

Unheard Voices: The Youth's Movements toward the Conflict in Thailand's Southernmost Provinces

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ABSTRACT

The conflict in Thailand's southernmost provinces originated many decades ago. It is believed that the new wave of violence began on January 2004, when an unknown militant group attacked a military camp in Narathiwat province. In spite of several rounds of dialogue between Thai authority and the insurgent group, Barasi Revolusi Nasional-Coordinate (BRN-Coordinate), were organized, but frozen by Thailand's political turmoil. There is no positive sign for peace and the people's way of life is still affected by the violence. Up until now, more than 5,000 people have been killed.

Deep South Watch reports that between 2004 and 2012, there were 57 deaths, 357 injured, and at least 4990 of the under-15 years old children became orphan. Some of the youth were arbitrarily arrested and interrogated by the Thai authorities. In many cases, the youth were abused and tortured in army custody under the martial law act. They were forced to give information and make confessions. However, there is no concrete policy from Thai authorities to cure and recover their mental damages, some of them became frustrated and joined the insurgent group afterwards. These massive numbers of child victims are significant and alarming figures.

Thai state seems to open more space for the local youth to address and express their opinions, which can be considered as a constructive change, they are allowed to gather for some activities such as sharing their experiences among themselves and the authorities. Nevertheless, the youth's demands are still neglected by Thai authorities.

This paper uses Galtung's conflict analysis and Laderach's Conflict Transformation theory as the major frameworks. The paper studies the youth movements in Thailand's southernmost provinces, their attitudes and demands toward the conflict, and the Thai authorities' responses on their movements. The paper argues that despite the Thai authorities' negligence some positive changes have emerged.

KEYWORD: Thailand Southernmost Provinces Conflict, Youth Movements in Southern Thailand, Conflict Transformation

1. Introduction

The area of today's Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, Satun and part of Songkla were part of an ancient Malay settlement known as Langkasuka which was founded around the second century (Ooi 2004, 764). According to archeology evidence, Lankasuka was an important trading port among Asian sailors, particularly when mariners began to find their ways to sail directly across the Gulf of Siam from the southernmost of today's Vietnam to the Malay Peninsula (Teeuw and Wyatt 1970, 1-2). It

was believed that Hinduism and Buddhism were introduced to Langkasuka in the third and the eight centuries respectively, while Islam was brought into this region later by the Arab traders. Later on Langkasuka was gradually disappeared around the fourteen to fifteen centuries with the emergence of Patani as its replacement and as a major trading port.

The relationship between Patani and Siam kingdoms at state level had been established in what could date back as far as the period of Ayutthaya. According to chronicles, it was a suzerain-vassal relationship, which can be also seen generally in this region when a smaller or weaker kingdom bowed to a stronger one by sending some sort of tributes as a token of submission and seeking for protections, cooperation or peacefully coexistence between kingdoms in return. There are many records indicating that Patani accepted Ayutthaya's power, a Dutch document of 1640 mentions about the Patani and Johor missions to Ayutthaya to offer the customary gold and silver flowers (Suwannathat-Pian 2003, 212).

However, there were several confrontations between the two kingdoms as well. Jeremias Van Vliet, a Dutch merchant who came to Ayutthaya in 1633, wrote in his account about the incident of King Prasat Thong deploying his troops to attack Patani. It was explained in the version of the Thai royal chronicle as a rebel against the Ayutthaya, while in the Patani's version it is argued that the King of Siam had no legitimacy to rule because Prasat Thong, the usurper king, came to power by killing the true kings and their heirs (Aphornsuvan 2007, 18). With the larger army and ships built for the expected assault, Ayutthaya successfully attacked Patani. The Patani queen, Raja Ungu, was killed by the time of the Ayutthaya's campaign. However, in the latter reign of Raja Kuning, a daughter of the previous queen, the relationship with Ayutthaya was restored, the queen even visited Ayutthaya by herself in 1641 (Aphornsuvan 2007, 18).

The suzerain-vassal relationship between two kingdoms had dramatically changed during the reign of King Rama II of Bangkok, the new Thai kingdom after Ayutthaya was ruined by the Burmese invasion. Bangkok initiated a new policy by divided Patani into seven provinces; namely, Patani, Nhongchick, Raman, Ra-ngae, Saiburi, Yala, and Yaring, these 7 provinces were known in Thai as Khaek Jed Huamaung. It apparently showed Bangkok's intention to control these provinces directly by its own selected governors and to reduce the power of local rulers.

