). Related to both Mak Yong and Wayang Kulit, "for they share the same language, music, aura and world view" it operates within the paradigm of traditional Malay medicine where the human body – in its holistic form, ie mind and body as one - is represented, defined and expressed through the four elements earth, water, fire, and wind. Wind, however is the dominant element – the element accommodating desire, and when disturbed thus causes depression or dis-ease - and the aim of the ceremony is to address and redress the balance of wind. It is through wind that the inner spirit can be healed. A shaman in trance, using music and dance, interacts with a *minduk*, a chanting spirit medium. *Main peteri* is referred to as both dance and *berbomoh*, the term for the ancient healing system. It is a tradition only found in Pattani, Kelantan and Trengganu and its performance is usually only among close friends and family (Zulkifli 2002).

Laderman's research and *main peteri* are mentioned here for two reasons. The first is to offer an insight into Malay medical theory, and secondly, to describe and analyse a change in practice. The concepts of *nyawa*, *sĕmangat* and *rûh* have already been mentioned, and slight reference has been made to the inner winds, *angin*. In Malay medical theory it is the winds that "determine individual personality, drives and talent. Their presence, type and quality can be deduced from the behaviour of their possessor, but they are palpable neither to observers nor to their owners, except during trances when they are felt as actual presences" (Laderman 1997: 334)

According to Laderman, most of the shaman's practice is dealing with the inner Winds. Illnesses from spirit attacks are not as common as fevers, and digestive upsets which are considered to derive from humoral imbalance. Inappropriate diet, lack of sleep or stress can cause an imbalance, as can a 'disharmony' between the body and the season. "Individuals differ physically and temperamentally; all change as they pass through stages of life, seasons of the year and hours of the day. Thus a person who tends toward the hot polarity would

classify as neutral a food considered 'cold' by most people . . ." (Laderman 1994: 185). The humoral system - based upon a belief in the four basic elements of life, earth, air, fire and water – and the classification of food into hot and cold categories has an integrative, relative, situational quality. These features are not fixed and require the skill of the healer to determine appropriacy and application.

Bisa is another aspect of Malay medical theory. In its core meaning it refers to power and the potency of the words of the *bomoh* when uttering an incantation. It can also refer to anything that gives a septic wound, such as snakebites, stings or wounds. However, the most frequent use of the word is for food, and specifically food avoidance. "Knowledge of which foods are *bisa* is common; people act upon it during illnesses and in other vulnerable conditions . . ." (Laderman 1994: 186). A tentative link can be made between *bisa* foods and allergies, with the *bisa* food exacerbating the preexisting, but hidden condition.

Laderman's article, 'The Limits of Magic' (1997 describes a change in practice, in a sense adapting from rural to urban demands. Laderman recalls seeing the séance of a woman named Cik Su in 1977, and describes her as an unorthodox and quite intimidating shaman. During performances her spirit guide would name names of individuals believed to have perpetrated magic and sorcery upon the patient. This was highly unusual as following proper Malay medical etiquette; a shaman will not name the individual causing the problem. No one would be allowed to enter or leave the room, during performances, which was also highly unusual. Her séances would be quite frightening, and lack any of the humor typically present to relieve tension. She was criticized by other shamans for focusing on human evil and magic too much, and for not acknowledging that most problems were caused by disharmonies of the Self, not from malevolent people.

By 1982 when the author happens to see her again, she has become relatively affluent, and is still participating in séance performances, but their nature had changed. Teaming up with a partner, and attracting an urban rather than her previous rural audience Cik Su had now reduced her performance to less than an hour. However, it still retained the keen fear and potency of before. During her performance electric lights would be turned off and oil lamps lit instead. Once her performance was finished her partner would take over and would part-lecture, part-diagnose and treat the problems of members of the audience. His method of treatment combined traditional and nontraditional Malay etiologies and referred to the omnipotence of God.

As Laderman says, "The partnership of Cik Su and Yussof was a winning combination" (1997: 340). Her performance "authenticated the night's treatments for her patients and their families: urban Malays who had little previous acquaintance with shamanistic ceremonies" (Laderman 1997: 340). Furthermore, they set the tone for the audience to be receptive to Yussof's preaching and treatment. In essence, the 'traditional' was restructured within a modern 'frame' and re-presented to an urban audience. Furthermore, Yussof's statements of "piety, prayer and devotion to Islam, protected the healing treatments from the kind of criticism directed at more traditional shamans' séances" (Laderman 1997: 341). Laderman case study presents, in a sense, traditional healing practice in its most adaptive and contemporary form, ie whereas what is observed in the following chapter is the absorption of the 'new' in order to sustain established forms, in Cik Su's performance, the older forms are necessary in order to 'endorse' the contemporaneous aspects.

The performance demonstrates Landy's (1974) notion of cultural conservative, for example by reverting to old paraphenalia such as oil lamps and, in a sense, creating what the audience expected to see as 'traditional'. However, the notion appears to be framed more in a sense of postmodern irony – there is a lack of authenticity in using such 'props': their purpose is for 'atmosphere' not function. It should also be added that an assessment of the value of a performance of this nature also depends on the perspective of the observer, a point which Landy alludes to. To the urban dweller, it would appear traditional and authentic; to the rural healer, it would appear crass and inappropriate.

CONCLUSION

This chapter has sought to demonstrate both the broader historical environment in which traditional healing practice has evolved, and, more recently, key aspects of the content of practice over the past one hundred years. In doing so, it has been established that healing practice has been integrated within socio-cultural development and, more recently, it has reflected ethnic identity. The chapter finishes with an example of contemporary practice as observed in Kelantan and, in a sense poses a question for future consideration. As we move into the 21st century there appears to be evidence of a greater form of self-consciousness. Reference has been made to this already in Chapter II through Erikson's observation that ethnicity has suffered, in a sense, an appropriation of itself, ie parameter collapse, where theory has been absorbed into practice. The question is, are we witnessing something similar

in the 'manipulation' rather than 'adaptation' of Cik Su's healing practice? Is this the shape of things to come. This point will be returned to in the concluding chapter.