CHAPTER II
THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to outline a conceptual framework that can most effectively demonstrate and substantiate the research question: in what ways does traditional healing practice among the Malay Muslims in the Pattani area of the South of Thailand sustain ethnic identity?

This study of ethnic identity and traditional healing practice focuses, primarily, on the notion of adaptability. Adaptability is presented both through time, ie historically, and through space, ie situationally; however, it is not strictly portrayed in the sense of a linear progression. Plurality feeds and encourages adaptability, and at the same time reflects the co-existence of lateral possibilities. The rationality of linear progression does not fit with the ambiguity inherent in pluralism. Thus adaptability functions through the range of possibilities available both from the past and in the present.

Although this chapter has two main subjects: traditional healing practice and ethnic identity, the section on ethnic identity is combined with a broader discussion of ethnicity. Considering the historical circumstances of the Malay-speaking Muslims in the South of Thailand, the concept of ethnic identity needs to be framed within a discussion of the concept of ethnicity. The Comaroffs' theory presents ethnicity evolving, in a sense dialectically, through history. This macro position is employed to enable us to comprehend the relationship of ethnicity to and its development through the nation state, and, also indicates how the oscillation of ethnic identity occurs. Once this is established a closer analaysis of ethnic identity within healing practice is outlined.

Nagata's concept of ethnic identity (1974) as both plural and situational follows. Although her theory of 'oscillation' derives from research conducted in the multi-ethnic community of Georgetown, Penang, its relevance has broader implications for the understanding of identity as a whole. Thus, Hall's more recent discussion of cultural identity (1996) is included, and this affirms and extends key notions introduced in Nagata's work. In this study the practice of the healers is presented collectively within the Pattani region, thus the concept of ethnic identity has a broader cultural tangent.

The first section of the conceptual framework presents Landy's notion of the adaptive role of traditional healers (1977). Although his study considers the impact of 'Western'

medicine, it also accommodates broader socio-cultural change, of which the introduction of biomedicine is indicative. Additionally, for healers in the Pattani region change has extended not only to accommodate the diaspora of subject to citizen, but also to include the effects of reform within Islam.

ADAPTABILITY AND TRADITIONAL HEALING PRACTICE

Landy's (1977) approach addresses the notion of the adaptability of the traditional healer's role with reference to the influence of both the 'competition' of biomedical systems and within the broader sphere of socio-cultural change. He observes a degree of 'elasticity' in the practice of the healers within their own communities. He thus works from the suppositions that healers, whose position is relatively secure during times of stability prior to socio-cultural change, still need to frequently reinforce their social position. They do this because they have to rationalize and explain curing incidents that were not successful, without compromising their status and authority. Prestige in the healing role enhances any other role that the healer may occupy, and vice versa. Status thus becomes interlinked in the individual through the different roles occupied. At the same time the healer's status is also interlinked externally through 'competition' with other healers. However, a tacit understanding exists within the broader community, expectations being thus shared and understood. Based on this sense of 'negotiating', adaptability can be observed as a fundamental means of functioning for the healer.

Landy promotes this inherent adaptability, but seeks to go further by analysing the role change of the healer when faced with the effect of other socio-cultural influences, ie from outside the group. His purpose in focusing on the healer is described when he states, "For most societies it is certainly a key role since the healer is dealing with matters of life and death, and what happens to the curer may be an important barometer of what is going on in the total process of socio-cultural change" (1977: 468).

Adaptability necessitates role change. As Landy notes, role change had previously been approached from a variety of perspectives including the structural/functional perspective of role performance, a processual perspective such as an examination of rites of passage as well as from the context of status changes, such as the role of women in society. Although typically analysed in terms of conflict and strain, role change in this instance, according to Landy, needs to be studied against a frame of competing values and the economic potency of new cultural input. In situations of rapid culture change, alternative behaviour possibilities, expectations, rewards and obligations will originate both within and without the indigenous social system, and thus Landy defines role adaptation, "as the process of attaining an operational socio-psychological steady-state by the occupant of

a status or status set through sequences of 'role bargains' or transactions among alternative role behaviours" (1977: 469).

