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## To Be or Not to Be... The Cultural Identity of the Jawi (Thailand)

### **Abstract**

At the beginning of the century, the sultanate of Patani was permanently annexed by Siam (Thailand), and its inhabitants were cut off from a common future with Malaysia. Since then, these people, Muslims of Malay origin, have resisted political and cultural integration, maintaining themselves as Malays vis-à-vis the Thai and distinguishing themselves from other Malays in elaborating an autonym, the usage of which is somewhat of a puzzle to those outside the community. But in this way it seems an appropriate mark of identification for the Jawi: existing, but much debated; used, but not recognized; in short, in a state of limbo.

**Key words:** Jawi—Thailand—Malaysia—ethnicity—autonym—endonym—exonym

*Asian Folklore Studies*, Volume 57, 1998: 223–255

A national unity can be achieved through a diversity of ethnic groups. No cultural group would submit to a process of integration that would eventually lead to the loss of its valued identity.

SURIN PITSUWAN, *Islam and Malay Nationalism*

**A**T THE SOUTHEASTERN EXTREMITY of peninsular Thailand there are four provinces whose inhabitants, about two million people, make up close to 4% Thailand's population. They are of Malay origin, follow the Muslim religion, and represent four-fifths of the Muslims of Thailand. They are the second-largest minority after the Chinese, and call themselves the "Jawi." These provinces are Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun. The first three constituted, until not too long ago, the famous sultanate of Patani,<sup>1</sup> which was one of the most important trading crossroads of Southeast Asia in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries.

As WELCH and MCNEILL (1989, 28) point out, the oldest Thai or European documents on the area refer to this Malay and Muslim sultanate, calling it "Patani," while the Chinese chronicles use other names (Lang-hsi-chia, Lang-ya-ssi-chia, Lang-chia-shu, or Lang-ya-hsiu) which are equivalents of the Malay name Langkasuka and lead us to believe that the region of Patani succeeded the kingdom of this name. As P. WHEATLEY (1980, 265) said:

Many of the perplexities which we have noted in these pages may well prove permanently insoluble, but enough has been salvaged from obscurity to show that Langkasuka, a kingdom of considerable importance during the first fifteen hundred years of the Christian era, was situated in the vicinity of modern Patani. Emerging as an entity early in the period of Indianization, it persisted through the vicissitudes of peninsular history until early in the sixteenth century when it mysteriously disappeared, leaving only a legendary name to peasant mythology.

This belief is supported by archaeological excavations that have been

undertaken in the province of Pattani, at an area called the “Yarang Complex”: a group of three excavation sites and about thirty other grave mounds covering a surface area of twelve square kilometers that is situated about fifteen kilometers from the present town of Pattani (the oldest remains discovered date from approximately A.D. 1050–1300 ).

#### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

The sultanate of Patani was long a favored point of crossing and commerce. The Thai clashed with the Malay sultanates in their push towards the south in the thirteenth century. Later, the Dutch, English, French, and Portuguese jostled for influence in the area. Patani was annexed by King Rama I at the termination of a victorious campaign in 1785, together with the sultanate of Kedah “and its dependencies,” and the sultanates of Kelantan and Trengganu. The Siamese regarded this annexation as a regularization: they had considered the sultanate of Patani as their vassal ever since the first Siamese conquests on the peninsula in the second half of the thirteenth century. In reality, after these annexations, the Malays maintained almost total independence. But from 1791, Trengganu and Patani were handed over to the kingdom of Songkla, and Kelantan and Kedah to the kingdom of Nakhon Sri Thammarat. This gave rise to immediate revolts in Patani. A Malay governor and a few Siamese administrators were installed in place of the sultan but, Songkla proving incapable of exerting real authority, the governor himself revolted against Siam in 1808. Bangkok then decided to divide Patani into seven provinces: Sai Buri (first Selinong Bayu, then Telubè, in Jawi), Pattani (Ttaning in Jawi),<sup>2</sup> Nongchik (Nochi’ in Jawi), Yala (Nibong in Jawi), Yaring (Jamu in Jawi), Rangae (Tanyông Mah in Jawi), and Rahman (Koto Baru Mè in Jawi). But this decision was not sufficient to restore calm. Rebellions continued, just as in the neighboring sultanates. The rebellion of the sultan of Kedah encouraged the “seven provinces” to resist Siam, with the exception of Yaring, which was governed by a Siamese. In 1838, only four provinces participated in a new revolt, while those of Yaring, Pattani, and Sai Buri remained loyal to Bangkok. Kedah was also divided into four provinces and the sultan replaced by Siamese governors. Therefore, these Siamese possessions on the peninsula were, henceforth, much more dependent on Bangkok than the sultanates of Kelantan and Trengganu.

But Bangkok was obliged to give back the running of the provinces to the indigenous elites, and restored the sultan of Kedah to his throne in 1842, while the situation remained unchanged in Patani, where the princes showed themselves to be submissive.

The reign of Chulalongkorn (Rama V) upset the status quo. This

Siamese sovereign, taken with modernism, announced a regime of direct administration and created a new territorial division—the *monthon*—and trouble started again in Patani. The sultan of Patani, Abdul Kadir, was imprisoned for two years and then released on the condition that he retire from politics. Henceforth, Kelantan and Trengganu were dependent upon the province of Phuket, while Patani and Kedah came under Nakhon Si Thammarat. Siam then became worried about the loyalty of its possessions because of the advance of French and English conquests.

The English influence in the Malay states brought a marked improvement in the conditions of life in comparison with those of the sultanates under Siamese control, provoking a significant emigration to the English possessions:

L'Angleterre possédant tous les points importants de la presqu'île, il ne lui reste plus qu'à terminer sa conquête en annexant l'un après l'autre tous les petits royaumes de la péninsule.... Les seuls royaumes (Patani, Kélanthane, Kémaman, Pahang) qui jusqu'ici se soient tenus à l'abri de l'invasion anglaise sont les tributaires de Siam.... Avant la fin du siècle peut-être, le dernier souverain malais aura perdu sa couronne.

(DE MORGAN 1993, 17)

Depuis dix ans que l'Angleterre est maîtresse à Pérak, le pays a été singulièrement transformé: des routes ont été créées, les rivières ont été rendues navigables, des tarifs ont été établis pour les transports... les impôts ont été légèrement diminués.... Grâce à ces améliorations [de l'Angleterre], la population s'est accrue d'une manière très notable; les Malais des royaumes voisins fuyant les pays gouvernés par les radjahs, viennent journellement se fixer dans le royaume de Pérak.... L'émigration des Malais de Patani vers Pérak est considérable. Pendant le séjour que j'ai fait dans Rahman, j'ai vu sans cesse des familles malaises descendre en radeau le fleuve Pérak pour venir se fixer dans les environs de Kotah Tampan.... Les royaumes indigènes et ceux qui paient tribut au Siam sont encore gouvernés par les Sultans, leur état de pauvreté est indescriptible. Les voies de communication y sont totalement défaut. Les impôts y sont levés au désir du souverain et la population y diminue d'une façon très notable surtout depuis ces dernières années. (DE MORGAN 1993, 12 and 17)

The decision to create the *monthon* Pattani was taken in 1906, and a high commissioner was named in place of the sultan. The seven provinces



were regrouped into four new ones: Yala (Yala and Rahman), Pattani (Pattani, Yaring and Nongchik), Sai Buri, and Narathiwat (formerly Rangae).

The advance of the English in Malaya stopped the southward advance of the Siamese. On 10 March 1909, the Anglo Siamese Treaty gave the sultanates of Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, Perlis, and the island of Langkawi to the United Kingdom (KOBKUA SUWANNATHAT-PIAN 1988).

In exchange, the British recognized Siamese authority over the regions situated further north, including Satun (and also Patani, although the sultanate was not mentioned by name in the treaty).

The system of *monthon* was abolished in 1932 at the same time as the absolute monarchy was transformed into a constitutional monarchy. The four provinces of Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, and Satun were, henceforth, incorporated into the provinces of Siam (see map on previous page).

