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The Change in Pashtun Identity: Ethnicity and the Religion of the Pashtuns in Northern Thailand¹⁾

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パシュトゥーン・アイデンティティの変容 —タイ国北部におけるパシュトゥーン系住民の宗教と民族—

村 上 忠 良

要旨：本論文は、タイ国に居住するパシュトゥーン系住民の民族意識と宗教の関係について、タイ国内の民族関係を通して考察する。タイ系仏教徒が多数を占めるタイ国には、現在約300万人もの非タイ系のムスリムが居住しており、これらのムスリム少数派にとってイスラームは自らの民族意識を形成する上で重要な要素となっている。一方、これらのムスリム少数派は多様な民族集団から構成されており、ムスリム少数派をめぐる民族間関係は、多数派のタイ系仏教徒との関係だけではなく、ムスリム少数派の諸民族集団間の関係も含んでいる。本論文では、タイ国内のムスリム少数派の事例としてタイ国北部のパシュトゥーン系住民をとりあげ、パシュトゥーン系住民を取り巻く民族関係のなかで、イスラームとしての繋がりが民族意識の拠り所となると同時に、その民族性の解消へとも向かわせる働きを持っていることを指摘し、その両義的な関係を回避するための試みを明らかにしている。

キーワード：パシュトゥーン、タイ国北部、民族間関係

Keywords: Pashtun, Northern Thailand, inter-ethnic relations

1. The framework of my research on ethnicity and religion in Thailand

In this paper, I will consider the relationship between the ethnicity and religion of the Pashtuns in Northern Thailand.²⁾ The Pashtuns are one of Muslim minorities in Thailand. Most of the research on ethnic minorities in Thailand focus on the relationship between ethnicity and religion in the framework of the majority-minority dichotomy. Researchers have paid attention to the religions of ethnic minorities as one of the important factors differentiating them from the Thai Buddhist majority (cf. Surin 1985; Tapp

¹⁾ The draft of this paper was reported in oral presentation at CSEAS International Workshop "Reconsideration on the Historical and Contemporary Land-route Connection between South Asia and South East Asia," 8th -9th March, 2014, Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University.

²⁾ I conducted field research on the Pashtuns in Chiang Rai, Northern Thailand in 1998 and 1999, as part of the research project "Religion and Ethnicity among Asian Immigrants," Anthropological Institute, Nanzan University.

1989; Kammerer 1990; McCargo 2008). This research framework was found to be useful for analysis of the integration or disintegration of ethnic minorities in Thailand. It explained that the coincidence between ethnic and religious boundaries intensifies the distinctive opposition between the Thai Buddhist majority and ethnic minorities. However, the inter-ethnic relations in Thailand are not only confined to the majority-minority relationship. As a multi-ethnic state, Thailand has a variety of relationships among ethnic groups. Therefore, the identities of ethnic minorities are not only defined by their relationship with the Thai Buddhist majority, but also that with other ethnic minorities (cf. Murakami 2005). I will study the relationship between the ethnicity and religion of the Pashtuns in the various inter-ethnic relationships they have developed within Thailand's Buddhist dominant, but multi-ethnic, society.

2. The Pashtun in Thailand

2.1. The Pashtuns among "Pakistani" immigrants in Thailand

The Pashtuns (Pakhtuns, Pathans) are people who mainly live in Afghanistan and the northwestern part of Pakistan with a roughly estimated population of 50 million. The majority of them are Sunni Muslims. They are traditionally both pastoralists and agriculturalists. Outside Afghanistan and Northwestern Pakistan, the Pashtuns live in many cities throughout India. Small Pashtun communities are also found in the countries of the Arabian Peninsula, Southeast Asia, and Europe as well as North America. They make their living through various vocations.

The Pashtuns started to migrate from Northwestern Pakistan into Thailand as British subjects in the latter half of the nineteenth century. They then scattered throughout Thailand in the first half of twentieth century. An article of *Bangkok World* published in 1962 reported that the total "Pakistani" population was at about 3,000 persons; at least 80 percent of the "Pakistani" people were Pashtuns from the area of Pakistan near the Afghan border, and the remaining 20 percent were largely the Bengalis.³⁾ Considering that this article mentioned "Pakistani" people before the division between East Pakistan (Bangladesh) and West Pakistan (Pakistan) in 1971, we could see that most of immigrants who came from the area known as Pakistan today were the Pashtuns and its population would be at around 2,400, or 80 percent of the 3000 persons at that time. Most of the early generations of the Pashtun immigrants were either merchants dealing in livestock or meat producers. *Bangkok World's* 1962 article described the Pashtuns in Thailand as follows:

Most of the Pashtun Pakistanis, being largely engaged in cattle production, are found in rural areas in the provinces of Chon Buri, Chiang Mai, Ubon, Khorat, Nong Khai, Nakhon Sawan, and Udorn.