During the reign of King Rama III in 1821, the king sent an army to seize Kedah and Perak. In 1825 Henry Burney from the British India visited Bangkok to negotiate on the issues related to the Anglo-Burmese war and the territories between Siam and Burma, for Burma was put under the control of the British India. In 1826, Siam and British had signed the treaty known as the Burney Treaty, which recognized the position of Bangkok over Kedah, Kelantan, Trengganu, and Patani; while, Perak and Selangor were set free. David Wyatt (Wyatt 1984, 170) states in his account that the Burney Treaty had made Siam felt more confidence in dealing with the west. A crucial incident occurred during the period of King Rama V who initiated the Siam administration reforms. King Rama V's centralization policy led to the end of autonomous, started in 1902 and completed in 1906, Siam removed Patani's Rajas and royalties from all the positions that could influence in any of interests, replaced with the bureaucrats from Bangkok (Aphornsuvan 2007, 24). Coinciding with the Siam's reform, in 1909, the Anglo-Siamese Treaty was signed, whereby the new borderline was created. Kedah, Kelantan, Terengganu, and Perlis were annexed as parts of British Malaya; while, Patani and Satun were completely recognized by both Siam and British as the controlled territories of Bangkok (Chalermripinyorach 2013, 26).

In 1947, another important incident which the Thai state considered as the beginning of the modern day conflict, known as the seven demands of Haji Sulong, had occurred. Haji Sulong was a charisma local leader, he went to study Islam religious in Mecca, he established a religious school in

1933 after returned to Pattani. He earned respect from both the locals and Muslim leaders by contributed a better practice and knowledge of Islam. It was believed that during the Nationalistic regime of Field Marshal Phibun (Phibun1st government period between 1938 and 1944), the relationship between government and local Malay Muslims in Thailand's southernmost provinces was deteriorated. Thus Haji Sulong as one of the most respected person by the local tried to find out the solutions by requesting the central government to consider the local's demands as follows (Dubus and Polka 2011, 16):

1. *The appointment of a person with full powers to govern the four provinces of Pattani, Yala, Naratiwat, and Satun. This person must have the power to fire, suspend or replace all local civil servants. This person must be a native of one of the four provinces and must be elected by the inhabitants of the four provinces*
2. *80 per cent of all civil servants in the four provinces must be Muslim*
3. *The Malay language must be an official language alongside the Thai language*
4. *The teaching in primary schools must be done in Malay*
5. *Muslim laws must be recognized and implemented under the aegis of an Islam court, separated from the civil court where the qadhi (Muslim judge) is seating as an assistant*
6. *All taxes and incomes collected in the four provinces must be used locally*
7. *The establishment of a Muslim affairs bureau with full powers to manage Muslims affairs under the authority of the governor mentioned in the first point*

Although there was no evidence showing that Haji Sulong's demands were to separate from Thailand at all, the Thai Government had accused Haji Sulong of being a separatist. On January 1948, Haji Sulong was arrested under the charge of being the leader of separatism movements.

The tension was arisen and finally exploded on April 28, 1948 at the village of Duson Nyor, Narathiwat. During two days of violence, at least 400 villagers, mostly the peasants, and 30 policemen were reported dead in the clash. The Muslim account, however, describes that the police started shooting during the "oil bathing" ceremony, in which the villagers believed as a ritual to defend them from the Chinese Communist bandits; while, the police suspected their activities. The police then athered and finally attacked the villagers (Aphornsuvan 2007, 53). Although the causes of Duson Nyor clash was unclear, the government had labeled the incident as "Duson Nyor Rebellion" or "Haji Sulong's Rebellion"

Haji Sulong was jailed for four and a half years. After he was released in 1952, he mysteriously disappeared in 1954, while travelling up to Songkhla province to report himself to the police. His case, however, remained as an inspiration for Malay Muslim leaders, activists, and the latter insurgency groups against Thai government for generations.

Not until the end of 1950s had the real insurgency groups emerged. At the very beginning, there were few insurgency groups launching the armed confrontation with Thai government; namely, BNPP (Barisan Nasional Pembebasan Patani) in 1959, BRN (Barisan Revolusi Nasional) in 1960, PULO (Patani United Liberation Organization) in 1968, GMIP (Gerakan Mujahidin Islam Patani) in 1995, and Bersatu which was the umbrella organization of PULO, BIPP, and BRN in 1989 (Chalermripinyorach 2013, 27-30).

