

## EXPLORE THE HISTORICAL SITE OF ISLAMIC HERITAGE IN SOUTHERN THAILAND

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**Abstract:** This research article was written with the aim of describing the historical sites of Islamic heritage in Southern Thailand. This research uses a qualitative method with a narrative type with a socio-historical approach. The data collected in this article mostly comes from literature studies, both from popular articles and from previous research, apart from that it is also based on the results of observations, interviews and documentation, where researchers directly visited these historical places. The data analysis technique uses Miles and Huberman interactive analysis, with data validity techniques using the triangulation method. The results of the research describe 6 historical site locations in Southern Thailand, namely: 1) History of the Raja Selindung Bayu Mosque, Teluban (Saiburi) Pattani; 2) History of the Telok Manok Mosque; 3) History of the Keresik Mosque (Krue Se Mosque); 4) History of the Aho Mosque; 5) History of the Langkasuka Fellowship, and 6) History of the Jami' Pattani Mosque in Thailand. The conclusion from the research results is that even though Muslims are a minority in Thailand, they are proud and continue to maintain the existence of Malay culture and the Islamic religion which has become their identity, by continuing to preserve and care for the historical sites of Islamic heritage in Thailand. South.

**Keywords:** History, Islam, Sites, Southern Thailand

### Introduction

Thailand is a unique kingdom in the world, because during Western aggression against the East and Southeast it was never colonized. However, during its later political development, it turned out that it often faced upheaval within the country. The Kingdom of Thailand has other official names that are not widely known, namely: Ratcha Anachak, Prathet Thai, and Mueang Taek. This kingdom is located in the east, bordering Cambodia, in the west, bordering Myanmar and the Andaman Sea, on the other hand, in the south, bordering Malaysia and the Gulf of Siam. With a total area of the kingdom covering an area of up to 510,000 square kilometers (Marissa, Nelmda, Putri, 2019).

Muslims are a minority in Thailand, in the White Elephant Country, followers of Islam are generally found in several provinces, such as Pattani, Yalla, Narathiwat, Satun and Songkhla. These provinces were once part of the Pattani Raya Kingdom, a Malay sultanate that was founded around the 15th century. The entry of Islam into Thailand. Historians reveal that there are several theories about the beginning of the arrival of Islam in Thailand. One theory is that Islam entered Thailand in the 10th century, through Arab traders. Another theory states that Islam was brought to Thailand by the Samudra Pasai Kingdom in Aceh. There is also another opinion which suggests that Islam entered Thailand even before the Kingdom of Thailand was founded, namely in the 9th

century. This is proven by the discovery of ancient paintings depicting Arab Muslims in Ayuthaya, before the founding of the Pattani Sultanate. Another theory explains that the spread of Islam in Southeast Asia was a missionary mission during the Caliph Umar bin Khattab. However, the first areas to be exposed to Islamic influence from Arab traders are less known (Subroto dan Ningsih, 2022).

From a religious perspective, the majority of Thailand's population adheres to Buddhism (90%), the remaining 10% adheres to Islam, Catholicism, Confucianism and Hinduism. Specifically, followers of Islam number 4% or 2.3 million people (Kaling, 2015). Muslims are concentrated in Southern Thailand in the provinces of Pattani, Yalla, Narathiwat, Songkhla and Satun (Helmiati, 2011). The area is inhabited by a majority Muslim population. Sunni since several centuries ago Historical experts agree that Islam entered Southern Thailand in the 16th century (Lahea, 2019).

This article aims to describe historical sites related to Islamic religious heritage, which can be a source of information in knowing the history of the arrival of Islam in Thailand, especially in southern Thailand, where the majority of the population in that region is Muslim.

## Literature Review

Efforts to awaken humanity are not an easy endeavor. It requires sincerity and unified commitment at all levels and layers of society, especially those with the title of ulama and leader (Harfiani et al., 2023). Ulama and leaders must be held accountable for the good and bad of a society and the rise and fall of a civilization. The words of the Prophet Muhammad SAW: *"Two groups of people, if they are corrupt, then all humanity is corrupt, if they are good, then all humanity is good. Those who are meant are the ulama and umara' (scientists and leaders)."*

Islam entered Thailand in the 10th century AD at the same time as the beginning of the spread of Islam by the friends of the Prophet Muhammad through traders from the Arabian peninsula to the Kingdom of Pattani Raya or Pattani Darussalam. The spread of Islam in Southeast Asia was a unified 'package' of Islamic preaching from the Arabian peninsula during the time of the Caliph Umar Bin Khaththab. Furthermore, historically, Islam has spread in several regions of Southeast Asia for a long time, in Malakka, Aceh (Nusantara), and the Malayan Peninsula, including the Malay region in Siam (Thailand). The success of the Arabs in establishing the Pattani Islamic Daulah is proof that Islam existed before the Kingdom before the Sukhotai kingdom, the forerunner to the kingdom of Siam or Thailand, was born. Broadly speaking, currently, the Thai Muslim community is divided into two, namely: the Muslim community as the indigenous population, residing in Pattani (southern Thailand); and immigrant Muslim communities (immigrants) located in the cities of Bangkok and Chiang Mai (central and northern Thailand) (Marissa, Nelmidia, Putri, 2019).