Although actual or potential conflict may arise, the opportunity to adapt is also evident and can act to strengthen the healer's role. It is from this perspective that Landy opts to apply and adapt Goode's model of role strain, more associated with ideas of cultural broker and role ambiguity. "All individuals in any socio-cultural system are confronted with 'overdemanding' total role obligations (Goode 1960: 485 passim) but must manage to equilibrate role relationships and role sets through continual bargaining and consensuses with other actors in the system, and consequently reduce role strain" (1977: 469)

From this frame and using Goode's theory, Landy creates a typology of the healer's role as adaptive, attenuated, or emergent. Role adaptation is apparent in instances where "elements of ideology and behaviour patterns of the impinging culture are adopted to enhance therapeutic efficiency, and even strengthen the curer's status in his own society." (1977: 469). Attenuated roles occur where, "the curer's status may be so hopelessly compromised that role adaptation is impossible of fulfillment and the status of curer becomes marginal and headed for extinction" (1977:479). Landy acknowledges that anthropologists do not have much or useful data on those particular circumstances, ie the process of attenuation has not been clearly understood. Landy considers emergent roles occur in some socio-cultural systems where no specific healing tradition previously existed. The impact of biomedicine can give rise to the emergence of new practitioners, "A new synthesis both of socio-cultural system and of curing role begins to appear, with Western medicine fertilizing, rather than starving, the emergent practitioner's role" (1977: 475). This thesis purports that it is through the adaptive role that the healer sustains ethnic identity.

To most usefully apply Landy's theory to the Malay-speaking healers in the South of Thailand two points need to be highlighted and discussed. The first point is the idea that communities were 'stagnant', experiencing little or no change prior to the impact of 'modernising' socio-cultural influences, encompassing the introduction and application of biomedicine. This thesis presents the healer's role within a more historically dynamic environment. The Malay peninsular has experienced continuous change and development, and acculturated the effects of a multitude of external influences over the centuries, and this is described in Chapter 3. Change is constant. It is the rate of change that varies. The second point derives from the first and is the handling of ethnic identity. The understanding of the concept develops from the model of ethnicity and again presents a more plural and dynamic idea.

Thus, the need here is to move away from Landy's suggestion of a 'before and after' with regard to role change and adaptability, and is instead to shift the paradigm more to one expressing a continuum of change and adaptability. The essence of this thesis is to demonstrate continuity through change; the framework presented in this chapter acts to support this.

1. THE ATTENUATED HEALING ROLE

Landy indicates three situations that could lead to the attenuation of the healer's role. The first of these occurs when healers make no change to their practice, and there follows a decline in the number of clients. As more powerful competitors gain in popularity, the healer's role diminishes. Secondly, rapidly changing attitudes through exposure within the community to new beliefs and values can dissipate the healer's role, especially if within that change the healer is subject to uncertainty and decreasing support. Finally, attenuation can also occur when there is no one to take over the role and/or in circumstances where sanctioning agents within the community die out and the contemporary replacement sees no use or function in the role.

The healer may react to these circumstances by denigrating more powerful competitors such as biomedical practices or governmental agencies. In order to 'survive' the healer may attempt to adopt a substitute status. However, if the curer is unwilling or unable to adapt, he or she will in all likelihood become marginalized.

2. THE EMERGENT HEALING ROLE

Landy describes one emergent role which arose as a result of the introduction of biomedical practices in a community with no prior history of healers, ailments having previously been treated by family members. The emergent part-time local practitioners followed Western-oriented practices to create counter-magic for sorcery from sources outside the community. Landy details another emergent role occurring when an individual discovered a new treatment or method that was able to compete effectively in the community and at the same time had resonance for the members of that community, thus slotting into the existing social structure and value system. He therefore suggests that for the emergent role to be maintained and not become attenuated, it has to "fit" into the community. The values and practices most easily transferred in the emergence of a new healing role will be those that are most consonant with the ideology and behavioural standards of the host culture. Landy also suggests that perhaps those roles that bear least similarity to the Western medical role stand the greatest chance of survival.

3. THE ADAPTIVE HEALING ROLE

A description of the features of the adaptive healing role follows. Landy's data was compiled from a wide variety of sources and the key points are summarised below.

a   Division of Role Responsibility

In this situation, an implied division of role responsibility occurs between the healer and the biomedical practitioner, with the healer having the dominant role in the community. He or she will decide who can best deal with the patient's problem. If appropriate, the healer will recommend the patient consult the physician. This would not necessarily occur in reverse; however, the patient would visit the healer following a visit to a physician if the doctor had been unable to 'find' and thus treat the patient's ailment.