Patani, and subsequently Satun, were thus the first Malay sultanates to be incorporated into the Thai nation, and the only ones to lose their status as sovereign states. The Siamese government immediately accelerated the replacement of the Malay elites by Siamese civil servants, making use of a “rule of direct administration.” Movements for autonomy and independence emerged, all the more attractive because of the many governmental measures that clashed with the religious convictions of the inhabitants of the sultanate and rejected or even prohibited expression of their cultural specificity (notably in language and dress).

The first movement, quickly suppressed, was that of Abdul Kadir, the former sultan of Patani, who was installed in 1915 in Kelantan and who died in 1933. In January 1948, Haji Sulong, the charismatic leader of the Patani People’s Movement for independence and president of the Islamic Council, was arrested for high treason. This was the signal for revolt by the Malays of Patani and the revival of a bloody guerrilla war. On 5 March 1948 GAMPAR (Gabungan Melayu Patani Raya), the “Movement for Great Malay Patani” was created, supported by the Malay Nationalist Party of Kelantan. In 1960, on the heels of Malaysia’s independence and following the Indonesian example, the BRN (Barisan Revolusi Nasional), the “National Revolution Front”—called *pati bi* by Jawi peasants, from the English “Party B”—appeared and salvaged the fragments of the anemic GAMPAR and presented a resolutely pan-Malaysian program. Its objective was to liberate Patani from the Siamese grip and to integrate it into the new Malaysian federation. The Thai routed the BRN with intense repression, confining it to terrorist action of negligible political importance. Founded in 1971 in Kelantan, the Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani (BNPP), or “Patani National Liberation Front,” displayed a more Islamic character and aimed at creating a climate

of terror among the Chinese population and the Thai civil servants. Its fighting members were trained abroad. In 1967, the Patani United Liberation Organization (PULO) was founded in India. An office opened in Mecca in 1968, recruited members, notably among the numerous pilgrims coming from Patani. This movement, if it openly relies on the support of religion, remains no less faithful to the descendants of the sultans of Patani. Its armed branch, the PULA (Patani United Liberation Army), asserts its extremist position by military actions. Finally, in 1987, there appeared in Malaysia the PKRRP, or “Popular Revolutionary Commandos of Patani,” of which the military arm is said to include two hundred students who trained in Libya and fought in Afghanistan. The fighters of all these movements are called *madu besi*, “iron bees,” by the Jawi villagers, who do not differentiate between them by the name of their movement so much as by the name of their gang’s local leader. As a result, fighters even in the same movement may be differentiated by the villagers.

Each of these movements, more or less moribund at present, has its own stronghold in the region. They have been radicalized and marginalized, and their numbers dwindle because of a military alliance between Malaysia and Thailand that provides for reciprocal rights of pursuit into each other’s national territory, and because of a clever policy of pardon by the Thai authorities, who grant amnesty and offer land to all repentant rebels. The dwindling of the guerrilla armies is caused as well by the inability of these small groups to come to a durable understanding among themselves, and by the bad image of the sultans of Patani and the aristocrats or their hired henchmen who impose their tyranny—the word is not too strong—on the population. The small separatist groups, particularly the PULO, have similarly been guilty of much extortion and violence against the population that has resulted in a loss of their support. Moreover, the Malay movements have also fought against the troops of the Malayan Communist Party supported by, if not completely made up of, the Chinese minority. The PULO, which for a short time was very active, has, so to speak, disappeared from the political horizon. It is reduced today to an opportunistic amalgam having more to do with organized crime.

#### MYTHS AND REALITY: A COUNTRY APART

Different mythic narratives about the origin of the name of the sultanate continue to coexist. The most widespread in the lowlands is this one:

A white deer appeared in the forest and started out on a walk punctuated by remarkable actions: the animal was magic. It disappeared on a very white sandy beach. The raja, aroused with curiosity, asked the

frightened villagers where the animal was to be found. They answered that it had disappeared on “this beach, here” [*pata ni*]. The king thus renamed the town, his capital city.

This version comes from a coastal village in the district of Yaring. But, in the villages of the highlands, in particular in Sai Buri, the animal is no longer a deer but a “white elephant with black tusks,” and, contrarily, it appears on the beach and disappears in the forest (LE ROUX 1994). The king names his town in the same way as is narrated in the above story. This myth still has prophetic value today, close to a messianic prophecy, since it is said that when the “white elephant with black tusks” reappears there will be a “holy war.” The return of this elephant will herald the supremacy of the Jawi over the earth for forty years—the return of the golden age of the sultanate. When it disappears it is followed by the appearance of a Siamese naga<sup>3</sup> that will give the power once more to the Thai, for forty years. After that the naga will in turn give way to the Mahdi, the last prophet, for the ultimate cycle of forty years, portent of apocalyptic chaos and the end of the world. The myth is certainly of Hindu origin, but with a distinct Islamic overlay.

In these legends, the Siamese play a role that is not insignificant: the white elephant is, in fact, one of the symbols of Siamese royalty. Examples of reciprocal linguistic and cultural borrowing are numerous. Many Thai words are found in the Jawi language, although they are restricted to words that refer to administrative entities and units of measure. The relationships of the Jawi with the Thai, at least with the peasants of the Southern region—their immediate neighbors—are good.

The language spoken by virtually the whole population in this region is very similar to Kelantan Malay, but with distinctive phonological particularities (ASMAH HAJI OMAR 1977). Most people have only a rudimentary command of Thai. The majority of Thai Buddhists in the south, on the other hand, do not know the language spoken by the original Jawi inhabitants. The Patani Malays call the language they speak, which is a Malay dialect, *baso Jawi*, while the Thai or Sino-Thai call it *phasa Jawi* in Thai, “Jawi language” (HEMMET 1994, 100).<sup>4</sup>

The expression “Patani Malay” (or “Malays from Patani”) is misleading because it does not refer simply to speakers of the Malay language. The fact is that they use daily two languages—both of which are dialects, one of Malay the other of Thai. The Thai of the south, or Pak Tai, in fact speak a dialect (with numerous sub-variations) with seven tones (against five in standard Thai as spoken in Bangkok) (SMALLEY 1994). The Pak Tai vocabulary is strongly influenced by Malay and Chinese, but nearly 30% of its words are of Mon origin (HEMMET 1994, 101).

The inhabitants of the region are certainly Malay, but they are in contact with the Indianized and Buddhist world, of which they carry visible marks. A fundamental specificity is proof of this.

The region of Patani is also linked with that of Kelantan (a border state of Malaysia), with which it has a common border, by political and historical vicissitudes, by language and culture, by the manufacture and use of characteristic houses and of the *pata' kera'* or *kolè'* boats (boats with bifid bow and stern painted in vivid colors [CORTEZ 1996]), by the breeding of zebra-doves (*Geopelia striata*) for singing competition, and by the making of *budu*—a salty fish sauce—which takes on the value of a mark of cultural identity for the Jawi.<sup>5</sup> Patani and Kelantan, as WINZELER (1985, 6) has pointed out, appear to be different from the other Malay regions:

The unique characteristics of Malay culture and language in Kelantan are noted today by Malay people from other regions of the country. Speakers of Malay from distant areas of the peninsula claim they cannot at first understand the Kelantan dialect, and that people here behave differently, have peculiar customs, and eat strange foods, in particular a smelly fermented fish sauce.... The various cultural characteristics which Malays of other areas attribute to the Kelantanese regarding language, food, magic, and sex are the common stuff of ethnic distinction; they indicate that other Malays perceive the Kelantanese as somewhat different, and slightly dangerously so.

Kelantan today may be an important state in the Malaysian Federation (ROFF 1974), but in the history of the two sultanates, Patani was more often the suzerain. Its inhabitants are legitimately proud of their origins and feel that they are distinguishable, if not different. They say, for example, that the Thai nationality (which includes a Buddhist connotation) is not sufficiently fit to represent them vis-à-vis the inhabitants of Kelantan or the other Malay states.

#### TO BE MALAY IN THAILAND

After having neglected them for a long time, for the last few years Thailand has lavished capital investment on its Malay provinces and encouraged numerous aid programs for development, such as the replanting of rubber plantations. One may speak of an “economic take-off” since 1989, despite the fact that economic policy is often badly carried out and sometimes generates violent reactions because major improvements in the infrastructure are often not made. But the dynamic has been set in motion and the region of old Patani is without a doubt destined to remain part of the kingdom of Thailand.