³⁾ "Cattle and Culture: The Pakistanis in Thai life," *Bangkok World*, Sunday Magazine Section, March 11, 1962, p. 2, as cited in the publication of the Department of the Army, USA (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1970:1099). *Bangkok World* is an English language newspaper started in the 1960s and closed in the mid-1980s.

They can also be found in nearly every district of the four southern Moslem Provinces of Pattani, Narathiwat, Yala, and Satun. (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1970: 1099)

The “Pakistani” immigrants in Thailand, mainly consisting of the Pashtuns, set up the Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association in 1954 with support from the Pakistan Embassy of Thailand. Their headquarters is located near the General Post Office, Bang Rak Area of Bangkok. The founding members are mainly from the first generation of Pashtun immigrants. There were 2000 persons registered as members in 1962. It has a mosque in the same compound which functions both as the center of the Pashtun network and a meeting-place for different “Pakistani” ethnic groups in Thailand. Although inactive politically, some members have been very active in Islamic religious activities: building of several mosques and sponsoring a translation of the Koran into Thai (Headquarters, Department of the Army 1970:1102).

While in the 1970s the association became less active, the second and third generations of the Pashtuns re-invigorated its activities in 1991. In the time of my research in 1999, a member of the board of the Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association informed me that the number of its members was around 4,000 and estimated the total population of the Pashtuns in Thailand to be around 20,000.⁴⁾

2.2. The Pashtuns in the flux of South Asian migration

Although the Pashtun immigrants are not big population, they widely live all over Thailand. I presume that they moved into Thailand through several routes. Since most of the first generations of the Pashtun immigrants came as British subjects from British India or British Malaya, it is appropriate to view them as a part of the influx of South Asian immigrants from British colonies into Thailand since the latter half of the nineteenth century. The transition of South Asian immigrant groups serves as a useful reference to the Pashtun’s immigration into Thailand.

In the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Tamil (both Muslims and Hindus) and the Gujarati Muslims moved into Southern Thailand through British Malaya. Then, people from the north and northwestern area of British India began to migrate into Thailand: the Punjabis (both Sikhs and Hindus) in the 1880s and Hindus of Uttar Pradesh (United Provinces) in the early twentieth century. After World War I, the Punjabis increased their numbers and overwhelmed other South Asian immigrants in Thailand (Sato 1995: 13–26; cf. Mani 1993).

I suppose that the Pashtun’s immigration occur along with the South Asian immigrations from the north and northwestern areas of British India or British Malaya. In southern Thailand, we can estimate the history of Pashtun’s settlement through the years their mosques were established. The Pashtun’s

⁴⁾ Interview with Mr. Kram Prathansiri, a member of the board of the Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association, in September, 1999. The number of the Pashtun population here includes both Thai nationals and Pakistani nationals.

earliest mosque in Thailand was established in 1922 and the second in 1928 in Phang-nga, a province on the west side of the Malay Peninsula. The third was established in Yala, the province next to Pang-nga, in 1930. Mosques established by the Pashtuns were latterly called “Pakistan Mosques” to show their identity.⁵⁾ The Pakistan Mosque in Trang was established in 1947; the one in Satun was established in 1950. Those in the provinces along the east coast, Pattani and Narathiwat, have been established since between the 1970s–1990s. The establishment of Pakistan Mosques shows that Pashtun immigrants first settled in Phang-gna and Yala. They then extended their settlements to other provinces in the south, such as Trang, Satun, Pattani, and Narathiwat.⁶⁾ In Bangkok, a British diplomat frequently mentioned cases of the Pashtuns in British consul court in the early twentieth century in his memoir (Sato 1995: 76–77). This shows that the Pashtuns established their community and became involved in economic activities in Bangkok at that time.

From the years that their mosques were established, we infer that they immigrated to southern Thailand from British India or British Malaya at the end of the nineteenth century or during the early twentieth century. The Pashtuns in Bangkok would come from the cities of British India directly at around the same time. Some of them moved landward to other provinces of Central Thailand, such as Ayutthaya, Saraburi, Angthong, and Chon Buri. Others went farther to lower Northern Thailand, Nakhon Sawan Uthradit, and Phisanulok; or to Northeastern Thailand, Nakhon Ratchasima, Mahasarakham, and Roi-et. I will discuss the Pashtun’s immigration into Northern Thailand in the next section.