The process of bringing Islam to Thailand began when the Siamese kingdom acquired the kingdom of Pattani Raya or Pattani Darussalam (Pattani comes from the word al-Fattani which means wisdom). Starting from a time long before, in the early history of Thailand, it was marked by the birth of a short-lived kingdom called Sukhotai, where since the 12th century the kingdom of Pattani Raya or Pattani Darussalam had existed in the southern region of the kingdom. In the southern region of the Kingdom of Thailand, where the majority of the population is Muslim, it is in the area known as the Pattani Raya region or Pattani Darussalam in the past. And now we can find it in the provinces: Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, Satun, and Songkhla (Marissa, Nelmidia, Putri, 2019).

Islam arrived in Pattani in the 10th or 11th century AD, brought by Arab and Hindu traders, and the spread of Islam in Pattani. The presence of Islam in Pattani began with the arrival of Sheikh Said, a preacher from Pasai, who succeeded in healing the King of Pattani named Phaya Tu Nakpa

was seriously ill, so King Phaya Tu Nakpa converted to Islam, then Sheikh Said founded a mosque, namely the Keresik Mosque which exists today, with the aim of being a place for preaching Islam in Pattani. The development of Islamic da'wah in South Pattani, Thailand is increasingly developing day by day through the process of preaching by great scholars in Pattani in the fields of education, the Islamic boarding school system, economics and politics (Lahea, 2019).

Historical experts agree that the arrival of Islam to Thailand was in the 10th century. Since then, Islam has continued to grow and develop roots in the area. Muslim adherents in the region transformed Islamic teachings to their descendants and society surroundings. In the long term, the Islamic values and culture that they produce continuously become an identity that is inherent in the people of Southern Thailand (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, Songkhla and Satun). Muslims in Southern Thailand are a combination of several ethnicities, such as Persian, Cambodian, Bengali, Indian, Pakistani, Chinese and Malay. Meanwhile, Malay descendants constitute the largest part of Muslims in Thailand (Salman, 2015). Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to say that they were part of the Islamic Archipelago which spread widely throughout Southeast Asia during those times along with the Malays (Nugroho, 2021). Over time, efforts to preserve Islamic values continue in the Muslim community of Southern Thailand. This effort is in the form of Islamic learning which grows in the form of majlis ta'lim (Mania, 2019).

It is thought that Islam came to Patani in the 12th century by Sheikh Said who came from Pasai. Subsequently, Patani became one of the most advanced Islamic kingdoms due to its strategic location between the Chinese and Indian trade routes. His fame and greatness reached its peak during the reign of the Queen. Patani was once an Islamic kingdom that reached its peak of victory for almost three centuries on the Malay peninsula. The Patani Kingdom successfully competed with the Siam (Thailand) kingdom which had a major influence on civilization and culture in several regions in Indonesia. Islamic education in Patani is running well and is well known to the people around the area, so that Patani is used as the veranda of Mecca. One of the most interesting events in the history of Islamic education in Patani occurred in the late 1920s (Zailani & Karsae, 2018).

Traditional Malay education is education that emerged in Pattani, since the 17th century with institutions such as madrasas and mosques, while mosques are not only places of worship, but also centers for the study and spread of the Islamic religion. A cleric and hafiz from Sena village who built the first cottage in Southern Thailand (Patani) along with his family and followers. He also spread Islam in Malay lands. His full name is Al-Allamah Al-Hafiz Wan Husain as-Sanawi al-Fhatani bin Ali. Increasingly, Islamic religious activities developed in the South of Thailand under the leadership of Wan Husain, who is known in Kelantan as "Tok Masjid" because he is said to be the founder of the Teluk Manok Mosque (Fauziah, 2011). Recitation and educational groups such as Islamic boarding schools play a significant role as a driving force, which is a typical educational institution for Muslim communities. In Malaysia, Brunei or other Malay Muslim areas, this institution has become an important legacy that continues to exist until the present era (Rahayu et al., 2022).