Landy notes that the separation of role responsibility is not based on a neat division between specific types of illnesses, ie chronic, but non-incapacitating, or critical and incapacitating. In fact, he warns against drawing any simplistic divisions among the complexity inherent in the diagnosis and treatment of ailments.

b   Resynthesising

Landy discusses the use of biomedical equipment by traditional healers and points this out as an indicator of adaptability. He cites Gould's observation that curers, " . . . even adopt the paraphernalia of modern medicine in order to intensify the psychological impact on their patients . . ." (Gould 1965: 207-208). Landy calls this "resynthesising", and suggests that it is not something particularly new, adding that in some complex preindustrial societies, technological development, although resting on empiricist and spiritual beliefs, was of major importance. ". . . the traditional healer is seen not merely as passive receptor of modern science and technology, but as incorporating technocultural agent and as creator of new technocultural syntheses. The curing role is not only changed, but resynthesized" (1977: 471). In his role adaptations to culture change the traditional healer not only incorporates but also elaborates biomedical elements.

c   Partial assimilation

Adaptation is apparent when partial assimilation is present, ie although differences are accentuated among theories that are irreconcilable; there is an overall feeling that the different systems are complementary rather then fundamentally contradictory.

d   Accommodating Counsel.

Landy considers that the change in emphasis in the counsel given by, in particular, spirit healers is illustrative of an adaptive quality. Healers who had formerly counseled the curbing of excessive physical desires changed the emphasis of their advice to the control of material desires in line with the increase in material comfort experienced when the community became more affluent.

However, this adaptive quality of the healer, evident in the counsel of curbing material appetites, can also be seen in the opposite function, that of mollifying desires. Landy also mentions how impoverished individuals with very limited opportunities for advancement were able to receive some social recognition through the sick role, ie the attention they received accommodated an understanding of their limitations. The healer's function in this case thus demonstrates appeasement.

e   Cultural Conservative

Landy considers fundamentally that the adaptive healer is culturally conservative. It is his or her function to conserve the 'old' ways, and select only those changes that will preserve his or her role without excessively disturbing the status quo, ie managing change, but from an essentially conservative position.

In this manner, by attempting to consolidate the dynamic of culture, the healer is able to strengthen the aspects that may have been dissipated under external pressures, ie forces from outside the community. Thus the healer has the potential for both maintaining and representing the identity of the community. However, this is not an altruistic position, for the more closely the indigenous culture begins to approximate the external influences, the more vulnerable the healer's role becomes. Thus cultural preservation is also self-preservation. As Landy states, "It is from the culture of his membership group that he draws his sanction as healer, and from the maintenance of its values and practices that he retains the legitimation of his role" (Landy 1977:478).

f   Ambiguity and Adaptability.

In the rationale for self-preservation, the practitioner needs to be adaptable. Although promoting cultural conservatism, the healer cannot maintain a static position. "Depending upon the pace of culture change, the curer may have to undergo continual adaptation, not only socially in seeking constant realignment of interpersonal relationships, but psychologically in assimilating or redirecting the ever-increasing flow of new ideas,

values, and technology, in learning rewarding paths in the changing external maze"
(1977: 478).

This lends itself to a capacity to think laterally, ie to accommodate and accept ideas that
contrast and conflict, and thus an ability to compartmentalize. It is in the creation of what
is essentially ambiguity that adaptability is found. As Landy points out, this ambiguity and
adaptability is also situational; the healer may be viewed as an innovator, for example, in
one instance and as cultural conservative in another – depending on the time, the place
and the interaction.

4.   THE FOUR ASPECTS

The ethnography of healing practice in Chapter IV demonstrates how the cultural
conservatism of the healer manifests through a blending and interweaving of different
aspects of practice to reveal the ambiguity and adaptability inherent in practice. The
oscillation of healing practice acts to support ethnic identity.

In order to present this information as clearly as possible, four major aspects of healing
practice are employed. These aspects emerged as data was collected and illustrate the
flexibility within practice. This ethnographical chapter thus uses the terms Ancestral
Voices, Ancient Knowledge, Religious Guidance and Modern Means, to highlight the
body of practice. These aspects function as a guide to illustrate the ambiguity within the
form and content of practice.

They are not original in form, having been adapted from a succession of concepts and
approaches in the same field. This follows from Hall's deconstructive approach which

> " . . . puts key concepts 'under erasure'. This indicates that they
> are no longer serviceable – 'good to think with' – in their originary
> and unreconstructed form. But since they have not been
> superseded dialectically, and there are no other, entirely different
> concepts with which to replace them, there is nothing to do but to
> continue to think with them – albeit now in their detotalized or
> deconstructed forms, and no longer operating within the
> paradigm in which they were originally generated" (Hall, 1996).