⁵⁾ I will discuss the meaning of the name “Pakistan Mosque” in section 5.

⁶⁾ The network between the Pashtuns in Malaysia and Southern Thailand needs further study.

3. The Pashtuns in Chiang Rai, Northern Thailand

3.1. From Northwest Pakistan to Chiang Rai

As for the Pashtuns in Northern Thailand, their ancestors came by land from the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) of Pakistan today, through the upper part of Myanmar in the early twentieth century. The colonization of Myanmar by the British accelerated the immigration of the Pashtuns into Myanmar since the middle of the nineteenth century. The census of British India in 1891 shows that there were 15,689 Pashtuns in British Burma (Yegar 1982: 102). After the colonization of the upper part of Myanmar in 1886, some of them moved northeastward into Yunnan of Southwest China through the Shan State of Myanmar and then moved southward into Northern Thailand and Laos. Most of the early Pashtun immigrants were livestock traders. They were single men and married local Northern Thai women. We can find Pashtun families in the cities and towns along the trading routes in Northern Thailand.

Chiang Rai is a province of Northern Thailand bordering Myanmar and Laos. Its provincial capital, Chiang Rai city (Chiang Rai Municipality, *thetsaban nakhon chiangrai*), is the second largest city in Northern Thailand, after Chiang Mai, with the population of 67,000. While the majority of the residents are Northern Thai (*khon mueang*), Chiang Rai city, a center of the border trade with neighboring countries, has a variety of ethnic groups, such as Chinese, Hill-tribes (*chao khao*), the Central Thai, Yunnanese Ho Muslims, and the Pashtuns.

3.2. Kokthong: A Pashtun community in Chiang Rai

Kokthong is a Pashtun community of Chiang Rai Municipality. It located at the outskirts of Chiang Rai City. Kokthong Pashtuns tell the story of their ancestor's immigration into Chiang Rai as follows:

In the 1920s, two Pashtun brothers migrated from Northwestern Pakistan and settled in Chiang Rai City. They are known as "Mula Yai" (Senior Imam) and "Mula Noi" (Junior Imam) because of their knowledge of Islam. These brothers married local Northern Thai women and had children. While Mula Noi left Chiang Rai a few years later, Mula Yai's descendants and other Pashtuns formed the Kokthong community in the suburbs of Chiang Rai. Then, just before World War II, the Pashtun families in Vientiane and Luang Phaban of Laos fled the Japanese military in the French Indochina and came to live in Kokthong. This event increased the population of the Pashtuns in this community. Today, the descendants of the Vientiane Pashtuns predominate the population of Kokthong.⁷⁾

Kokthong Pashtuns still have intimate relationships with the Pashtuns in Laos and the Shan State of

⁷⁾ Derived from my interviews with Kokthong Pashtuns in 1999.

Myanmar across national borders. Beyond the regional network, they are in contact with the Pashtuns in the NWFP of Pakistan, where their ancestors originated. Since the rapid economic growth of Thailand in the 1980s, a certain number of young Pashtun males come from the NWFP of Pakistan in search of work.⁸⁾ Some of them would go home after stay for a few years; others settled down and raised a family with local woman in Kokthong. Additionally, the Pashtuns of Kokthong have provided financial help for their “relatives” to construct mosques in Pakistan. These regional and international networks maintain the Pashtun identity among the Kokthong people.

As for its population, while most of the Pashtun communities in Thailand usually consist of a small number of households at around 20–40, Kokthong has a remarkably large population in comparison with other Pashtun communities. It has 157 households with a population of about 1,110.⁹⁾ Most of its population are descendants of the Pashtun immigrants with small populations of Malays (6 households), Bengalis (2), Yunnanese Ho Muslims (1), and Northern Thai converts (10).¹⁰⁾ Their joining with the Pashtuns from Laos made their population rapidly increase in the 1940s–1950s, resulting in the large population of this community.