The recruitment of a new generation into the insurgency groups is believed to take place mainly in Islamic schools such as the Pondok schools or Tadiga schools by the *ustadz* (Islamic teacher). Duncan MacCargo (2009, 148) tates that some Islamic school, for example, Thamma Wittaya Islamic School in Yala province, was one of the main recruitment centers, in which more than 200 *ustadz*

were believed to indoctrinate thousands of student in this defined. From then on, number of violence has been significantly increasing. There were 50 violence in 2001, 75 violence in 2002, 119 violence in 2003, and over 1,000 violence in 2004, the year that Thai authorities regarded as the beginning of the newest wave of insurgency movements (Internation Crisis group 2007, 16).

2. Theoretical Framework

In this paper two theories are employed to analyze Thailand southernmost provinces conflict.

In Johan Galtung’s Conflict triangle, he suggests that we usually see the conflict on both the Manifest level and Latent level, a conflict can start at any angle and it can spread to other angles. Galtung (1996, 73) describes the conflict that we could see every elements as “a fully articulated conflict”.

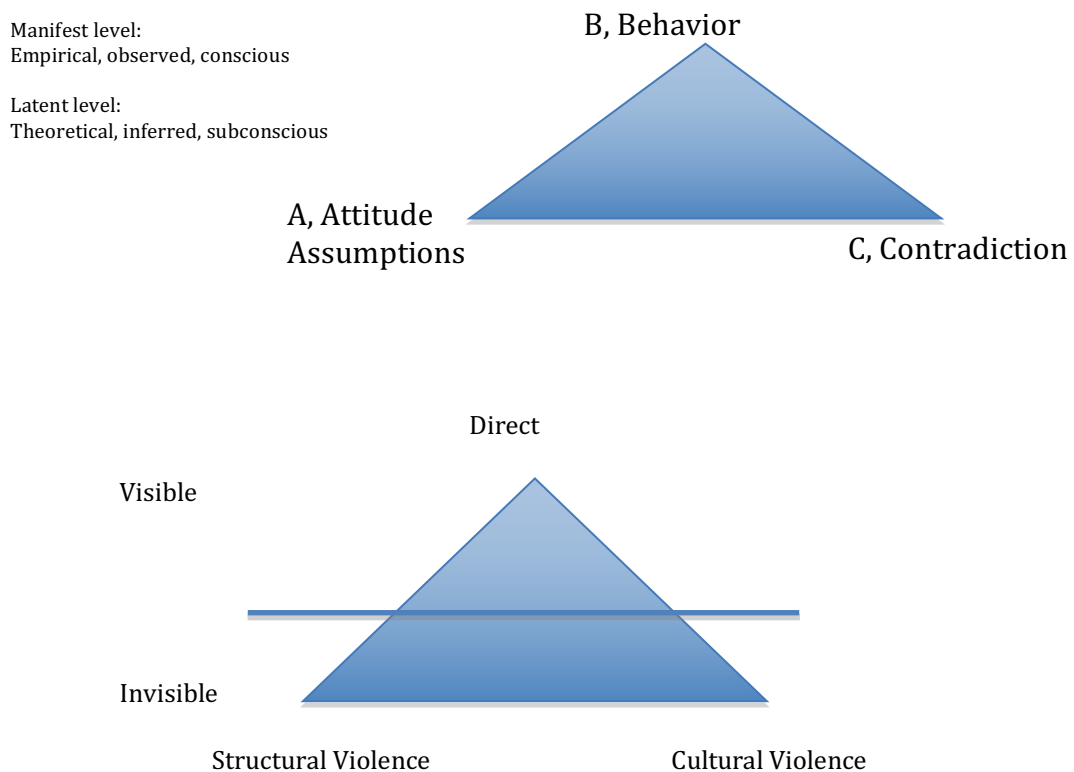


Figure 1 Galtung’s conflict triangle

By using his triangle as a criteria, he divides conflicts into two types as follows:

Actors conflicts: A and C both conscious

Structural Conflict: A and C both subconscious

Galtung also suggests the factors involved which can make the conflict becomes more complicated. He introduces a formula in order to measure the complexity of conflicts, the so-called Galtung’s complexity formula (Galtung 1996, 76) as follows:

$$c = m + n - 2$$

when m referred to the actors in a conflict
 n is a number of goals expected by actors

the value of c will indicate us how complex the conflict is

- $c < 0$: structural conflict, neither actors nor goals ($m=0, n=0$)
- $c = 0$: one actor, one unrealized goal: frustration ($m=1, n=1$)
- $c = 1$: elementary conflicts: dilemmas ($m=1, n=2$) or disputes ($m=2, n=1$)
- $c > 1$: Complex conflicts