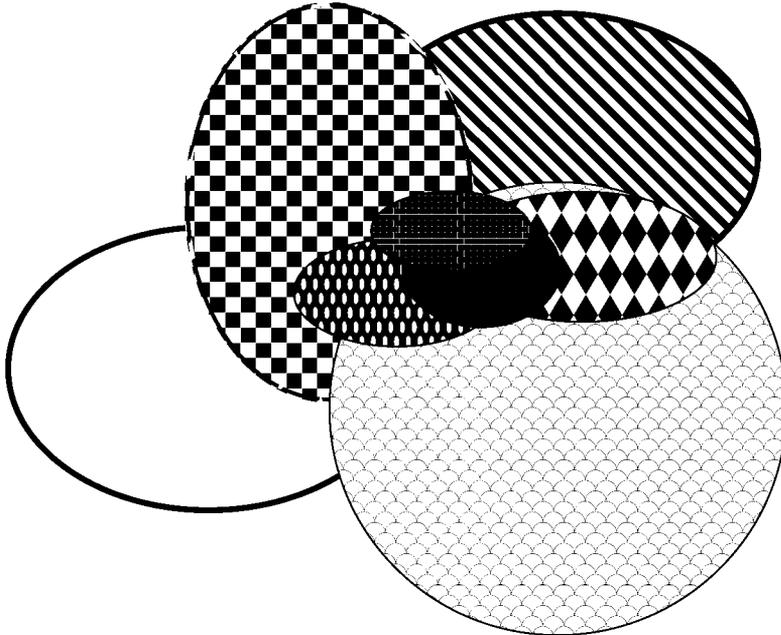
The difficulty of being Malay Muslims within a Buddhist kingdom goes hand in hand with material and moral advantages in relation to the neighboring federation of Malaysian states: they can demand compensations on the basis of their cultural difference, or they can justify their way of life, which is a little more dissolute but less hypocritical than the one in puritan Malaysia.<sup>6</sup> In short, the Malay population of Patani lives a life of acculturation that is the inescapable consequence of a policy of national assimilation. We can therefore no longer speak of a struggle for independence, unless a sudden upsurge happens, which is highly improbable.

The inhabitants of Patani, cut off from a common destiny with the other sultanates of the peninsula, have reoriented themselves around Malay cultural values that were in a way frozen in Patani for a long period, while they were changing everywhere else, especially after independence. The region of Patani today is a storehouse of traditions of the Malay peninsular world. Rice is still harvested with the traditional rice harvest knife. Invocations to the soul of the rice are recited before the harvest. Healers (*bohmo*) are still very active and traditional beliefs remain strong (LE ROUX 1997). It is only in the recent past that a harsh and dogmatic Islam has engulfed this society that is abandoning, little by little, and no doubt definitely, its improvised role as cultural guardian. The inhabitants of Patani, in the past Malay (in the political sense), are now inhabitants of Thailand by territorial absorption; they are not yet Thai because of their remaining Malay (in the cultural sense); they are Muslims and, finally, they are Austronesians by language (their language is part of the Malayo-Polynesian group whereas Siamese belongs to the Thai-Kadai group). They belong to all of these worlds without fusing with any single one (see diagram on next page).

THE APPROPRIATION OF AN ETHNONYM AS A MARK OF CULTURAL IDENTITY  
It is vis-à-vis the Malaysians that the emergence of an ethnonym seems necessary—something like a substitute for nationality. The Jawi would say: *kito jadi orè Jawi, orè Islè*, which means, “we are the Jawi (Malays of Patani in Thailand) Muslims.”

The identity of the Jawi is undoubtedly more cultural than ethnic and is situated at the nexus of several large groups. This peripheral society exists only through an accident of history and as such does not actually constitute an ethnic group. The Jawi cannot claim to be different from other Malays as the Iban of Borneo differ from the Javanese, or the Jörai of Vietnam from the ancient Cham. In this sense, their ethnonym expresses the composite and complex “social space”<sup>7</sup> that is theirs but does not let us forget that they come from a rural society that, while a minority in Thailand, is a majority in other countries. To define the Jawi as a single integral part of the broad

THE JAWI SITUATION IN RELATION TO THE LARGER CULTURAL  
ENSEMBLE OF WHICH IT IS A PART



LEGEND

The Jawi society is simultaneously part of several ensembles or groupings and it exists at the meeting point of these different ensembles, and only there.

\* CULTURAL ENSEMBLES OR GROUPINGS

1. The Austronesian world (Muslim societies like the Bugis of Sulawesi, and non-Muslim societies such as the Jörai of Vietnam, the Yami of Taiwan, the Iban of Borneo, the Polynesians, the Melanesians, and the Malgaches).
2. The Malay world in the broad sense of the Austronesian Muslims of Southeast Asia: Indonesia, Malaysia (sultanates), The Philippines (Moros of Mindanao). It also refers to the presence of recurrent elements of culture (language, kris, sarong, silat, etc.).
3. The Malay group or ensemble in the strict sense: those who are Muslims and use the Malay language.
4. The Indianized world (living in Thailand, whose writing is borrowed from Sanskrit; beliefs and legends of Indian origin, and surviving linguistic elements).

\* RELIGIOUS ENSEMBLES OR GROUPINGS

5. The Muslim world (includes pilgrimages to Mecca and influence from the Middle East).
6. The Buddhist world (interference of Buddhism, the state religion of Thailand, in rituals; the presence of numerous wat or temples in the Malay villages).

\* POLITICAL ENSEMBLES OR GROUPINGS

7. Thailand (included in the kingdom, the Jawi have Thai passports).
8. Malaysia, especially the states of Kelantan and Kedah, which have a very permeable common border.

Thai social space would amount to negating an important part of their identity. The social space of the Jawi is a geographically complex space, contrary to a unified area like a province; it is syncretic, at the point where it brings together Malay and Siamese groups and is subjected to interference from the outside (i.e., from Chinese businessmen and Islamic transnationalism). This social space is equally locked into a system of social networks that weaves the ensemble formed by the provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat into a homogeneous block on the social map, but extends beyond this geographical region.

For the Arabs of Mecca, the term “Jawi” usually designates the Muslims of Southeast Asia (LOMBARD 1989). It is almost a synonym for “Malay Muslims” and was formerly used to designate as much the inhabitants of Indonesia as those of Malaysia.

The word *jawi* also designates one of the ways of writing the Malay language.<sup>8</sup> This language can, in effect, be transcribed in two ways: in romanized characters (*baso rumi*), the more recent one; or in Arabic characters (*baso jawi*), the older. In this context the term *jawi* refers to the script in modified Arabic letters used for writing standard Malay.

When they speak about the script the Jawi use, therefore, the term *jawi* with a specifier: either *sura'* (book, letter, written document), or *nnyura*—more recently, *tuléh* (to write, to transcribe, to draw). This results in *sura' jawi* and *nnyura jawi* (or *tuléh jawi*) but not simply *jawi*. It has to be noted that the term covers a large semantic field.<sup>9</sup> This writing style plays an important role for the Jawi in regard to ethnic and cultural identity, since the Jawi normally write, for themselves as well as for those they speak to, in *jawi* script, a style of writing that is quite antiquated both in Malaysia and in Indonesia. In this sense the culturally archaic writing style has an identifying value.

One can wonder about the origin of the word “Jawi,” the proper general term to designate the western part of the Malay archipelago (Java, Sumatra, Malaysia) being phonetically very close to “Jawa,” the indigenous name of one of the principal Indonesian islands:

The terms *Jawa*, *Jawi* were applied by the Arabs to the Archipelago generally, and often with specific reference to Sumatra.... “*Ma'bar* (q. v.) is the last part of India; then comes the country of China (Sin), the first part of which is *Jawa*, reached by a difficult and fatal sea (*Yakut*, 1224, i. 516).” (YULE and BURNELL 1989, 454–56)

The Arabic transcription of the Malay language could have been created on the island of Java, but the inhabitants of Patani propose another explanation.