The documentation and analysis of healing practice through recent history has
experienced the same ethnocentric bias as much of earlier anthropological study.
Following from Hall's statement above, although much material has been discarded,
much of value has also been retained. "Each of the earlier historical moments is still
operating in the present, either as legacy or as a set of practices that researchers still
follow or argue against" (Densin & Lincoln, 1994 cited in Anderson, 1996:45). Anderson
states, "(T)he history of anthropological theory documents many examples of the survival

of older concepts and concerns that remained integral to, or at least supplemental to, whatever "new approaches" replaced "older ones". (Anderson, 1996: 73). He cites Rappaport, who states, "We are ever moving on to new approaches without having assimilated the lessons of older ones . . . we are inclined to dismiss rather than modify or correct," (Rappaport, 1984 in Anderson, 1996: 45) and adds, "New paradigms, it would appear are not as incompatible with the old . . ."(1996: 73).

Frazer's 'The Golden Bough' (Anderson 1996: 47) outlines a Comtean hypothesis of three ages: Magic, Religion and Science to describe a proto-scientific evolutionary theory of man. W. H. Rivers' text 'Medicine, Magic and Religion' published in 1924 after his death, follows a not dissimilar time sequence of three stages of evolutionary growth termed 'Magic', 'Religion' and 'Naturalism'. Although both theories have now been abandoned, the concepts of magic, religion, naturalism and science can still be useful to explore the content of healing practice. However, terms such as 'magic' and 'the supernatural' first need to be checked for their ethnocentric bias.

The term magic can be differentiated from religion in that the magician, shaman or healer is considered able to, in a sense, manipulate and control the ethereal power or forces. Religion, in contrast, represents a higher power or deity which directs and controls nature and human life. Entreaty and supplication can be made, but this higher power can never be manipulated by human forces.

As an analytical concept, the term 'supernatural' reflects a scientific and ethnocentric bias. The use of an appeal to religious or magical forces can be considered a treatment option as much as the use of herbs. These forces are believed to have great power and are thus treated with respect, but their existence is considered wholly natural, or normal, by those who accommodate and believe in them. Thus the notion of the 'supernatural' does not exist in this context. The ethnography shows, however, that with the growth of the Islamic reform movement, there is a self-awareness, an increasing shift in consciousness apparent in the discernment of these forces and this results in a denial or dissociation from the previous way of thinking.

Foster and Anderson (1978) addressed the issue of cultural relativism and the need to avoid using terms that evaluate healing practice from an ethnocentric (and biomedical) perspective. They created the terms 'personalistic' and 'naturalistic' to be used for disease etiologies, specifically for causality concepts.

'Personalistic' refers to a system where the causal agent is "sensate" (1978: 53), ie a deity or god; or a non human being, such as a ghost, ancestor or evil spirit; or another human being. The sick person can thus be considered a victim of the sensate.

'Naturalistic' refers to a system where illness results from natural forces or conditions, such as heat and cold. This system accommodates the paradigms of the humors, of yin and yang, for example, and thus refers to a model of equilibrium. The healer's focus is to regain the internal 'balance' of the individual.

However, Foster and Anderson also state that the terms "can also conveniently be used to speak of entire medical systems (ie not only causality, but all of the associated behaviour that stem from these views)."(1978: 53).

As with different forms of magic, personalistic and naturalistic systems are not and should not be considered mutually exclusive. Although this ethnography focuses on interpreting aspects of the system of healing practice, it does not promote the isolation of those strands.

Golomb pursued this integrated, syncretic approach in his research, and considered that "the possibility of multiple etiologies for a single illness encourages representatives of very different specialists, like herbal medicine, folk psychotherapy, and animistic curing, to treat afflictions seemingly outside their traditional therapeutic jurisdictions." (1988: 761). Thus, to observe and comprehend the healing practices of these traditional curers, it is important to move away from the contemporary paradigm that creates sharply defined roles in biomedicine and other spheres. The *bomoh* offers a diffuse and broad range of practices some of which stretch beyond the treatment of ailments; we need to be aware, however, that the shadow of biomedical practice leads and encourages us to expect healers to have bounded, defined roles.