In his account, the Little Book of Conflict Transformation (2003), Lederach suggests at the issue as a big picture. In order to do this, we need to consider content and context of the issue, focus on both episode and epicenter of the conflict. The idea of conflict transformation is to expand the views of time, not only the present, but its history and future. Unlike conflict resolution that intend to end something not desired, conflict transformation is the process that finds the way to end something destructive and build something desired (2003, 33). Lederach argues the presenting situation where the problems or issues situated are rooted by their pattern of relationships, and both are embedded in the sphere of history. This is a natural phenomenal of any concerned problems and it portrays us the connection between the present and the past. He suggests us to see the presenting issues as a glass window through which we always look through, and focus our attention on what lies beyond the window (2003, 49) not the window itself.

Moving through the presenting situation toward its relational and historical patterns takes us to the epicenter of the conflict possibly regenerating various new episodes that could be similar to or different from the concerned issues (2003, 36).

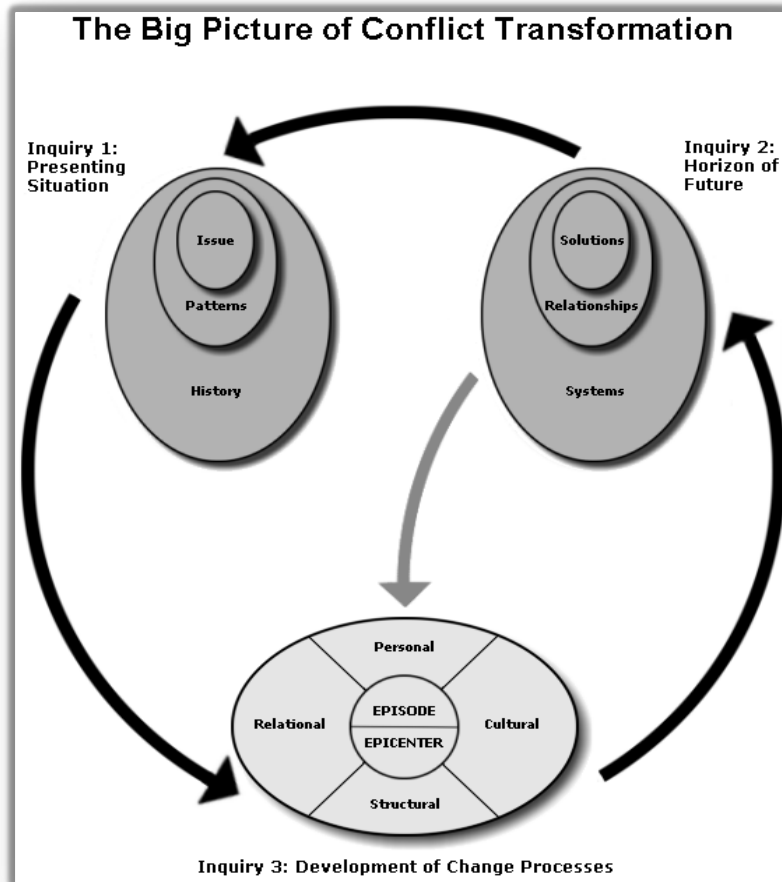


Figure 2 Lederach's Big Picture of Conflict Transformation

Positive change requires understanding on both epicenter and episode of the issues. The change processes require the understanding on relationships and patterns of four interconnected elements: personal, relational, cultural, and structural. The conflict transformation requires us to hold together at the same time to multiple independent initiatives rather than a single operational solution. The presenting situation sphere drives us to do something for positive changes, thus these processes of changes create the horizon of the future which we can visualize but cannot control. The solutions of the issues are certainly involved with its relationships and structures or systems. Frequently, the solutions cannot be achieved, the future horizontal visualization possibly creates orientation in two directions; (1) to the change processes in case the issues are still not able to be solved, or (2) back to the initial stage again in case the new issues emerge.

Lederach further explains that the change processes have their own dynamism, though sometimes the processes are stopped by obstacles, move backwards and collapse, but this may create opportunities to build in wholly new ways.