Formerly, there had been two “Javas,” a *Jawo ssa* (“Great Java” in Jawi language) and a *Jawo kechi*’ (Little Java). *Jawo ssa* was, according to them, the name given in the past to the Malay Peninsula and *Jawo kechi*’ designated the present island of Java in Indonesia. The first name was forgotten with time, and today there remains only the second, whose qualifier would no longer be needed. That is what Marco POLO points out in the second volume of his travel journal, *Le Devisement du monde. Le livre des merveilles* (1980, 409):

CLXIV. Ci devise de la grande île de Java

Selon ce que disent les bons mariniers et le savent bien, c’est la plus grande île qui soit au monde, car elle a au moins trois milles de tour. Elle est à un grand roi du pays, ils sont idolâtres et ne font tribut à nul homme du monde.

In a note the editors point out that the Java mentioned here is indeed the present-day Java in Indonesia, because Marco Polo knew of it from hearsay, and talked about it. (The famous traveler, however, was led to give it disproportionate dimensions since its eastern parts were not known to the Arab navigators of the time.) Later in the text Marco POLO speaks further of “Minor Java,” which the editors identify in a note as the island of Sumatra:

CLXVII. Ci devise de Java la Mineure

Sachez qu’elle n’est pas si petite, puisqu’elle a plus de deux milles de tour... en cette île, il y a huit royaumes, dans six desquels, moi Marco Polo, je suis allé: Ferlec, Basman, Sumatra, Dagroian, Lambri et Fansur; mais je n’ai pas été dans les deux autres. (1980, 412)

George COEDÈS mentions in *The Indianized States of Southeast Asia* (1968, 53):

It is true that Java and Sumata were often thought to form one island and that Marco Polo called Sumatra “Java Minor.” But is this sufficient reason to brush Java aside and systematically relate all the evidence concerning countries denominated Java, Yâva (dvîpa), Yeh-p’o-t’i, and She-p’o to Sumatra, or, indeed, sometimes to Borneo or even to the Malay Peninsula?

It is not important whether Great Java and Little Java designate the island of Java, that of Sumatra, or the whole of the Malay Peninsula; what is certain is that these qualifiers once served to designate two different regions, as the Jawi tell us. Besides, it is established that the region of old Patani has

been one of the first centers for the diffusion of Islam, i.e., it was the first region with the same status as Malacca (BOUGAS 1992). But there are only a few valid sources to precisely date the arrival of Islam. According to TEEUW and WYATT (1970, 4), who quote d'Eredia (1613), Islam had been adopted in Patani and Pahang before it was introduced in Malacca. Islam reached Trengganu between 1386 and 1387. Wyatt and Teeuw see no reason why Islam could not have been introduced into Patani at least at the same time when it was introduced to Malacca. For George COEDÈS (1968, 244) the arrival of Islam in Trengganu should be dated between 1326 and 1327. This date appears on the oldest Malay inscription about the Islamization of the peninsula discovered in this region.<sup>10</sup>

COEDÈS, by referring to the work of SKEAT and BLAGDEN (1906), explains further:

On the peninsula, in those areas where Malays now constitute the majority because of relatively recent migrations from Sumatra and Java, the Indians undoubtedly encountered on the coast proto-Malays—Indonesians already strongly Mongolized, whose descendants are known today by the name *Jakun*. (1968, 12)

The *Hikayat Patani* (TEEUW and WYATT 1970, 131) gives further proof that “Jawi” is a term that has long been used by the inhabitants of old Patani to designate themselves. TEEUW and WYATT translate *dan Haji Yunus itu Jawi Patani asalnya* as “and Haji Yunus was a Malay from Patani” and add in a footnote: “A Jawi Patani may be a son of a Malay woman and a foreign man, though he may also be a real native of Patani” (1970, 200). The oral tradition of the Jawi declares unanimously that the inhabitants of Patani are Jawi because they dwell on *Jawo ssa*, that is, on the Malay Peninsula; this is the “Great Java” that the Jawi oral literature mentions as being in direct contact with Patani, via the legendary vanished kingdom of Langkasuka. YULE and BURNELL (1989, 456) also state:

1553: And so these, as well as those of the interior of the Island (Sumatra), are all dark, with lank hair, of good nature and countenance, and not resembling the Javanese, although such near neighbours, indeed it is very notable that at so small a distance from each other their nature should vary so much, all the more because all the people of this Island call themselves by the common name of *Jawi* (*Jaiijs*), because they hold it for certain that the Javanese (os *Jāos*) were formerly lords of this great Island...—Barros, III, v. 1.

R. J. WILKINSON (1959, 452), for his part, notes that “Jawi” means “Malayan” (inhabitant of continental Malaysia) and also “Malay born in the Malay Peninsula,” and he adds that etymologically speaking this term means “appertaining to the Jawa of the Arabs,” i.e., to Sumatra and Java. This explains and justifies in Jawi eyes their appropriation of the term *jawi*: “We are the Jawi, the inhabitants of Jawo (*ssa*), and we have given this name to the script of our language.”

One must say that, despite the genuine origin of the ethnonym of the Jawi from Java, Sumatra, or from the Malay Peninsula strictly speaking, even if it comes from the script of modified Arabic letters for standard Malay, or from Javanese immigrants, Malay society from Patani often refers to Java and to (present) Indonesia as *Indo*, including both in the term. The sultanate of Patani certainly had contacts with the kingdoms of the present island of Java. Denys LOMBARD says:

It appears quite clear that in the 15th and 16th centuries Java was a provider of slaves.... As a remarkable fact, a traveler passing through in 1613 witnessed a revolt of Javanese slaves in Patani; this, to our knowledge, is the one and only example of a slave war to be found in the whole of *Insulinde*.<sup>11</sup> (1990, 148)

The inhabitants of the Thai provinces of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat have appropriated the term “Jawi,” changing it from a common noun to a proper noun meaning “those of Thailand.” They know that this term elsewhere designates the Muslims of Southeast Asia as well as the system of writing, and that therefore the term’s semantic field extends far beyond the limits of their social space of reference. Gilbert HAMONIC (1985, 178), speaking about Makasar of Sulawesi (Indonesia), uses the term “Jawi” in contrast to the term “Sayyid,” locally meaning “the Prophet’s descendants,” or people in a socially high position. But he does not define the semantic term “Jawi” in this particular context (where without doubt it means “common Muslim people”).

However, for the inhabitants of Patani the word “Jawi” designates their dialect and, in fact, typifies their ethnic identity.<sup>12</sup> It is an unconscious ethnonym, something like a mannerism in speech that the speaker does not notice but that everyone else recognizes as one of his or her personal characteristics. Moreover, this fact is not accepted outside the community, and not institutionalized.<sup>13</sup> A parallel perhaps exists with the Moros of the Philippines, who are made up of several different ethnic groups (Maguindanaon, Maranao, etc.) that are now known by this previously pejorative name, imposed upon them by the conquering Spaniards (LOYRE DE

HAUTECLOCQUE 1989; CHEMAN 1990, 77).<sup>14</sup> The name “Moros” has stuck to these groups and now they use it in statements of their political movements for independence. The Jawi, unlike the Moros, bear a name that has not been made official, not by time (the annexation of the sultanate is recent), nor by European colonization (from which old Patani escaped), nor by Thai usage (the Thai prefer the name Thai-Islam), nor by the Muslims and the Malay elites (not even by the Jawi supporters of independence, because this would mean recognizing a break with the Malay political world). We have, therefore, a kind of international political situation at variance with a pragmatic reality, which itself poses no threat to anyone, seeking only its own survival. François RAILLON (1993, 183) describes the situation:

The situation of the 2.5 millions of Patani Sunnites is both more clearly recognizable and less tense than that of the Moros. It is clearer because the Patani are Malays confronted with Thai Buddhists; less tense because, despite struggles that can turn violent, relationships are not that hardened.