While Kokthong Pashtuns maintain their ethnic identity, they steadily adapt to the social life of Thailand. Most Kokthong Pashtuns have Thai citizenship, send their children to government schools, and earn their livings in the local economy. Over the years, they have come to speak Northern Thai (*kham mueang*) as their first language, not Pashtu, with the exception of a few kinship terms, such as *baba* (grandfather) and *abai* (grandmother). On the point of their vocation, Kokthong Pashtuns have engaged in agriculture as well as stock farming¹¹⁾ and meat production since their settlement in Chiang Rai. Kokthong Pashtuns characterize their community as an agricultural and stock farming village in contrast with the Pashtuns in Chiang Mai, the political and economic center of Northern Thailand. The Pashtuns in Chiang Mai are merchants living in the urban area because their ancestors were originally merchants of the commercial towns in the NWFP of Pakistan. The ancestors of the Kokthong Pashtuns, as livestock traders in early years, settled in the suburb of Chiang Rai City, because their ancestors came from the agricultural area in the NWFP.¹²⁾ Besides agriculture and stock farming, Kokthong Pashtuns have entered a variety of jobs in the process of adapting to local society: sales business, company employment, public employment, etc.

⁸⁾ In 1999, there were around 40 Pashtun newcomers from Pakistan. As they came to Thailand by air, they are no longer “overland immigrants.”

⁹⁾ The population size and household numbers come from the resident registration in 1999.

¹⁰⁾ Northern Thai converts are people who married Kokthong women.

¹¹⁾ The Pashtun farmers of Kokthong breed water-buffalo, goats, and cattle for meat. Until recently, they had bred “Indian water-buffalo” for milk and agricultural work, which their ancestors brought to Thailand. Today there are few genuine breeds of “Indian water-buffalo.”

¹²⁾ The ancestors of the Kokthong Pashtuns came from Buner region, Swat, in the NWFP of Pakistan today. Interviews with the elders of the Kokthong Pashtuns were conducted in 1999.

3.3. Mosque as a focal institution of the community

Kokthong has a mosque as its center. Before the establishment of the mosque in their community, Kokthong Pashtuns used to attend worships and festivals at the Darul Aman Mosque (清莱清真寺)¹³⁾ near the municipal market in Chiang Rai City, three kilometers away from Kokthong. In the 1960s, Kokthong Pashtuns established a small private Islamic school for their children and used the upstairs of its building for daily worship, because the mosque at the city's center was far from their community. This worship place was not registered as a mosque with the government. As time went on, Kokthong Muslims felt the necessity of having their own mosque in the community.

In 1985, they started to build a mosque. The ground for the mosque was donated by a faithful benefactor who would be its Imam.¹⁴⁾ The construction cost of 2.5 million Baht was collected from the donations of Muslims both inside and outside of the community. The construction was completed in 1986, and they registered the mosque as the Nurul-Islam Pakistan Mosque (*Matsajit Nurun-Islam Pakisatan*) (Ibrohim 1992). Upon the registration of the mosque with the Thai government, the mosque's committee to run its religious activities was established. It consists of the three main posts of *Imam*, *Kotheb* (*khatib*), and *Bilan* (*bilal*) as well as nine other members. In 1992, the building for a private Islamic school was newly constructed next to the mosque.¹⁵⁾

Because Kokthong is a community under the direct administration of Chiang Rai Municipality, it is not admitted as a self-administration organization. There is neither a representative institution nor village headman. Therefore, the mosque committee often has community meetings to form their opinion or to impart information from the municipal authority upon request. The Imam of the mosque seems to be the de facto "headman" of the community. The mosque committee actually takes the role of the representative institution of the Kokthong community in addition to its responsibility for religious activities. The municipal authority also regards it as the committee of the residents' association.

4. "Thai-Muslim" activities

Chiang Rai Province has a certain number of Muslim populations consisting of various ethnic groups: the Yunnanese Ho, the Pashtuns, the Malays, the Bengalis, and so on. Including the mosque of Kokthong, there are seven mosques in this province. Two are located in Chiang Rai city: at the city's center and in Kokthong. One is in Mae Sai, a merchant town thriving on border trade with Myanmar. Four are in the

¹³⁾ This mosque was established by Yunnanese Ho Muslims in 1922.

¹⁴⁾ The ground for the mosque is 7 rai, or 11,200 m² (Ibrohim 1992).

¹⁵⁾ The private Islamic school in Kokthong teaches classes from 17:00 to 18:30 on weekdays and from 9:00 to 12:00 on Saturday and Sunday. The contents of the teachings are based on the standard curriculum established by the Central Islamic Council of Thailand. In 1999, 140 students from the age of 6 to 18 years old studied with five teachers; four are Kokthong Pashtuns and one is a Malay Muslim who married a Kokthong Pashtun woman.