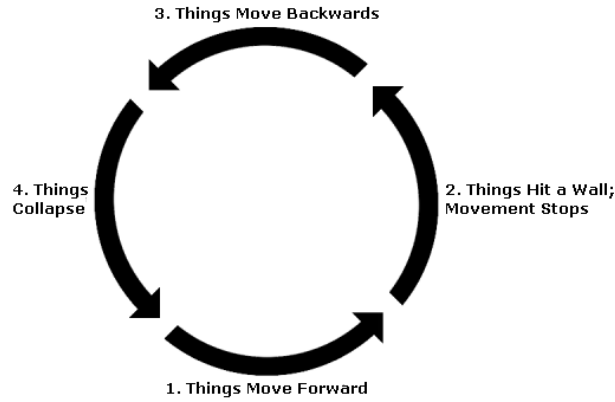


Figure 3 Change as a Circle

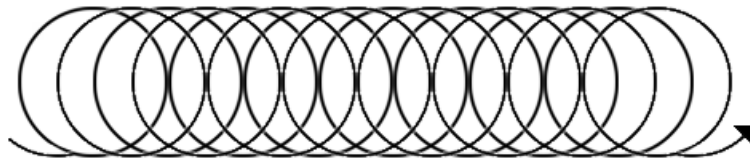


Figure 4 A Simple Process Structure

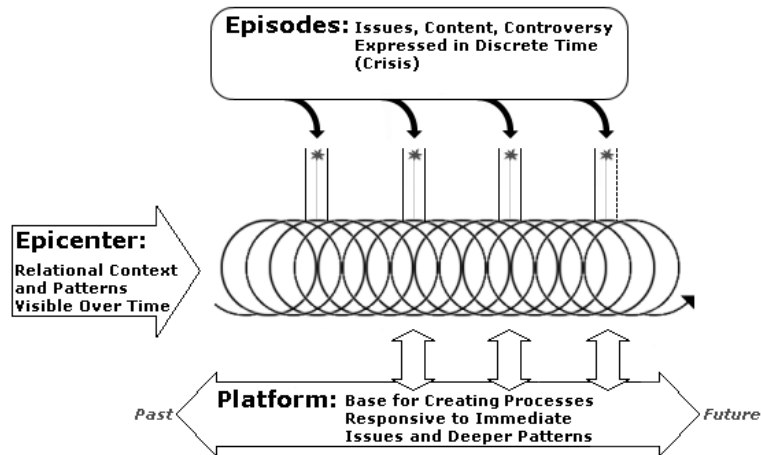


Figure 5 Conflict Transformation Platform

When we look in broad picture, we may see the change circle performs like a spiral made of multidirectional internal patterns that create a forward direction of the overall movements.

3. Thailand's Southernmost Provinces Youth as Victims

As mentioned earlier, it is believed that most of the recruitment processes into the insurgency groups have been done in the school, hence the youth are the most likely to be targeted as a victims.

There are huge numbers of youth in Thailand's southernmost provinces who got impacted directly and indirectly, or both, by the conflict. In some cases, like Maroso Chantrawadee, who managed to

survive from the back of an army truck after the 2004 Tak Bai incident, in which Thai soldiers stacked hundreds of the arrested young Muslim men on top of each other to the army camp for interrogation. 78 were died of suffocation on the way to the camp, Maroso was believed to join the BRN and became a leader of a band of armed militia, the so-called *juwae*, after his suffering as a victim from the Tak Bai incident.

On April 28, 2004 the insurgent groups attacked 10 military and police check points, later gathering at Kru-Ze mosque, where totally 108 people, mostly the youth, were killed. Historians have doubted whether the insurgency had launched their operations on the anniversary day of Duson Nyor incident.

From January to September 2013, Deep south watch reports that 274 of the under 18 years old youth were affected from the violence, 11 of them were facing the incident on their way to or back from school, 2 were reported riding on the back of motorcycle while their mother got shot (Children Voice for Peace 2013, 11).

On January 23, 2013, unknown militant group killed a teacher at Tanyong School, Narathiwat. The teacher was shot dead in front of his 292 students (Children Voice for Peace 2013, 14).

Although Thailand has proper procedures for youth when they were accused or arrested in case of crimes but for the southernmost provinces, Thai state has declared the special emergency act and the martial law, which allow the authorities to take in the suspect without any warrant from the court up to 37 days (Sayantrakul 2012, 51). This inevitably leads to the violation of human rights; to illustrate, there are several reports on the physical abuse and torture during the custody of the army under martial law act. The suspects were forced to give information and confession against their will. When it comes to the case that the suspect is found not guilty, Thai authorities only recompense for physical and mental injury sustained, which is unable to entirely cover the victims' resilience to their sorrows and depressions.