The problems of this population have to do with its sensitive positioning in the south of Thailand, at the border with Malaysia. For the Patani, the Malay world is much closer than Bangkok. However, the likings of the Thai for centralisation and a policy of assimilation towards the Muslims of the south helped to put the particularism that is the consequence of an accident of history even more into relief<sup>15</sup>

In the past, all Malays of Malaysia saw themselves as Jawi (in the sense of “Muslims”). Today, this term seems archaic to them. This goes hand in hand with the adoption of romanized Malay (the *rumi* script) to the detriment of *jawi* writing.<sup>16</sup> The inhabitants of Kelantan perceive themselves as Malays (*orang Melayu* in Malay) or as Muslims (*orang Islam*) first and particularly as Malaysians (*orang Malaysia*). The people of Patani continue to travel to Arabia as Jawi (Muslims of Southeast Asia), while the other Malays present themselves nowadays as Malaysians or Indonesians: independence has assured them of a valid nationality “for export.” This is not the case for the Jawi who are from Thailand but are not Thai. Originally, and according to them, the term “Jawi” was no more imposed on them than the others but they were soon the only ones to use it to designate themselves and to write in *jawi* script. This is why, in Mecca, Arabs, Malaysians, or Indonesians solve the equation: “I am Jawi” + imprecise origin = “He comes from Patani in Thailand.” The Jawi present themselves naturally and without any feelings of animosity as *orè Jawi* vis-à-vis Indonesians (whom they call *orè Indo*) and

Malaysians (whom they call *orè Malè*). To a Thai, however, they introduce themselves as *orè Nnayu*. The Thai, especially the southern Thai, are close enough neighbors to be able to make a clear distinction between ethnic Thai (called *orè Siyè* in Jawi, or *orang Siam* in standard Malay) and ethnic Malay (*orè Nnayu* in Jawi, *orang Melayu* in standard Malay), which they can readily understand. This kind of dichotomy can be qualified as applying to those “outside of the Malay world.” If the interlocutor is a foreigner, and especially if he is a Malay from Malaysia, another form of specification would become necessary. In this case one can use a different type of dichotomy, one that is understood within the Malay world: *orè Nnayu/orè Jawi* (*orang Melayu/orang Jawi* in standard Malay). In this case, the former means “from Malaysia,” while the latter means “from Patani in Thailand.” The fact is that cultural influences are reciprocal and, therefore, have a particularizing effect (SMALLEY 1994, 101). For such reasons the Jawi cannot simply be considered as Malays (or one should at least be most careful if one did consider them in such a way), because the social space of their daily life is as much Thai as Malay, and therefore quite different from that of the inhabitants of Malaysia or mainland Thailand.

In order to make this situation clearly understandable we need to look into the question of what the real base of their ethnic origin was. We need to inquire whether they originate mainly from a Malay stock, or whether they come from a proto-Indochinese stock that was later “Malayisized,” and therefore mixed, as for example the Samsam. CRAWFURD’S statement reflects this:

The indigenous inhabitants of the territory of Queda, consist of four classes, namely: Malays, Samsans, Siamese, and Samangs; but chiefly of the two former, among whom the second are said to be the most numerous. By Samsans, are meant people of the Siamese race who have adopted the Mohammedan religion, and who speak a language which is a mixed jargon of the languages of the two people; a matter which, in the opinion of the latter, brings some reproach with it. The following is a specimen: “*Saya na pai naik keh bun gunung*,” “I want to ascend the mountain” in which the first word is Malay, the two next Siamese, the fourth Malay, the fifth and sixth Siamese, and the seventh or last Malay again. (1967, 28–29)

The Samsam, as they are described in the ethnographic literature, are particularly characterized by their language (a pidgin formed by a Mon-Khmer and Siamese vocabulary, together with an Austronesian grammatical structure) and by the use of a stone hurling bow that has a wooden handle

carved in the form of a dove. Both items we find to be in use among the Jawi of today.

This hypothesis of the Samsam as possibly the main ethnic origin of the Jawi, has been formulated by the French anthropologist Georges Cortez (personal communication 1997). It appears to be probable and, in fact, quite promising, considering the historical, technical, and linguistic data available at present.<sup>17</sup>

#### ETHNONYMS: EXONYMS AND ENDONYMS<sup>18</sup>

Gehan WIJEYWARDENE (1990a, 4–5) proposes a general categorization for the ethnic groups of continental Southeast Asia: 1) majority ethnic groups (Burmese, Thai, Han); 2) groups that are a majority in one or several states, but a minority in others; 3) large ethnic groups that do not form a majority anywhere (Mon, Karen); 4) native ethnic groups (Kachin, proto-Indochinese); 5) ethnic groups, mainly hill-dwellers, which have recently come from China (Hmong, Yao). Although none of the examples given concern Austronesian societies, let alone the Malays, these are to be placed in the second category. Forming the majority in Malaysia, they constitute one of the most important minorities of Thailand. However, for political reasons they are virtually never considered as a specific ethnic group in Thailand, even though the Lao of Thailand are recognized as such and designated by a particular name, “Isan.” As WIJEYWARDENE has pointed out,

The ethnic identity that Thailand has created within its borders now looks like the product of a highly conscious public policy, and I think there is a lot to be said for this view. In its vocabulary, there is constant pressure to stress the “Thai-ness” of the citizenry. Malays are “Thai-Islam” or “Thai-Muslim,” the Lao of northeastern Thailand are “Thai-Isan,” and the rather derogatory use of “Lao” for the inhabitants of north Thailand was replaced early this century by the terms “Thai-Yuan” and “Lannathai,” neither of which has much currency among the inhabitants (except academics), who prefer to call themselves either “Thai” or “Khon Müang,” the “people of the müang.” There is also a move to have the hill people think of themselves as Khon Thai-chaw khaw, perhaps to be translated as “hill Thai.” (1990b, 68)

Two remarks are appropriate here. First, a subject is understood differently, depending on whether one adopts an outsider or an insider point of view. In our case it means that understanding is different depending on whether one accepts the government view or that of the official opposition, in this case the Muslims who are also Malays. Second, the language in

which the subject is discussed is of importance. The inhabitants of Patani use the terms *Malè* (from the English “Malay”) to designate the nationals of Malaysia and *Nnayu* (from the Malay “Melayu”) to designate people of Malay culture.

### *Exonyms*

Thai Buddhists call their nationals of Malay origin “Thai-Islam” in a manner similar to the way in which other large minorities of the country, like the Shan (Thai Yay), are referred to. The difference is that the latter are part of the same cultural sphere as the Thai or Siamese, as has been pointed out by WIJEYWARDENE (1990b, 71), whose definition of Thai ethnicity is very similar to that of the Jawi:

There is no “law” which leads all Tai to become part of one-nation-state, nor a “law” nor set of natural laws which has dictated the borders of modern Thailand. Satisfactory accounts of both these phenomena may be given through a consideration of the accidents of history. Yet community of language and ethnic identification, and the ways in which these are thought of and written about, are potentially powerful factors, as are the natural facts of topography in determining frontiers. History, like evolution, may be constrained by accident, but only certain accidents may happen.

Much of the literature on ethnicity is concerned with such things as “definition,” “self-definition,” and, above all, “group boundaries.” This paper is concerned with “boundaries” of another kind, “national boundaries,” and questions of definition are taken for granted. What has been taken for granted with regard to “Tai/Thai” ethnicity may now be spelled out as comprising three social facts—“being Tai (or Thai),” “speaking Tai (or Thai),” and “being Buddhist.”...Tai language and Tai identity may be taken together. (1990b, 66–67)

For the inhabitants of Southern Thailand—Siamese, Chinese, as well as Malay—the term Thai signifies “Buddhist” and ethnic “Thai” (i.e., someone of Siamese ethnic origin). However, as R. WINZELER notes, there are:

In both Thailand and Malaysia, people who speak Malay as a first language are expected to be, and in general are, Muslim, while people who speak Thai as a first language are expected to be, and are, Buddhist. However, language and religion do not always go together this way. In

some areas of the West Coast of Peninsular Malaysia there are ethnic Thais who after moving southward, embraced Islam but continued to speak Thai as a first language, and in present-day South Thailand there are ethnic Malay communities who speak Thai in place of Malay but who have remained Muslim. (1985, 65)

The last case is that of the ethnic Malay of Trengganu and Satun provinces who speak Thai, but do not use their dialectal Malay anymore.

The Jawi designate the Chinese by the appellation *to' Pè'* (ethnic group) or *Chino* (religion). According to WINZELER (1985, 14), the Chinese who have been living for a long time among Malay villagers, however, are called *cina kampung* (village Chinese), and those who live in towns or have recently arrived are called *cina bandar* (town Chinese). Winzeler notices further, that in Indonesia, the Chinese who have been resident for a long time and become adapted are known as *peranakan*, while the newcomers are known as *totoh*. In the former Straits Settlements (Penang, Malacca, and Singapore), the long-established Chinese were known as *baba* or Straits Chinese.