Yunnanese refugee villages in the mountainous area (see Table 1).¹⁶⁾ Classifying these mosques into two types, the mosques of Kokthong and the four Yunnanese refugee villages are classified as community-based; the members and followers are exclusively confined within each community. The mosques of Chiang Rai city and Mae Sai town are classified as the urban-type; we can see the alignment of city-dwelling Muslims from various ethnic groups. As I mentioned above, in the early stages of immigration, Kokthong Pashtuns had joined the daily worship and religious festivals of the Yunnanese Ho at the mosque in the city's center. Even today, Muslims of other ethnic groups living and working in the urban area also attend this mosque. The mosque in Mae Sai town also has Muslims of various ethnic groups who attend worship.

Table 1. Mosques and Muslims in Chiang Rai Province.

	Location of mosque		Ethnic group
1	the center of Chiang Rai City	Muang District	Yunnanese Ho, Pashtun, Malay, Bengali
2	Kokthong	Muang District	Pashtun
3	Mae Sai town	Mae Sai District	Yunnanese Ho, Pashtun, Bengali
4	Ban Tham	Mae Sai District	Yunnanese Ho
5	Mae Salong	Mae Chan District	Yunnanese Ho
6	Ban Rak Thai (Ban Hin Taek)	Mae Chan District	Yunnanese Ho
7	Doi Wawi	Mae Suai District	Yunnanese Ho

According to the religious administration on Islam run by the Thai government, the Islamic Committee of Chiang Rai is formed as a provincial affiliate of the Central Islamic Council of Thailand. This provincial Islamic Committee is responsible for the religious affairs of Muslims in Chiang Rai.¹⁷⁾ Each mosque committee is placed under the supervision of the provincial committee. While daily worship and most festivals are independently held in each mosque, some festivals or religious activities are held as events of all Muslims in the province. For example, the provincial Islamic Committee adjusts the schedule of the Mawlid festival so that each mosque holds it on a different day, allowing every mosque to host a large celebration by inviting all Muslims in Chiang Rai.¹⁸⁾ Therefore, Mawlid festivals function as fund-raising events for each mosque through reciprocal altruism. The activities of the provincial Islamic Community have forged social relationships and built a sense of unity among Muslims in Chiang

¹⁶⁾ As the result of defeat of the Kuomintang in the war with the Communist Party in China, the Kuomintang army and pro-Kuomintang Yunnanese refugees migrated from the Yunnan Province and the Shan States into the mountainous area of Northern Thailand in the 1950s–1960s. These Yunnanese refugees include both Han people and Ho Muslims.

¹⁷⁾ For the religious administration on Islam in Thailand, see Ishii (1977). The Islamic committee of Chiang Rai consists of 15 members, including one chairperson and two deputy chairpersons.

¹⁸⁾ Mawlid (*mawlid al-nabi*) is the birthday festival of the prophet Muhammad.

Rai.¹⁹⁾ The social relationships and sense of unity lead the Pashtuns to identify as Thai-Muslim under the hierarchical and central governance structure of the religious administration on Islam in Thailand.²⁰⁾

5. Transformation of Pashtun identity

5.1. From Pathan to Pakistan

The Pashtuns in Thailand have gone by the name “Pathan,” which is the ethnonym in English. The Pashtuns themselves use the name “Pathan” to express their ethnic origin.²¹⁾ Meanwhile, after the independence of Pakistan, the Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association was established at Bangkok in 1954. Most of its members were those Pashtuns who originated in the NWFP of Pakistan. The Pashtuns living in local area of Thailand have also become members of this association. The activities of the association give the Pashtuns in distant parts of Thailand increased chances of getting to know each other. This brings two results in the sense of identity among the Pashtuns in Thailand: the reformation of the Pashtun’s network in the national unit of Thailand and the tendency to represent their identity using the national name of “Pakistan/Pakistani.” Kokthong Pashtuns also connect through the Pashtun network in Thailand and show the tendency to express their ethnic identity using the name “Pakistan/Pakistani.”

The naming of mosques is an example of this tendency. When the mosques are established mainly by the Pashtuns in Thailand, they find value in naming them “Pakistan Mosques” in their registration with the Thai government.²²⁾ As we see above, the Pashtun immigrants in Southern Thailand are the forerunners of this trend. The oldest mosque established by the Pashtuns in Thailand is located in Pangnga Province; it was established in 1922 and registered to the government authority in the 1950s under the name of the “Phang-nga Pakistan Mosque.” The second is the “Bangkhli Pakistan Mosque” in Pangnga Province. It was established in 1928 and registered in 1955. The third is the “Pakistan Mosque” in Yala Province, established in 1930 and registered in 1953.