In the same way, the term 'traditional' must also be clarified in the context of the ethnography of the healers and their practice. It is used to differentiate from biomedicine, ie the practice of contemporary, scientific medicine and the medical culture associated with it. 'Traditional' is not used to suggest that local healing practice exhibits a fixed set of (older) values and qualities or possesses little in the way of adaptive, experimental qualities – quite the opposite, in fact. Neither is the term 'traditional' used as a value judgment, ie the ethnography does not promote positive aspects of traditional practice (the interaction and involvement of the community, for example) against negative

aspects of biomedicine (such as the detached, impersonal stance of health professionals). These issues were raised in Golomb's work and were relevant at that time to his argument regarding ethnicity and curing practice (1985).

Postmodern discourse recognises that biomedicine is also a form of ethnomedicine. Biomedicine is not an all-knowing, universal system although it occupies that powerful position in the minds of most individuals. Even though it is informed and authoritative, it should neither be regarded as fixed or infallible. Lock's creation of the term 'local biologies' arising out of her research on the perception and treatment of menopause makes this point very clearly:

> "Empirical evidence suggests that biomedical knowledge and practice shows significant variation in different geographical locations, and, moreover, different emphases and competing arguments among subdisciplines of biomedicine are well recognized. One way to account for these differences is to argue that biomedicine is shaped by values; that medicine is not the epistemologically free enterprise that it claims to be" (Lock 2001: 487)

Where Lock's statement considers the space dimension within biomedicine, the Peltos (1997) add to the time dimension. They argue that health professionals not only have cultural belief systems about causes of and treatments for sickness, but also that these beliefs systems are constantly revised with the addition of new information.

The issue of changing values and knowledge within biomedicine further raises issues regarding the use of etic categories. Although traditionally considered detached and objective in order to enable cross-cultural comparison, this might not strictly be the case. If biomedicine is a form of ethnomedicine, then etic categories potentially become emic.

Within the dichotomy of biomedical modern systems and traditional healing practice, we also need to be aware of the use of the terms 'belief' and 'knowledge'. Yoder cites Needham as stating the word 'belief' should be abandoned because the possibility of misunderstanding is great (Needham 1972 in Yoder 1997: 137). His point is to emphasise that the word has been widely misused. The term 'knowledge' has a positive tendency and implies the assumption that information is 'scientific fact'. The term 'belief', is perceived as less substantial, and can imply traditional ideas, folk models, or (in contrast to knowledge) an inappropriate, ill-informed understanding. Within the relationship between the two words there is the commonly held view of 'progress', ie the idea of developing and replacing people's beliefs with scientific knowledge, which echoes the evolutionary

models of Frazer and Rivers touched on earlier. Good (1996) critiques the use of these terms, 'belief' in particular, in great depth in Chapter 1 of 'Medicine, Rationality and Experience'(1996). Among many other thought-provoking points, he argues that we rightly need to examine the historical context in which these terms have been used, and thus the assumptions made at that time. The Peltos (1997) also astutely add a discussion of the word 'attitude' to the debate. They persuasively argue that attitude is closely related to belief. It can be seen in some aspects as derivative of belief or knowledge, ie questions about attitude often reveal beliefs. They add that attitudes are usually considered to represent the motivational results of people's belief and knowledge. Following the Peltos, this thesis considers belief and knowledge as equivalent concepts and reference to attitudes appears in the same context.

The author has created the following four aspects based on and arising from this historical presentation and discussion of terms and parameters. In the manner of adaptive practice, these terms have an established 'history', but are validated and 'updated' within a contemporary paradigmatic shift. For example, the terms – or aspects - are not presented as arising within and developing along an evolutionary scale of positivist value judgments, but are used to illustrate a co-existence and interweaving apparent within the plural and adaptive nature of healing practice:

Ancestral Voices (AV) – This aspect accommodates the intangible, ie the realm of invisible forces, the influence and direction garnered from ancestral spirits. It also absorbs reference to the Malay concepts of spirits and demons, which are thus considered as separate from the *jiin* and the angels of the Quran. Thus this aspect (the term category is inadequate) also absorbs the prior concepts of magic and the supernatural, and accommodates facets of the less pejorative term of personalistic (Foster & Anderson 1978).

Ancient Knowledge (AK) – This aspect represents the more practical aspect of healing practice and technique where diagnosis, causal analysis and or treatments connects ailments to physical properties. It thus accommodates theories of humoral imbalance, and concepts of diet and food taboo within the healing process, and includes the use of betel in healing practice. It absorbs Foster's term 'naturalistic'.