4. The Youth Movements in Thailand's Southernmost Provinces

The first movement of the youth in Thailand's southernmost provinces can date back to 1975 in which a group of students mobilized the mass to protest the government on the "Kor Tor Bridge" incident, where a group of Marines arrested six villagers; later five dead bodies were found in Saiburi River near the Kor Tor Bridge. There left only one survivor, a 13-year-old child, feigning death and later being rescued by other villagers.

The protest was led by a group of students who in fact, were studying at universities in Bangkok. According to Assoc. Prof. Abdullah Abru, a lecturer from college of Islamic Studies, Prince of Songkla University, Pattani campus, the protest was a subsequence of the 14 October 1973 uprising in Bangkok¹. A group of southernmost provinces students in Bangkok the so-called "Selatan"² which earned experiences from the uprising in Bangkok, had summoned people for protest in front of the Pattani city hall on 11 December 1975 and demanded Bangkok to give an answer on the Kor Tor Bridge incident. On the night of 13 December, there was a bomb on the crowd, 12 people were reported dead. After the news spread out, a hundred thousand of people were pouring to join the protest³ for the next day before the protest lasted for 45 days in many different places.

¹ Online article, retrieved at <http://www.muslimram.com/content.php?page=sub&category=2&id=21>

² Selatan means south

³ Online article by Ekkarin Tuansiri, retrieved at <http://prachatai.com/m/journal/33525>

History always repeats itself. So is the modern day movements of the youth from southernmost provinces. In 2007, a group of students who had studied at Ramkhamhang University in Bangkok, known as PNYS (Pattani-Narathiwat-Yala Students) started their activity against a crime, which the local believed it was done by the Rangers. On May 22, 2007, at Yala, there was a militant group, dressed like the Rangers, raped and killed a Muslim girl and another three villagers brutally. The mother of the girl was bound while witnessing the scene. Before leaving, they set fire on her. She was lucky enough to have been rescued by another villager before getting burnt to death. The mother who survived the tragic event reported the case to the police, but there has never been any progress on the investigation.

The PNYS student group, the student federation of Thailand, and the local students from southernmost provinces, managed the protest in front of the Pattani central mosque from 31 May 2007 to 4 June 2007, demanded the Thai authorities to investigate the case properly.

According to Atef Sohko⁴, one of the student leaders, they did not have a proper plan for the protest but asking their networks to invite local students and local people to share experiences on the situations, it turned out to be a protest by chance after so many people came to join them,

"this was the reason why the authorities didn't know about the event, some officers told the media that it was very well organized and authorities didn't have a clue about it, in fact, there was nothing, we also didn't prepare".

The protest was considered as a wakeup call for the local youth, by which they realized that they have an ability to catch up public attentions and motivate people to join the mass. PNYS encouraged students in each province to set up their own organization and create their own activities. The campaign was successful. Each province, totally five, (Pattani, Yala, Narathiwat, Satun, and Songkla), has its own organization, and all finally became a member of the Student Federation of Thailand.

After earned experiences participated in several activities with the Student Federation of Thailand, the five pulled their organizations and packed themselves together, renamed it as PERMAS⁵ (Persekutuan Mahasiswa Sempadam Selatan Thai). PERMAS restructured the area formerly arranged by Thailand government into new seven areas regarding their own model. PERMAS is suspected by the Thai authorities as the Youth Political wing of the BRN, because PERMAS obviously showed their sympathy to the insurgency groups in many occasions. However, there are no concrete evidence. During an interview, Atef Sohko admitted that most of the PERMAS members would like to achieve their goals, which more or less, similar to the BRN, but PERMAS do not and will never support any operations that involve in any form of violence.

PERMAS positioned itself as the umbrella organization; there are about 30-40 small groups under the PERMAS. Each group is free to operate and create their own activities. PERMAS will support, cooperate, and advise when it is required. PERMAS denies accepting any fund from Thai authorities; their activities mostly rely on donation.

Being aware of the youth in Thailand's southernmost provinces on their political participation, the Thai authorities such as the army and SBPAC (The Southern Border Provinces Administration Centre) realized that they have got to do something in order to earn trust. Thus, they have tried to mobilize their own youth to fight against the insurgency groups in the psychological war.

⁴ Interviewed Atef Sohko on September 2, 2013

⁵ Interviewed Atef Sohko on October 7, 2013

SBPAC has many programs to support the youth in southernmost provinces, i.e., scholarship for short course training⁶ on nursing, computer, garments, bakery, etc., in hope that this will help the youth to acquire a better job and live a better life. SBPAC also supported budget of 100 million baht on Thailand Knowledge Park project (TK Park) in Pattani⁷ to improve education level and draw the attentions of the youth from politics. These policies reflect SBPAC's believe on education and economic development that will gradually solve the political issues. The endeavors of SBPAC are well accepted by the locals, although some conservative villagers still disagree with the SBPAC and denounce that this modern concepts of knowledge are not well connected with Islamic educations.