The Jawi are used to designating the Thai by the expression *orè Siyè* ("people of Siam"), reserving the term *Thai* (in Jawi) primarily to indicate Buddhists. For Jawi and other Malays of Thailand, to hear themselves called Thai-Islam amounts to being called "Muslim-Buddhists" which is, to say the least, incompatible. The expression accepted by the Thai government, Thai-Islam, finds no such acceptance among the Jawi-Malay population. Thai Muslims, "Thai-Islam," include 20% non-Malays as well: Thai converts, Pakistanis, Indians, Chinese, and others (NANTAWAN HAEMINDRA 1976, 197). In reality, it would be best to reserve the term "Thai-Muslim" for Thai who have converted to Islam, notably through intermarriage (CHEMAN 1990, 44), as well as for Malays assimilated for several generations and expressing themselves in Thai (as those in Satun for example).

The exonyms—Thai-Islam (from the part of the Siamese) and Malay-Muslim (from the part of the Malaysians) present an image of the Jawi that is incomplete or pejorative in their eyes. The two components of these terms designate different categories: e.g., "Thai" refers to a nation and a local culture, "Islam" refers to a world religion. Each component term relegates the Jawi to the outside of one or the other broad social space and does not recognize the syncretic reality of the Jawi world.

In Thai newspapers and on TV, the word "Jawi" (*khon Jawi*), a word with polite and quite friendly connotation, is used less frequently than the official term "Thai-Islam," but it is used.

In day-to-day life, the Thai (Siamese) and Chinese called the Malays

*khon Jawi* and, more often, *khon khaek*, a term that originally designated Indians and is still used to designate foreigners, or customers. But this term is perceived as very derogatory by the Malay inhabitants of Thailand; unlike the term *taokhae* (“middlemen,” coming from the Chinese), which is a compliment for the Chinese as well as for the Thai and Jawi, *khaek* is extremely pejorative for a Jawi. In this cultural identity context it would be heard as equivalent to “wog.”

The Malays of Thailand pose a real problem of appellation, if not of identification, for the Siamese as well as for foreign researchers. In most academic works (e.g., CHEMAN 1990; FRASER 1962), they are designated in English by the term “Malay,” with some confusion between Malay culture or ethnic membership, and nationality or political membership. But some writers consider them in an historic perspective, where the name is to a certain extent justified. Before the annexation of Patani by the Siamese, the inhabitants of the sultanate were considered to be Malays, as those of Kelantan, Trengganu, and the other Malay sultanates. Still other writers use long awkward circumlocutions, such as “Malay-Muslim” (OMAR FAROUK 1986), or “Malay Muslim minority of Southern Thailand” (BRUNEAU 1987). Louis GOLOMB (1986) is one of the rare ones to call them “Pattani-Malay,” recognizing their originality; but his term is unintentionally humorous as it juxtaposes the term “Malay,” which signifies belonging to the Malay world—this no doubt satisfies the supporters who want to link the group with Malaysia—alongside “Pattani,” which retains the official spelling with the double “t” and thus links them explicitly to Thailand. With more simplicity, François RAILLON (1993) calls them “Patani” (with only one “t”). No researcher uses the term “Jawi” to designate this particular population and its language, even though this ethnonym is used spontaneously by the Jawi and their Thai and Chinese neighbors, irrespective of social standing or area of residence.

Thai researchers contrast “Thai” not with “Jawi” but with “Nnyu” (Malay). The reason is that the Jawi use different levels of language, depending on the ethnic origin of the person to whom they are talking. Speaking with a foreigner from outside Asia, the inhabitants of Patani call themselves “Jawi,” their official (or unofficial) name outside the country, notably in their almost-exclusive travel destination, Mecca.

### *Endonyms*

The inhabitants of Patani designate themselves by various names for various contexts and speakers. They submit themselves to incredible intellectual gymnastics. Jawi, men or women, by the age of thirty, for example, have

undergone hefty instruction. They have studied spoken and written Thai, as a matter of course, as well as written Arabic and the *jawi* writing system; they have learned their own dialect and know the nuances of the dialects in the region; they are likely to know some standard Malay, and, quite possibly, some English. They are polyglots who jump quickly from one language to the other. When they read *orang* (man) in a text of standard Malay written in *jawi* script, they correct automatically and pronounce it *orè* (in Jawi), translate it to *khon* in Thai, and then to “man” or “person” in English, depending on the person they are talking with. Most astonishingly, they are capable of thinking *orè* but writing *orang*, and pronouncing *orang* when they know that the listener is Malay or understands Malay but no Jawi.

When they meet someone who addresses them in standard Malay, the Jawi respond similarly, as if the language spoken to them were their own proper dialect, and thus they very often distort the inquiries of official linguists with the same ease they handle an imposing series of ethnonyms.

In Southeast Asia the older-younger relationship and a complex range of personal pronouns and terms of reference depending on gender, rank, age, and job help almost everywhere to keep up these intellectual gymnastics. The Jawi know the systems of the Malaysians and the Thai equally well, whereas these groups do not master the system of the Jawi. The outside observer, used to lesser contextual richness, sometimes has difficulties in following this socially efflorescent language.

When they speak to a Malay of Malaysia, especially an inhabitant of a state close to their region of birth, the Jawi refer to themselves as *ano' Ttani* (*anak Patani* in Malay, “child of Patani” or native to Patani).<sup>19</sup> This immediately indicates to the Malaysian a set of cultural elements. It is, therefore, unnecessary to say more precisely that they are Malay, the speaker knows the language; unnecessary to say they are Muslim, they have exchanged the Muslim greeting and upon at least their first meeting at one of their homes they will pray together. It is also unnecessary to say that they come from Thailand as all Malaysians know in which country Patani is situated.

Addressing themselves to a friendly Thai, someone who is interested in the local culture, the Jawi refer to themselves as *orè Nnayu* (“man of Malay origin and culture,” “a Malay”). Although there are situations like those mentioned by Winzeler, it can be said that within the country both are holders of a Thai passport, but one is Siamese, thus explicitly Buddhist, and the other Malay, thus explicitly Muslim.

Addressing themselves to a less friendly Thai, a suspicious, aggressive, or narrow-minded army officer, for example, the Jawi are ironical or take a conciliatory stance and call themselves by the official term: “Thai-Islam.”

Another important point is that these different ethnonyms are

## PRINCIPAL EXONYMS AND ENDONYMS

EXONYMS			
Malay and English terms used by Malays and Malaysians in Standard Malay	Thai and English used by Thai	Foreign terms (English, French)	English translations
<i>orang Patani</i>			Person of Patani
<i>anak Patani</i>			Native of Patani
<i>orang Melayu di negeri Thailand</i>			Malay of Thailand
<i>Melayu</i>			Malay
In English:			
<i>Malay</i>		Malay	Malay
<i>Malay-Muslim</i>		Malay Muslim	Malay Muslim
		Pattani-Malay	Malay of Patani
	<i>Thai-Islam</i>	Thai-Islam	Thai Muslim
	<i>Thai-Muslim</i>	Thai-Muslim	Thai Muslim
	<i>Khon Khaek</i>		Foreigner, client, Indian, wog

JAWI ENDONYMS VIS-À-VIS					
Malays	<i>Bahasa Malaysia</i> translation	Themselves	Thai	Foreigners (from the West)	English translation
<i>orè Jawi</i>	<i>orang Jawi</i> <i>orang Melayu</i> <i>orang Islam</i>	<i>orè Jawi</i> <i>orè Nnayu</i> <i>orè Islè</i>	<i>orè/khon Jawi</i> <i>orè/khon Nnayu</i> <i>orè Islè</i>	<i>orè Jawi</i> <i>orè Nnayu</i> <i>orè Islè</i>	Jawi Malays Muslims Inhabitants of Patani Natives of Patani Thai Muslims
<i>orè Ttani</i>	<i>orang Patani</i>				
<i>ano' Ttani</i>	<i>anak Patani</i>		Thai-Islam		

expressed in a given language and their choice is a function of the languages mastered by the speaker. One uses “Nnayu” when speaking to a Thai who can understand the Malay language, although Thai-Islam is the appellation in Thai; one cannot say *ano' Ttani* to an Anglo-Saxon or to a Thai because they will not understand. Finally, to use the English word “Malay” in front of a Thai is perceived as derogatory because phonetically it is heard as *Malè*, the Jawi and local Thai term used to designate the inhabitants of Malaysia. Confusion and misunderstanding usually reign in such exchanges.