Because the usage of the name “Pakistan” could not predate the independence of Pakistan, the mosques that were established before 1947 would not be named “Pakistan” at time of their establishment (1920s–1930s). However, it is significant that they named them “Pakistan Mosques” in their registration. Currently, there are 25 mosques that bear the name “Pakistan,” as far as I know (see Appendix).

Since their settlement in Chiang Rai, Kokthong Pashtuns have called themselves “Pathan” and

¹⁹⁾ In addition to the religious activities, Muslims in Chiang Rai City share a cemetery. The Municipality of Chiang Rai lays out its cemeterial place in the hillside of the Denha area, on the west side of the city. It contains a Buddhist crematorium and a Muslim cemetery for the residents. Deceased Muslims are similarly buried in this cemetery regardless of their ethnicity.

²⁰⁾ I already indicated the emergence of the “Thai-Muslim” identity through both top-down control of the religious activities of Muslims and bottom-up movements of non-governmental organizations (Murakami 2005).

²¹⁾ Some of the Pashtun families in Northeast Thailand use “Pathan” as their surname (Duagnthip 2011). The internet site of the Pashtuns in Thailand also uses the name “Pathan Club Thailand” (<https://th-th.facebook.com/PathanClubThailand>).

²²⁾ The system of registration of mosques in Thailand started in 1945 (Ishii 1977).

maintained their ethnic identity through the relationships among inland Pathan/Pashtun immigrants in Northern Thailand, Laos, the Shan State, and the upper part of Myanmar. These relationships are still upheld today. However, key persons of the Kokthong community became members of the Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association. The membership of key persons to the association gave Kokthong Pashtuns a sense of belonging to “the imagined community” of the Pakistani in Thailand regardless of their ethnic categories, time and route of immigration, and their place of origin in Pakistan. In this situation, Kokthong Pashtuns are inclined to proclaim themselves as “Pakistan/Pakistani” in formal situations. The mosque of Kokthong is one of the “Pakistan Mosques” in Thailand. After years of attending worships and celebrations at the mosque established by the Yunnanese Ho at the city’s center, the Kokthong Pashtuns established the “Nurul-Islam Pakistan Mosque” in their community. The naming of the Pakistan Mosque was due to the influence of the trend among the Pashtuns in other locations throughout Thailand.

5.2. Two meanings of Pakistan in Thai: *Pakisathan* and *Pakisatan*

Pakistan is the name of the nation, the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, where the Pashtun is one of the ethnic minorities. “Pakistan Mosque” literally means mosques for all Pakistani Muslims, including various ethnic groups. As we have seen, however, use of the word “Pakistan” in the names of mosques has a connotation indicating the Pashtuns’ ethnic consciousness in Thailand, where the Pashtuns are predominant among Pakistani immigrants. Therefore, the term “Pakistan” has two meanings in this context: denotation and connotation. The Pashtuns in Thailand give it a twist to emphasize its connotation by using two ways of transcribing “Pakistan”: *Pakisathan* (ปากีสถาน) and *Pakisatan* (ปากิستان).²³⁾ The former is the regular transcription for the name of the nation. The latter is newly invented and mostly used for the name of their mosques. The consonant “t” is written using a different letter than “th” in Thai. Although both *Pakisathan* and *Pakisatan* could be found in the name list of Pakistan Mosques, they seem to prefer the term *Pakisatan* to *Pakisathan* for naming mosques. For example, the Pakistan Mosque of Phisanulok in central-north Thailand is registered by the name *Matsajit Pakisathan*, but the nameplate in front of the mosque, in practice, shows its name as *Matsajit Pakisatan*.²⁴⁾ In Yala, Pakistan Mosque was changed its name from to *Matsajit Pakisathan* to *Annur Pakisatan* in 2012.²⁵⁾ It could be that while they use *Pakisathan* in registering the mosque with the Department of Religious Affairs, they use *Pakisatan* to show its connotation in practice. Sometimes, they even use the term *Pakisatan* in registration.

²³⁾ The difference between the consonants of “t” and “th” is underlined by the author.

²⁴⁾ See photographs of the Pakistan Mosque of Pisanulok on the website of the Central Islamic Committee of Thailand (<http://www.cicot.or.th/2011/main/mosque.php?page=&category=61&id=223>).