SBPAC encouraged youth activists to create activities to build trust between SBPAC and the locals. One good example is a group of youth called "Dreamsouth" led by students in Pattani, Yala, and Narathiwat. According to the interview with the group leader, Danyal Abdulloh⁸, it was started by his interested in the politics and violence situations in the area. He always join the seminar events to share opinion with others, which made him became familiar with the SBPAC officers. His critical mind and strong comments catchup people's attention. One day after the seminar, the SBPAC staff came and invited him for a talk, they offered help on financial and consultant with no conditions but to create activities and events. SBPAC strategy was to build trust and make local people feel more comfortable with Thai authorities. Dreamsouth's activities are useful for SBPAC in order to work closely with the locals and serve as a bridge between local people and Thai authorities.

Apparently, there is no unity among Thai authorities on the policies toward conflicts in southernmost provinces. Thai government's policy is always deemed changeable in favor of new cabinet. From Thaksin's government onwards, the new wave of violence broke out. The case continues during the interim military government of Prime Minister Surayudth, Samak-Somchai elected governments, Abhisit's government who got fully backed by the army (Abuza 2011, 5), and the latest Yingluck's government that seems to have more compromise policies compare to the previous governments. In past 10 years, each government had its own different policy. They usually put their trusted people in charge, thus the policies toward southernmost provinces are unavoidably affected by the Thai political instability.

The political instability led to the coup again in May 2014, after several months of political vacuum. Once again, the coup maker has switched many civil servants, claiming that it would make the administration more sufficient and transparent. In this light, SBPAC's Secretary General, Pol Colonel Tawee Sodsong, was removed from his duty. Therefore, Dream South's activities which they have planned in advance were suspended. Anyhow, Dream South is still pursuing their activities; in other words, they are currently seeking for supports from other channels such as international NGOs and foreign embassies.

Thai army has its own policy toward the southernmost conflict with always difference perspectives. For example, while the latest government concentrated more on education, economic development, and initiate peace dialogue, the army seemed to concern only on national security issue.

Regarding the youth movements, the Thai army also has its own ideas. The army supports a group of youth the so-called "Students Union of Promote Peace in Southernmost Provinces of Thailand" or SUPPSPT. The activities of SUPPSPT are different from PERMAS or Dream South, They usually organize big event by inviting prominent scholar from Bangkok to give a talk several times. Their

⁶<http://www.dailynews.co.th/thailand/178255>

⁷<http://www.publicpostonline.com/2013/main/content.php?page=sub&category=8&id=330>

⁸ Interviewed on 29 August 2013

main activity seems to be the Youth camp "the freedom of thinking and discipline youth camp" which up until now has been already organized more than seven times. The name of the activity was completely reflected something similar to the perceptions of the army toward the conflict in the southernmost provinces. It could be implied from its name that "you must have discipline and freedom of thinking"; the army wants the youth to think differently from the main stream locals, narrow-mindedly believed to give support to the insurgency group.

According to the informants that used to join the SUPPSPT's activities⁹, the program tried to promote the unity of the nation, the importance of the monarchy, and the history of Thai state which they claimed that it is the only true version. They condemn the Patani local history taught by *ustadz* as fraudulence newly produced by the insurgency group. It was said by other group that SUPPSPT has 19 million baht budget¹⁰ to organize their activities in 2013. I had a chance to follow the SUPPSPT and closely observe their activities at an Islamic private high school in Narathiwat, I found the activities very simple, mostly sharing their experience as a university student to the high school students and helping those students to make a correct choice for their future. But the interesting thing was that the school is located in the area categorized by the army as "Red Zone", meaning this area is considered as the most active area of the insurgency group. The army believes most of the villagers in "Red Zone" area accept the insurgency's ideology of separatism. The school I visited with SUPPSPT was secured by the full-scale armed soldiers during the period of activities; nonetheless, the SUPPSPT members were apparently well-connected and its *raison d'être* was fully supported by the army.

The leader of the SUPPSPT group, Sulaiman Chealae, after graduated from Prince of Songkla University, Pattani Campus, he recently set up an organization, the Peaceful of Southern Boundary's Organization (PSBO), to pursue his activities as an NGO while the SUPPSPT still exist.