Religious Guidance (RG) – This strand illustrates the influence of Islam within in healing practice, ie in framing belief, or in the use of the Qur'an. It accommodates elements of the term personalistic. (Foster & Anderson 1978)

Modern Means (MM) – This strand represents acknowledging biomedical practice and accommodating contemporary technology - biomedical or otherwise. This is manifest in either the use of a localized interpretation of biomedical practice or the inclusion of contemporary medical treatment and facilities within the pluralistic sphere of patient treatment (as an external option).

These aspects act as a guide through the data of the ethnography of healing practice. They are not separate, isolated categories, nor do they reflect the total content of role and practice. Their purpose is to enable the reader to acknowledge adaptability and ambiguity and observe how the dynamic of healing practice sustains ethnic identity.

The ambiguity inherent in the practice of the adaptive healer in a sense reflects the ambiguity within the treatment of ailments, whether that treatment is in a biomedical or any other type of treatment setting. The role is "fraught with ambiguity precisely because the healer in any society deals with 'real' uncertainty in scientific and clinical knowledge, with the uses to which uncertainty is put by the healer and his patient, and by the fact that such uncertainty derives from the basic ambiguities inherent in all serious phenomena that threatens life, such as disease and illness" (Landy 1977: 480).

Landy considers that the traditional healer who is able to adapt may have as much, and at times more power and responsibility than his 'counterpart' in biomedical practice, ". . . serious diseases may still be essentially unpredictable and uncontrollable, and in this basic uncertainty lies the probability of successful role adaptation. For he should come to know that uncertainty is often no less for his scientific competitors than for himself" (Landy 1977: 480).

This thesis considers the adaptive healer's practice to be a potent indicator of change. As Landy states, "The curer's role is endowed with power precisely because it stands at the interstices of religion, magic, and the social system" (Landy 1977:480).

This study continues with an overview of ethnicity and then a discussion of ethnic identity (this discussion of Nagata's work from 1974 is supported by Hall's more recent analysis from 1996 of cultural identity). The question of how traditional healing practice can be a vehicle for ethnic identity, and thus can be observed to sustain ethnic identity is presented within the paradigm of Nagata's notion of the 'oscillation' of ethnic identity.

ETHNICITY

APPROACHING ETHNICITY

Dentan asks whether it is useful and relevant to apply the concept of ethnicity to studies set in Southeast Asia. His question arises from his belief that the concept has been "historically conditioned . . . by specifically Euro-American racism and nationalism" (Dentan1976: 71). The problem rests in the fact that the concept of ethnicity, from this Euro-American perspective, has been presented as a "static, monolithic notion" (Dentan 1976: 73). Furthermore the "utterly arbitrary criteria derived from fossilized cultural racism" (Dentan 1976: 74) does not illustrate the issue of ethnicity within Southeast Asian, and too often the researcher is attempting to set the problem onto the data.

As Erikson suggests, "The question should not, therefore, be framed as 'what is ethnicity', but rather as 'how can we most fruitfully conceptualise ethnicity?'" (Erikson1993). The Comaroffs' neo-Marxist approach (1992) used in this thesis presents a dynamic and progressive backdrop to the notion of ethnic identity, and rejects the prior monolithic stance. Furthermore, it situates ethnicity within the inequality of power relations initiated, in a sense, by the impact of colonialism. Stemming from a study of post-colonial Africa, this particular approach fits most appropriately with the situation in Southern Thailand over the past century, where the dominance of Siam existed within and reflected the colonial paradigm.

One common theme of the study of this subject has been the instrumentalist/primordial dichotomy. Before presenting the Comaroffs' five-point approach, a brief explanation is required here of the term primordial along with its 'opposite' argument of instrumentalism. The primordial argument considers that ethnicity is innate, that the individual has an instinctive awareness of his or her own ethnic identity. It is a given, a part of human nature which is essentially unchanging, and unchangeable. It makes demands upon individuals, creates bonds within the community, bonds which create unity and solidarity above other potential internal divisions. Thus, ethnicity expressed through primordialism is basic, elemental, and internal with a power and determinism of its own.

If we consider the notion of primordial ethnicity to be 'of the heart' then the instrumentalist position (often referred to also as circumstantialist) is 'of the head'. This perspective considers ethnicity as socially constructed. It is situational, strategic, manipulable and able to change and be changed. Thus it can be considered a dependent variable, ie it is created and controlled by external interests and strategies. (Banks 2000; Barth 1969; Roosens 1989; Chapman et al 1989)

However, if we extend either position to its extreme the instrumentalist becomes too contingent, too relative, and the primordialist, too reductionist and inflexible (Evans 1999). Both positions though are actually an unnecessary polarization of what in fact are essentially complementary aspects of human life. Erikson goes as far as to rework these two dimensions of the ethnicity debate because he considers that the polar distinctions no longer seem to reflect the main theoretical differences (Erikson, 1993). The Comaroffs simply consider the two concepts to be both correct, yet incomplete.