The traces of belief and culture left by practices inherited from the past have produced a complementarity between Malay and Islam, using cultural symbols, ways of life, language, behavior and local customs that are much more easily accepted by the community. If viewed from various angles, Islamic teachings are a revealed religion that is Shamil in nature, but in reality, Pattani Malay society still practices religious rituals mixed with traditional customs, for reasons of not knowing or ignoring them and there is still space and gaps between ideal Islam and Practical Islam (Nuereng, 2016).

## Method

This research method is qualitative with a narrative type and uses a socio-historical approach. Therefore, literature review is an important point in this research. The data sources in this research are mostly obtained from literature studies, both from popular articles and from the results of previous research. Apart from that, data sources were also obtained from observations, documentation and interviews. The analysis technique used is descriptive with a validity analysis technique using the triangulation method. The data collected is in the form of historical sites of Islamic religious heritage in the Southern Thailand region, in the form of mosques which are still well maintained and also historical sites of the rise of Islam in the Southern Thailand region. These historical places have now become tourist destinations for various countries and are places visited by many travelers, especially those interested in knowing the history of the arrival of Islam in Thailand.

## Result and Discussion

### Result

Based on the results of observations, documentation, interviews and literature studies, the results of this research can be described in six historical sites in Southern Thailand, namely the History of the Raja Selindung Bayu Mosque, Teluban (Saiburi) Pattani; History of the Telok Manok Mosque; History of the Keresik Mosque (Krue Se Mosque); History of the Aho Mosque; History of the Langkasuka Fellowship, and History of the Jami' Pattani Mosque in Thailand, with the following explanation:

#### 1. History of the Raja Selindung Bayu Mosque, Teluban (Saiburi), Pattani.

Teluban is an area better known as Saiburi, Teluban's position is in the Patani region which is not separated from several other provinces, such as the Yala, Narathiwat, Stul regions and parts of Songkla. The Teluban king's mosque is located near a low hill known as Selindung Bayu. This mosque is not too big compared to other king's mosques, although it was never fully built, but this mosque was equipped with a roof to provide shelter from rain and heat.

The roof architecture of this mosque is in the form of a "perabung Lima", which is a roof design that is very popular in the architecture of Malay houses, such as Patani-Kelantan in the 19th century and the first part of the 20th century. There is also a roof in the shape of a "saji" or "qubah" which is built separately at the front, specifically for the mosque tower, which makes this mosque have two separate roofs.





### **Figure 1. Raja Selindung Bayu Mosque, Teluban (Saiburi), Pattani**

The name "Teluban" is believed to be taken from the name of the river where the city in question is located, just as the city of Patani is taken from the name of the Patani river, Jambu is taken from the name of the Jambu River and Menara is taken from the name of the Menara River. When Siam conquered Patani, the name Teluban was changed to Saiburi. In 1816, when Siam divided the greater Patani State into seven small states, Saiburi also gained the status of a state from these seven.

Around the end of 1919 we can confirm that it was Tengku Abdul Kadir who founded the city of the King's Palace in Selindung Bayu. If we assume that it was Tengku Abdul Kadir who took the initiative to build the Selindung Bayu king mosque, then the date must be near the end of the 19th century or early in the last quarter of the same century. According to several sources, the Selindung Bayu mosque was built during the time of Tengku Sulaiman Sharufuddin who ruled Pattani in 1889-1899.

## **2. History of the Telok Manok Mosque**

This building was completed in 1768 at the end of the reign of the Patani sultanate. Who built it still requires further research considering that several researchers have not been able to confirm whether Al-Hussein or Wadi Al-Hussein As-Sanawi was the first builder of this mosque in the 18th century or he was the one who renovated it in the 1960s.

However, the historical validity that Al-Hussein As-Sanawi was a prominent scholar and contributed to the spread of Islam there has been agreed upon by historians. The figure of Al-Hussein As-Sanawi Alfathoni is said to have wandered around various islands in the archipelago, including several places on the island of Java to the island of Lombok and even to Campa Country (now Vietnam) before settling in the area now called Telok Manok in the Patani Raya region of Thailand.



**Figure 2. Telok Manok Mosque**

Telok Manok Mosque is currently being developed as a cultural learning center and historical tourist site. The story of Wan Al Hussein's struggle to spread Islam in Southern Thailand is beautifully carved on an inscription in the form of a brass plate. The inscriptions are written using Thai script, as well as Latin script in English. The name Telok Manok was taken because this mosque is located in Telok Manok village, a small village about 25 kilometers from the capital

city of Narathiwat, the southernmost village of Thailand, bordering the northern region of Malaysia in the peninsula area.

### 3. History of the Keresik Mosque

The official name of the Keresik mosque is “Sultan Muzaffar Shah Mosque”. This is the first mosque in Southeast Asia to be built using red bricks made from Tarab Battani village (now in Mukim Gamia, Muang, Pattani). The building is based on Middle Eastern architecture.