²⁵⁾ See “Opening ceremony at the mosque in Yala,” News of Internal Security Operations Command Region 4 Office, 16 Sept. 2012. (<http://www.southpeace.go.th/News/Unit/news-550916-2.html>)

6. Final remarks

In this paper, I discuss the transformation of the Pashtuns' identity in two ways: as Thai-Muslim and as Pakistani, and the dilemmas that they face in this transformation. As the Pashtun are a Muslim minority in Thailand, Islam is indispensable for their ethnic identity. However, as a minority among various ethnic groups of Thai-Muslims, they cannot monopolize Islam as a key factor for their ethnic identity. The activities of the provincial Islam committee lead the Pashtuns in Chiang Rai to build up their identity as Thai-Muslims. It seems that various Muslim minorities aim for unity under the name of Thai-Muslim as a religious minority in Thailand. However, the incorporation of the Pashtuns into the category of Thai-Muslim would blur cultural differences and social boundaries between the Pashtuns and other Muslim minorities in Thailand.

As the descendants of Pashtun immigrants from the northwestern part of Pakistan today, the Pashtuns in Thailand express their ethnic identity as "Pakistan." Because most Thai people do not know the name of the Pashtun, one of the ethnic minorities in Pakistan, the term "Pakistan" is more recognizable in Thailand. However, because the term "Pakistan" is the name of the nation, it indicates not only the Pashtuns but also other ethnic groups of Pakistan or their descendants in Thailand.

As we have seen, the way to break out of this dilemma is using the term *Pakisatan* in the name of their mosques. By using the name of the place where their ancestors came from, which is known better than the name of their ethnic group, they can show their identity through the name of the mosque that is the center of their religious life. This naming does not only contrast the Pashtun Muslims to Thai Buddhism, but also the Pashtun Muslims to Muslims of other ethnic groups. At the same time, in using the term *Pakisatan*, not *Pakisathan*, they avoid being integrated into the national identity of Pakistan today. The invented transcription of Pakistan is more appropriate in showing their identity. Although the two terms sound similar, the meanings are differentiated. The Pashtuns in Thailand obviously discern the implication of the replacement of the consonant "th" by "t" and make a choice to use these terms depending on their situation.

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Appendix: List of Mosques related to the Pashtuns in Thailand

	Province	Name of mosque	Year of registration (establishment)	Location			Source	Remarks
				village etc.	Tambon	Amphoe		
Central	Bangkok กรุงเทพฯ	<i>Matsajit Mitraphap Thai-Pakisatan</i> มัสยิดมิตรภาพไทย-ปากีสถาน	1954	515 ซอย 39 ถนนเจริญกรุง	แขวงสีพระยา	เขตบางรัก	*1	
	Ayutthaya อโยธยา	<i>Matsajit Thai-Pakisatan (sapuyan)</i> มัสยิดไทย ปากีสถาน (ซาปูยาน)	n.d.				*2	
	Nakhon Pathom นครปฐม	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1999	หมู่ 7	ต. พระปฐมเจดีย์	อ. เมือง	*3	
	Nakon Nayok นครนายก	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan Mahal-il-khoi-rot</i> มัสยิดปากีสถานมาฮัลลิลคอยร็อต	n.d.	บ้านนา		อ.บ้านนา		
	Angthong อ่างทอง	<i>Matsajit Siratullah</i> มัสยิดชีรอตุลลอฮ์	2001 (1999)	25/4 ด.เทศบาล	ต. ตลาดหลวง	อ.เมือง	*2	※ without name of "Pakisatan/Pakisathan"
North	Nakhon Sawan นครสวรรค์	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan Nakhon Sawan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน นครสวรรค์	1960 (1937)	เลขที่ 154 ด.สวรรค์นิ		อ.เมือง	*2	
	Phisanulok พิษณุโลก	<i>Matsajit Pakisatan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1981		ต. ในเมือง	อ. เมือง	*3	
	Chiang Rai เชียงราย	<i>Matsajit Nurul Islam Pakisatan</i> มัสยิดนุรุลอิสลามปากีสถาน	1985				*1	
	Uttaradit อุตรดิตถ์	<i>Matsajit Atdai'i</i> มัสยิดออตดาอัย	2004 (1946)	35/3 ม.7	ต.ท่าเสา	อ.เมือง	*4	※ without name of "Pakisatan/Pakisathan"
	Lampang ลำปาง	<i>Matsajit Alfalah</i> มัสยิดอัลฟาลาฮ์	n.d.	ศรีชุม	ต.หัวเวียง	อ.เมือง	*2	※ without name of "Pakisatan/Pakisathan"
South	Prachuap-khirkhan ประจวบคีรีขันธ์	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดไทย-ปากีสถาน	n.d.	หมู่ 3	ต. ทับสะแก	อ. ทับสะแก	*5	
	Surathani สุราษฎร์ธานี	<i>Matsajit Yum-atul Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดยุมอตุลปากีสถาน	n.d.	หมู่ที่ 2 บ้านคอนคูน	ต.ประสงค์	อ. ท่าชนะ	*5	
	Narathiwat นราธิวาส	<i>Matsajit Alnur</i> มัสยิดอัลนูร์	1981	บางนา (ปากี)	ต. บางนา	อ. เมือง		※ without name of "Pakisatan/Pakisathan"
		<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1995	ปากีสถาน หมู่ที่ 1	ต.เรือเสาะออก	อ.เรือเสาะ	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1975	ตลาดใหม่ ถนนชินมรรคา	ต. สู่โงโก-ลก	อ. สู่โงโก-ลก	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1981	สุโงปาตี หมู่ที่ 1	ต. ปะลุ	อ.สุโงปาตี	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Pakisathan Darul-aman</i> มัสยิดปากีสถานดาร์อุลอามาน	1997	เจาะไอร้อง หมู่ที่ 1	ต. จวบ	อ.เจาะไอร้อง	*5	
	Pattani ปัตตานี	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน	1998	ถนนปัตตานีภิรมย์	ต. อานะรุ	อ. เมือง	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Nurul Islam (Pakisathan)</i> มัสยิดนุรุลอิสลาม(ปากีสถาน)	1980	หมู่ที่ 3	ต. ยะรัง	อ. ยะรัง	*5	
	Yala ยะลา	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน / <i>Matsajit Annur Pakisatan</i> มัสยิดอัน-นูรปากีสถาน	1953 (1930) / 2012	หมู่ที่ 7	ต. สะเตง	อ. เมือง	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Pakisatan Ban Rom Yala</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน บ้านร่ม ยะลา	n.d.	ชุมชนบ้านร่ม	เทศบาลนครยะลา	อ. เมือง		