The appearance of the word Jawi as an ethnonym is recent only in relation to the contemporary appropriation of the sultanate by Siam. It therefore has to be considered together with the appearance of anticolonialist nationalisms

and the creation of nationalities in Southeast Asia. In the seventeenth century, the inhabitants of Johore or Perlis, as well as those of Patani, felt no need for a particular ethnonym. They were the “Malay” dependents of a sultan, whether of Johore, or Perlis, or Patani. Today this is no longer the case. The Malaysians, therefore, recently had to introduce a differentiation—one that does not exist in Patani—between the terms *negera* (“country, federation”) and *negeri* (“member state of the federation,” sultanate assimilated with some sort of province).<sup>20</sup>

Nowadays, those who use the word “Jawi” are looked upon as village people (*ruraux* in French) or, to express it differently, the people regarded as “not-educated” by the Patani Malay elite (teachers, professors, civil servants, religious authorities) and some elite local Thai, especially those at universities and in the public service.

Here one is faced with a dichotomy. On one side there is an educated elite that supports integration (and thus uses the term Thai-Islam), or secession (and then uses the terms *Nnayu*, *Melayu*, Malay, or Malay-Muslim), or Islamization (and then uses terms like *Islè*, Islam, Malay-Muslim or Muslim), depending on the language used. On the other side there are the rural masses that recognize themselves in any or all of these terms, according to the language, the ethnic origin, and in particular the social position of their interlocutor, but express themselves naturally by means of the two expressions *orè Jawi* and *orè Nnayu* only. (Statistics show that the former of the two is clearly preferred.)

An understanding of the ethnonym used in Patani seems to depend on two social factors. One is the existence of levels of language according to ethnic group, social and professional position, and the religion<sup>21</sup> of the person being spoken to. The other is the existence of a subjective and contextual, yet essential, notion that could, without the risk of error, be related to the fashion of “political correctness.”

A Malay of Patani who has studied at Bangkok and received an official post, and who supports the economic liberalism in use in Thailand and advocates assimilation, will avoid speaking in public of Jawi, preferring for obvious reasons the expression “Thai-Islam,” in the same way as the Siamese administrative and military cadres. Another Malay of Patani who has studied in Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, or Malaysia who supports autonomy, independence, or attachment to Malaysia, and who is a practicing Muslim, will a fortiori prefer to use terms such as *Nnayu*, *Melayu* or Malay, or also *Islè* or Muslim (HORSTMANN 1997, and 1998). These two educated and privileged Malays will both avoid using the term “Jawi” with its rural connotation, in the same way as they avoid speaking in a dialect form, be it Malaysian or Thai. Instead they will use a refined and exquisite vocabulary

close to the standard language: the Malaysian of Kuala Lumpur and, especially for writing, the Thai of Bangkok.

#### PRESENT AND FUTURE

The inhabitants of Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat are Muslims, most being Sunni. Since the end of the 1950s, and lately with increasing intensity, Islamization has been promoted with the support of the Muslim countries of the Near East. They finance the construction of mosques in place of the ancient wooden *sura*, which is more an Austronesian village common-house (or palaver-house) than a place of Islamic prayer. These countries also give financial assistance to teachers of the faith. The result is a certain hardening in the practice of religion and, very recently, a brewing conflict between the village traditionalist group, wishing to live their faith in a manner close to that of the Indonesians, and the reformist faction of "New Heads" (*Ppalo Baru*), who desire the hardening of doctrine and its daily application (LE ROUX 1993). WINZELER observes a similar situation in Kelantan:

Islam also figures prominently in the identity of Kelantanese Malays. Within the context of Malaysia and perhaps South-East Asia generally, Kelantan is marked by a strong popular commitment to Islam. As with other cultural and linguistic characteristics, Islam in the area has its peculiarities. There is considerable individual variation in piety and religious interest, and the syncretic nature of many popular beliefs and practices is notable. Various cultural performances and ritual still flourish that are questioned or condemned by the orthodox. (1985, 7)

Partly because of the influence across the Kelantanese border the situation in Patani is comparable: Islamic authorities forbid traditional practices and rituals such as the martial art *ddika* (*silat* in Malay), and the ancestor cult rituals that are usually performed on the occasion of a circumcision.

This hardening is fostered by the recent anarchic but spectacular development of the region, with its inevitable share of people who have lost out, as well as the example of Malaysia next door, in particular that of Kelantan, where Islam is rigorously followed.

The result for the Jawi is an intense acculturation, the driving forces of which are endemic unemployment, a veritable cult of imported articles shown on television, and the increasing ravages of drugs (especially heroin) and AIDS. Traditional Jawi society, too poorly armed to withstand this aggression but too well armed to engage in an endemic guerrilla war, finds escape only in religious rigor.

For such reasons (religion and economics) the processes of incultura-

tion and “globalization” grow ever faster and are increasingly encompassing and effective. Therefore, Jawi society is not frozen in time, it changes. Recently, within no more than five to ten years, some wealthy and middle-class people emerged from among the small minority of the Jawi people. They live in towns and prefer to refer to themselves as *orè Nnayu* more than *orè Jawi* (because for them the word Jawi has a heavy connotation of country, or rural people, similar to the term “hillbillies”). But they are only a politically oriented minority: those who call themselves *orè Nnayu* are most often, if not always, partisans either of independence or of fusion with Malaysia. Among the village people, however, the ethnonym Jawi has been in use at least from 1909 to the end of the 1980s.

The individual in this society has always to face four important features that do not exactly match. They are: (1) belonging to the Malay world, (2) adhering to the Muslim faith, (3) belonging to the region of Patani and, (4) having Thai nationality. It is difficult to affirm that the ethnic Malays living in Patani constitute a genuine ethnic group as they are. But they believe they are, and in fact are, different from the Malay citizens of Malaysia as well as from the Thai Buddhists in the other parts of the Thai kingdom. Their ethnonym serves to express that difference and their originality.

The situation of the Jawi is somewhat similar to the situation of the Thai minority of Kelantan. As WINZELER (1985, 90) describes it, their history is similar to that of the Jawi. Formerly, before the signature of the Anglo-Siamese Treaty in 1909, Kelantan was under Thai rule. But after 1909, some Thai settlers decided to stay in Kelantan, where their descendants still live today:

It is evident that the Thai are not entirely satisfied with their status in Kelantan. They are aware of being surrounded by a Malay majority which despises some of their customs and which requires conversion to Islam as a condition for intermarriage. They also feel that the Malay state government makes it difficult for them to engage in land transactions.

At the same time Kelantanese Thai attitudes towards Thailand are also ambivalent and their ethnic status in regard to the latter country equivocal, if in different ways than is the case in Kelantan.... The Kelantanese Thai, though speakers of a dialect of Thai, are aware of their cultural and linguistic differences from the Thai of Thailand. Except for the few who have had advanced monastic training in Thailand, the Kelantanese Thai do not master the sophisticated linguistic idioms of urban Thailand which are used by those Thai officials they may

encounter in the southern provinces. *In Thailand, Thai peasants from Kelantan, especially those from the more isolated communities, are thus apt to be viewed as being not only 'country people' but as ethnically anomalous as well. For the Kelantanese Thai, Thailand, especially that large and significant part of it they think of as "Bangkok," is in a number of important respects a quite foreign country.* (My emphasis)

Though the Thai of Kelantan in many respects find themselves in a situation similar to that of the Jawi, they do not know or use any specific autonym in order to differentiate themselves from the Thai people of Thailand. One might regret that inhabitants of Kelantan other than the Thai, different as they are from those of Trengganu, do not possess their own endonym. However, the Malays of Thailand have lived through additional traumas and have an advantage: their evolution occurred in the midst of another country. For once, history grants the Malays of Thailand some compensation for losing sight of them. In fact, it is quite probable that, had Patani remained politically Malay and become Malaysian like its neighbors, the other sultanates, one would hardly pay attention to its inhabitants, for they would be Malaysian like the others.