The method for preparing the bricks is done by using a mixture of shells and crushed black sticky rice, then mixing these ingredients with white egg mixture and liquid sweets. This method was one of the local Malay wisdoms at that time. This mosque was built during the era of Sultan Muzaffar Shah in 2057 BE / 1514 AD (AnanWatananikorn 2531:64) based on the recommendation of Sheikh Shafiyuddin Al-abbas (fiqh scholar who was called Dato 'Faqih of the kingdom). After completion of construction, the Keresik Mosque was considered the official mosque of the Pattani Darussalam Malay government. Apart from acting as a place of worship, it is also a center for Islamic religious affairs and also a source of learning for various fields of Islamic knowledge.



**Figure 3. Keresik Mosque**



**Figure 4. Researchers taking photos in the courtyard of the Keresik Mosque**

Keresik Mosque in Thai is known as Krue Se Mosque or Pitu Krue-ban. Krue Se Mosque or Keresik Mosque is one of the oldest mosques in Southeast Asia. The building stands tall with rounded pillars to display the West Asian architectural style and an important feature is the domed roof that was never completed.

#### 4. History of the Aho Mosque

The Aho Mosque is a mosque that is approximately 400 years old. It is thought to be more ancient than Wadi Al-Hussein, Narathiwat. There is no evidence who the creator is, but it is thought to be a technician from Pattani. The architecture is ancient Javanese, and also influenced by Buddha and Prahm, so it looks like a monastery. The doors and windows are beautifully carved. The specialty of the mosque is the use of construction techniques, nails are not needed in this building. Apart from that, there is an ancient lake which is used for ablution.



Figure 5. Aho Mosque

#### 5. History of the Langkasuka Guild

There are so few written records of historical documents, so only a few summaries can be made by academic history reviewers. The Langkasuka Kingdom is believed to have existed since the 2nd century AD. It fell in the early 3rd century AD when the Funan Kingdom from Cambodia tried to expand its colonies. In the 6th century AD, it began to reappear and sent ambassadors to the Chinese empire in an effort to establish diplomatic relations.

The king of Langkasuka from the 6th century AD, King Bhagadatta, established all diplomatic relations with the Chinese empire in 515 AD. Then, his king sent representatives again to China in 523, 531 and 568 AD. In the 8th century AD, Langkasuka also faced war with Srivijaya and was subjugated by Srivijaya like other kingdoms on the island of Sumatra and Java. In 1025 AD, it fell.



Figure 6. Researchers taking photos at the Langkasuka site



## 6. Jami' Mosque

The largest mosque in the city of Pattani which is the center of activities for the Pattani Muslim community. This mosque is said to be the most beautiful in Thailand. It was built in 1954 and completed in 1963 with architecture influenced by Arabia. A pool equipped with a dome-shaped monument was built in the middle of the courtyard to create a Taj Mahal atmosphere.



**Figure 7. Pattani Jami' Mosque**

The construction costs for building the Jami' Mosque are very large and can accommodate up to three thousand pilgrims at once. It is the focus of the congregation in Pattani to worship and deepen their religious knowledge. Considering that Pattani, along with four other Southern provinces, are provinces with a majority Muslim population, the Thai government considers it reasonable to build a large mosque.

## Discussion

Based on the explanation of the research results above, in this discussion it can be analyzed that the Muslim community in Southern Thailand really appreciates the historical heritage of Islam, this is proven by the preservation and maintenance of Islamic historical sites which are now also tourist areas visited by many tourists both from within Thailand itself and from overseas travelers. This is in line with research conducted by Mania (2019) which states that the people of Southern Thailand continue to maintain Islamic values so that they continue as a form of Islamic learning effort for the community. Likewise, the results of research by Fauziah (2011) stated that traditional Malay education in Thailand was mostly carried out in madrasas and mosques, as places of worship and centers of study, as well as the spread of Islam. Lahea (2019) also researched the place for Islamic preaching in Pattani, namely the Keresik mosque which was founded by Syeih Said.

## Conclusion

The traces of belief and culture left by practices inherited from the past have produced a complementarity between Malay and Islam, using cultural symbols, ways of life, language, behavior and local customs that are much more easily accepted by the community. Historical sites in Southern Thailand are proof of the struggle of ulama in spreading Islam and preaching to uphold Islamic teachings in the White Elephant country with its minority Muslim community. As Muslims, we should be proud of the many historical relics that constitute Islamic cultural heritage, as is the case in Southern Thailand, such as those described in this article, namely the Raja



Selindung Bayu Mosque, Teluban (Saiburi) Pattani, Telok Manok Mosque, Mosque Keresik, Aho mosque, Langkasuka, and Jami' Pattani mosque, Thailand.

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