ETHNICITY ARISING IN THE COLONIAL ERA

The Comaroffs' discussion of the subject is unusual in that in part their objective is to understand how ethnicity arises and develops, and from this, how it can best be understood. Their starting point at once acknowledges the ambiguities present in the term 'ethnicity' and, to a degree, concurs with Erikson's proposition (1993) that 'ethnicity is first and foremost a concept and not a natural phenomenon' which '. . . exists at two levels, that of the analyst and that of the native'. The Comaroffs, however, pre-empted Erikson in their examination of ethnicity as an analytical object and conceptual subject. Thus, their theory addresses,

> 'those processes involving the rise of ethnic consciousness . . .
> and . . . the theoretical terms by means of which ethnicity itself
> may be comprehended' (Comaroff 1992: 49).

They state five cumulative propositions that present an analytical perspective offering thought for the 'genesis, persistence and transformation of ethnicity and ethnic consciousness' (Comaroff 1992:50).

Point 1

> ' . . . ethnicity always has its genesis in specific historical forces,
> forces which are simultaneously structural and cultural' (1992: 50)

The Comaroff's consider that ethnicity comes into being from a start point in the fundamental idea of self-identification, and it is here that they introduce the notion of the primordial. However, the Comaroffs maintain that the primordial is evident only in the *marking* of difference. They refute Weber's notion of atomistic self-defining groups, considering instead that there must have been some form of cultural interaction and awareness among precapitalist societies. This is certainly the case within Southeast Asia and the Malay peninsular in particular. To the Comaroffs, the primordial is manifest in the cultural *marking* of relations between groups; it is evident in the polar defining of what is 'us' and what is 'them' not in the substance. The substance changes through time depending on the external and material conditions historically wrought, but the marking, the desire to differentiate and classify doesn't change.

To extend this notion of 'marking' further, Bergson's concept of totemism is introduced. Totemism defines relations and demonstrates position; it is a means to express differences and dissimilarities between groups by using inanimate or animate objects to signify the particular relation or 'connection'.

Ethnic consciousness follows a similar structure in signifying an awareness of difference between groups, like totemism. However, ethnic consciousness differs in substance: the Comaroffs observe that ethnicity has two commonly occurring features. The first appears within social groups seeking to (subjectively) classify the world around them. The second is found when groups are stereotypically and hierarchically labeled in the division of labour. As the Comaroffs indicate, the first point is apparent in totemism and the second is apparent in class, yet it is in the fusion of both of these that ethnicity is found.

Point 2

> ' . . . ethnicity, far from being a "thing," describes both a set of relations and a mode of consciousness; moreover its meaning and practical salience varies for different social groupings according to their positions in the social order. But, as a form of consciousness it is one among many – totemism being another – each of which is produced as particular historical structures impinge themselves on human experience and condition social action.' (1992: 54)

The experience of ethnicity for social groups is expressed and realized in different ways. Dominant social groups use ethnicity to maintain and consolidate both their economic and cultural power. Putting forward their own cultural superiority is a means by which to deny and restrict the power of other groups. It is also a way of creating distance and separation from subordinate groups. Furthermore, this distance is strengthened by labeling the subordinate group as more culturally base, degraded, or less civilized.

Subordinate groups have their sense of ethnicity initiated through the ascription of the dominant group. Yet this will bear little similarity to the actual experiential reality of the weaker group. The ethnicity of the subordinate group comes to centre on the shared expression of a common position, a commonality of symbols and meanings, and possibly a shared moral code. The group may also be consolidated by a shared critical dismissal of the 'humanity' of those who dominate. Thus to both groups substance is manifested and also absorbed through the form of a collective self and collective other.

Point 3

> ' . . . while totemism emerges with the establishment of symmetrical relations between structurally similar social groupings – groupings which may or may not come to be integrated into one political community - ethnicity has its origins in the asymmetric incorporation of structurally dissimilar groupings into a single political economy.' (1992: 54)

Totemic consciousness rather than ethnic consciousness appears where groups interact and retain control over their means of production. There may be short-term hostilities and warfare, but as long as one group is not subordinate to the other in the long term, totemic consciousness is sustained.