	Province	Name of mosque	Year of registration (establishment)	Location			Source	Remarks
				village etc.	Tambon	Amphoe		
South	Phang-nga พังงา	<i>Matsajit Bang-khli Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดบางคลีปากีสถาน	1955 (1928)	หมู่ 8	ต. นาเคย	อ. ท้ายเหมือง	*5	
		<i>Matsajit Phang-nga Pakisathan</i> มัสยิดพังงาปากีสถาน	(1922)		ต. ท้ายช้าง	อ. เมือง	*5	
	Songkhla สงขลา	<i>Sahi Matsajit Pakisathan</i> ซาสีมัสยิดปากีสถาน	n.d.	58 ถ. รักการ	ต. หาดใหญ่	อ. หาดใหญ่	*6	
	Trang ตรัง	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan Kantang</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน กันตัง	1947	เลขที่ ๖๒	ต. กันตัง	อ. กันตัง	*7	
		<i>Matsajit Pakisathan Yan Takhao</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน ย่านตาขาว	1972	บ้านย่านตาขาว	ต. ย่านตาขาว	อ. ย่านตาขาว	*7	
Northeast	Satun สตูล	<i>Matsajit Pakisathan La-ngu</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน ละงู	1950	ตลาดละงู	ต. กำแพง	อ. ละงู	*8	
	Nakhon Ratchasima นครราชสีมา	<i>Matsajit Baitulhamd (Pakisatan)</i> มัสยิดบัยตุลฮามด์ (ปากีสถาน)	2012			อ. สีคิ้ว	*2	
	Roi-et ร้อยเอ็ด	<i>Matsajit Pakisatan Mamba-ulhitayah</i> มัสยิดปากีสถาน มัมบะอูลฮิตายะห์	2013	เลขที่ 18 ถนนปัทมานนท์	ต. ในเมือง	อ. เมือง	*9	
	Maharakham มหาสารคาม	<i>Matsajit Nurul-ia-san</i> มัสยิดนูรุ้ลเอียะซาน	n.d.			อ. เมือง	*10	※ without name of "Pakisatan/Pakisathan"

- Source: *1 data of the research by author in 1999-1998
- *2 Thai-Pakistani Friendship Association
<http://www.thaipaki.com/main/content.php?page=sub&category=11&id=145>
- *3 The Central Islamic Committee of Thailand
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