These are only three case studies of the major youth groups; in fact, despite their size, there are more than 65 groups of the youth¹¹. Although three groups of youth apparently have different viewpoints toward the conflict, they all share one common goal: they are ultimately against the use of forces and violence.

5. Analysis

Considering Galtung's triangle by taking the case of Thailand's southernmost provinces into account, we can divide the existing conflicts into three categories: direct violence, structure violence, and cultural violence, which can be categorized by the list as follows:

Direct Violence	Structure Violence	Cultural Violence
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clashes between Insurgency and Thai authorities • Bombs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poverty • Injustice • Lack of Infrastructure Developments • Lack of Economic Developments 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cultural Difference • Language Difference • Religion Difference • History

⁹ Interviewed on 31 August 2013

¹⁰ Interviewed an anonymous informant

¹¹ According to SBPAC information

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Torture by Thai authorities toward suspects • Violence toward Monks and Buddhist by Insurgency group 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of Understanding between Thai authorities and the locals 	
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In case of Thailand’s southernmost provinces conflict, it is apparently “a fully articulate conflict” as we could see both on manifest level and latent level. On its surface, we could find two actors in this conflict: the Thai state and the insurgency group. In reality, there are no unity among authorities of Thai state (Abuza 2011, 15) in the same manner as that the insurgency groups (Tuansiri, et al. 2012, 64); thus, the number of actors and its goals altogether are always more than three. Consequently, the factor c in Galtung’s complexity formula always greater than one.

By using Lederach’s conflict transformation theory, I considered the conflict as a presenting situation which lies on patterns of relationships of Thai authorities, the locals, and the insurgency groups. Not only does it just happen, but rooted for centuries as mentioned in the previous part of this paper. Since peace is the ultimate goal that each party would like to achieve in an attempt to find solutions which are considered as the horizon of the future, every party have created various processes that will change the relationships among them in all four levels: personal, relational, cultural, and structural.

The policy of Thai authorities that allow the youth to express their opinions freely can be considered as one of the processes that could lead to a constructive change, for it lies on the ability of recognize, understand, and redress (Lederach 2003, 35). Unfortunately, Thailand’s political instability has obstructed this opportunity. Thai authorities, once again, abandon the youth activities and ignore their opinions toward the conflicts. It seems that the process cannot move forward, any positive movement stop, and collapse by and large under these conditions, the new episodes are created. According to my close observation I found the youth have more enthusiastic to find their own ways.

Despite Thai authorities’s attempt to earn trust and support from the youth, the youth’s proposals remain neglected. The conflict is still there, but the circumstance gradually changed. The changing process slowly moving forward as we could see that the Dreamsouth has tried to find new supporters after SBPAC cannot support them since the coup, the expansion of SUPPSPT to PSBO, and the endeavors of PERMAS rely only on donations of the community.

The changing processes are continually moving forward, in fact, it already impacts the community since it makes the youth realize their rights of participation as a part of society.

6. Conclusion

The conflict in Thailand’s southernmost provinces is a fully articulate conflict by Galtung’s definition. In his account, Galtung (1996, 99) suggests that the answer for the complex actor conflicts where we found the factor $c > 1$ is to simplify it, in this case, the reduction of the number of actors and goals is required. Thai authorities and insurgency group need to find a unity within their own domain. Among the Thai authorities, the policy of the army and SBPAC was obviously disunited. However, after the latest coup, SBPAC is currently put under the command of the army. Although there is a resistance, finally SBPAC will be fully controlled by the army, and if the army

is willing to continue the peace dialogue with the BRN, at least the number of actors should be reducing but their goal might also be changed.

The youth of southernmost provinces are the victims who have suffered from the violence for decades. However, there is a positive sign even if the policy of Thai authorities has been changed dramatically. The initiative on peace dialogue between Thai authorities and insurgency group, at least, put the locals at ease so that they could yearn for the feeling of security and, eventually, peace.

The youth are allowed to participate in activities; they are able to express their attitude toward the conflict openly. The youth's endeavors can send impacts to the community by bridging the gap between Thai authorities and the locals and creating a sense of participation among the youth as well as the locals. Although their activities are affected by the central politics, the momentum of the change processes remains.

By using Lederach's Conflict Transformation theory to elaborate the dynamism of the conflict help us understand that even though the youth activities are ignored, the dynamism of change still continues. The constructive changes are evolving themselves, even if they cannot be achieved immediately, they keep moving forward in the positive direction.

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