The ethnonym "Jawi" is pragmatic because it stems from a particular usage and is not imposed. The term, furthermore, is useful because it is neutral. It refrains from referring directly to Islam while mentioning it implicitly, at least in its Asian context. It implies no political allegiance, either to Malaysia or to Indonesia. It does not pretend to appropriate the Malay world for itself, while integrating into it, but it avoids long and inconvenient circumlocutions and pejorative exonyms. Most important, it is forged and accepted by the inhabitants of Patani. This is why it would be in the interests of the Thai government to ratify this ethnonym, which would then provide the means for the scientific community to precisely designate a society in its geographic and cultural dimensions.

Still, these qualities cannot hide the fact that, outside the world of the Jawi themselves, their ethnonym meets almost total rejection. Those who use it do not really accept it. Whether by tolerating it in fact or denying it soon after by eradicating it with a terse explanation, this ethnonym is very much a reflection of the society it describes: a society in balance with itself and yet uncertain about its own future. Before the Jawi uncertain prospects loom, including possible ethnocide,<sup>22</sup> perpetrated by cultural absorption within Siam, by the hardening of pro-Malaysian factions, and by growing religious fundamentalism which, in the long run, may result in the abandonment of a certain local distinctiveness for a fight for an uncertain independence.

Should the Jawi renounce their "Malaysianity" in favor of a transnational

religious identity or, on the contrary, should they defend and maintain their “Jawinity”? Should they maintain their own local culture, a Malay culture, which builds its existence precisely on the outside world’s refusal to let it exist? And if they decide to do so, how much longer will they last?

#### NOTES

\*This is a revised version of an article published in 1994 in French: Le paradoxe identitaire des Jawi de Thaïlande ou l’ethnonyme d’une transition. *Cahiers des Sciences Humaines*, 30: 435–53.

1. Written historically with only one “t,” this name is used when speaking about the former sultanate of Patani or Great Patani. I use the spelling with a double “t” for the present Thai province of Pattani, which is smaller than the former sultanate.

2. The Jawi language or Patani Malay is undergoing processes of monosyllabication and tonalisation. Consequently it uses long consonants in the initial position. The transcription system, the so-called *rumi tani*, was created during the first two meetings of “Workshops on the Phonology of Patani Malay” held on 6 January and 10 June 1995, at the Patani Campus of the Prince of Songkla University. For more information on the language of this area see COURT 1984, and 1995, LE ROUX 1995, WAEMAJI PARAMAL 1990, WILDING 1979.

3. The Siamese, too, attribute great importance to the elephant, especially to the white elephant, not only because of Indian influences on their culture, but also because of this animal’s symbolism of purity and of Buddhism. The Indian naga, whom the Jawi often assimilate or confound with the Chinese dragon, similarly plays an important role in the mythic space of the Thai. However, here we are concerned with the point of view of the Jawi of Malay origin who consider the naga to be one of the most characteristic symbols of Siamese social space. They know that the white elephant is a symbolic figure of the Siamese. In order to avoid confusion and to set themselves apart, they depict their own white elephant as an animal with black tusks. It is further said that their own white elephant long antedates the white elephant of the Buddhists and of the Siamese. The white elephant with black tusks is the ancestor of all the elephants and the naga of the Siamese and the Sino-Thai with whom they have daily contact. This contact goes back to the first attacks against the sultanate of Patani and continues through its annexation by the Siamese, followed by Thai and Chinese merchants and entrepreneurs (see LE ROUX 1998a).

4. In fact, with the exception of the province of Satun, these Muslims speak the Malay dialect Jawi that is similar to the dialect of Kelantan on the other side of the border. In reality, it would be preferable to say “close” rather than “similar,” because even though there are similarities (SWEENEY 1972; ASMALI HAJI OMAR 1977), phonological differences exist (COURT 1995).

5. Two other important customary objects used to signify cultural identity are the *ḡayu-atah-ning* (wooden overhead spar in the house roof; see LE ROUX 1998b and 1999) and *bedé ḡaba* (last cannon of Patani: a firecracker made of bamboo loaded with calcium carbide; see LE ROUX 1998c).

6. Many of the border towns are places developed by the Thai-Chinese aimed at the inhabitants of Malaysia who partake in sex tourism on a large scale; by comparison, the simple Jawi come out the more creditable. For more on this see WINZELER 1985.

7. “Social space” is defined as “the space determined by the collectivity of systems which are characteristic of the relationships of a given ethnic group” (CONDOMINAS 1980, 14).

8. But not the spoken Patani Malay, which is called the “Jawi language.”

9. This phenomenon is also found with the Indonesian expression *orang Jawa*,

“Javanese,” a term that designates three different cultural circles: the inhabitants of western insular Southeast Asia; the inhabitants of the island Java; and the inhabitants of the eastern and central part of Java, its western part being called Sunda (Lombard, personal communication, 1995).

10. For a more complete account of the arrival of Islam in the area see BOUGAS 1992.

11. LOMBARD 1990 adds in footnote 764: “It is Peter Floris who travelled in Siam and Patani.”

12. Moreover, the Jawi generally use classifying terms when the context is not sufficient to understand the intended meaning of the term. Thus, they use *sura’ jawi* for the writing style, *baso jawi* for the (spoken) language, and *orè jawi* for persons.

13. The Malaysians, together with the supporters of independence and the members of the PULO and other small groups, refuse to use any term other than *Melayu*, whereas the Thai, who want integration at all costs, encourage the exclusive use of the expression “Thai-Islam” or “Thai-Muslim.”

14. See LOYRE DE HAUTECLOCQUE 1989 and CHEMAN 1990, 77 for information on MNLF (Misuari and Pundato factions of the Moro National Liberation Front), BMLQ (Bangsa Moro Liberation Organization), MILF (Moro Islamic Liberation Front), and MORO (Moro Revolutionary Organization). It seems to be quite the same for the term “Dayak,” which designates very different indigenous societies from the island of Borneo including Iban, Kayan, Kenyah, and Punan.

15. I readily agree with this part of F. Raillon’s text.

16. Indonesia adopted Bahasa Indonesia (written in *rumi*, romanized script) at Bandung on 28 October 1928 and Malaysia proclaimed Bahasa Malaysia its official language in 1957. This political choice to adopt a national language also implied the abandonment of the *jawi* script for *rumi* (see LLAMZON, 1975, 8 and 10).

17. On Samsam see ARCHAIMBAULT 1957, ANNANDALE and ROBINSON 1903–1907 and LE ROUX 1999.

18. An “exonym” is an ethnonym given to an ethnic group by other groups. An “endonym” is an ethnonym used by an ethnic group within its own community.

19. In many cases, when the Jawi want to speak of the region of the three provinces (Patani, Yala, Narathiwat) collectively, they simply say “Patani,” which then refers to the whole territory of the ancient sultanate. That is also the usage I adopted for this article.

20. On this interesting point see the (yet unpublished) proceedings of the symposium organized by D. Perret (EFEO) and the National Museum of Kuala Lumpur (1996).

21. Regarding this subject I refer the reader to the second volume of the collection edited by A. FORBES (1989), in particular to the article by CHAIVIVUN PRACHUABMOI. This author focuses on the role of women in maintaining ethnic identity, but also offers a comprehensive and pertinent analysis of the question of identity and of interethnic relations. However, while the author discusses the same complex interactions and hypotheses about the Jawi as myself, and offers a similar analysis as mine, she exclusively uses the term *Nayu* (*Nnayu* in Jawi) in places where I opt for the term *Jawi*. In doing so she illustrates, without knowing it, the appropriateness of my hypothesis concerning the different levels of language, a hypothesis she herself discusses at length. Being a Thai she no doubt heard only *Nayu*, as she writes the term (while it should be *Nnayu*), because her informants would have taken her ethnic background into consideration and, therefore, would not have used the word “Jawi” when speaking with her.

22. The term “ethnocide” here is understood as the “intentional destruction of an ethnic group as such,” by sociocultural assimilation or by dispersion, and not in the strict sense of physical elimination or genocide. For a similar usage of this term in French see SIMON 1973, 42.

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