Ethnic groups and ethnic consciousness arises as the inequalities between groups become more formally structured and consolidated through time. When one group dominates it will seek to contain the other through control of the means of production and the division of labour. It creates dependency in the subordinate group by denying its independent 'integrity'. Ethnic groups are thus born out of the opposition; that is, out of the 'efforts by those in control of the surrounding state apparatus to incorporate or assimilate" minority populations (1992: 67).

The dominant group is not only constituting and shaping itself but also strategically manipulating the subordinate population in which previously no cohesive group *per se* may have existed. As this becomes internalized within the subordinate group, an attributed identity is created; this identity may in fact be far removed from the subjective experience of it. The differentiation from the collective 'other' may bear little connection to what is actually experienced; it is simply a necessary contrivance to acknowledge difference. This is ethnic consciousness and this is the cultural expression of inequality signifying asymmetrical relations.

Geoffrey White's and Chavivun Prachuabmoh's study, The Cognitive Organization of Ethnic Images conducted in Pattani concurs with this point, "This . . . process portrays ethnic images as dynamic cognitive constructions which are susceptible to both situational variation and social, historical change." (1963)

Point 4

> ' . . . while ethnicity is the product of specific historical processes, it tends to take on the "natural" appearance of an autonomous force, a "principle" capable of determining the course of social life.' (1992: 60)

The Comaroffs perceive ethnicity to be the manifestation of historic forces in the lived domain. However, in society, it is ethnicity which is considered to determine status rather than the forces (which remain unacknowledged and unchallenged) that have led to its creation. Although the origin of ethnic consciousness may derive from the prior structuring of inequalities in society, once manifest in the 'lived' arena, ethnicity becomes the 'prime mover'. Furthermore, within society this idea of ethnicity as a given and as a determiner is absorbed as a notion in dominant groups as much as in subordinate.

Once the notion or concept of ethnicity is labeled and thus recognized within a society, it is further transformed. In a sense, it doubles on itself as it then evolves to become an essential feature within the social order. As the notion of ethnicity becomes consolidated so it "enters a dialectical relationship with the structures that underlie it" (1992: 60). Once this occurs, its salience ironically consolidates (and in a sense condones) the system and the social order that gave rise to ethnicity in the first place. As a result of this dialectic, ethnicity is reconfigured again and is further transformed within society.

Thus to summarise in brief: ethnicity as a mode of consciousness appears or emerges in societal groups as a result of larger structures of inequality. However, within societies ethnicity is not seen as a manifestation of these forces, it is perceived in and of itself. Once identified, it is 'promoted' and thus it changes and develops a greater 'self-awareness'. In fact this change, this 'awareness' represents the interaction of the concept of ethnicity and the promotion of it in society. To the Comaroffs, this process, which is fundamentally a dialectic between the manifest notion of ethnicity and the societal forces which led to its creation, acts to consolidate the disparities of the ethnic position (and thus the inequalities in society) rather than alleviating them.

Point 5

> 'Where it becomes an objectified "principle" in the collective consciousness of a society, ethnicity may be perpetuated by factors quite different from those that caused its emergence, and may have a direct and independent impact on the context in which it arose.' (1992: 61)

Ethnicity is strongly apparent in environments where ascribed cultural differences support societal structures of inequality. It is an active factor in the ordering of the social world, and as a result, the notion of ethnic identity has a relevant and influential role in everyday life. Furthermore, its active presence sustains it and perpetuates it.

The view from <u>within</u> society is that if the cultural markers (perceived to be at the base of the inequalities in the social systems) could be removed, groups could potentially get rid of inequalities and (subordinate) individuals could have the opportunity to change their status and pursue upward mobility. From this angle, ie within society, the systems which determine inequalities appear as negotiable and navigable, and thus changeable.

However, activities aimed at reversing the 'ascribed' inequalities might actually reinforce the notion that ethnicity contributes to and reinforces social differentiation. Action carried out through groups marked by their cultural identities confirms the perception that these identities are the only conduit of collective self-definition and action. In a sense the more social practice looks to ethnicity as having the answer to resolve structures of inequality the more those inequalities could be perpetuated.

The Comaroffs posit that upward mobility and the pursuit of capitalist reward for hard work are considered both practical and ideological virtues. For an individual in the subordinate group to pursue upward mobility, it is necessary to remove or negate cultural attributes that would denote prior (inferior) social status. In this respect it is generally easier for individuals rather than groups to adopt new identities. Upward mobility initiated by individuals within the subordinate group creates stratification within the intra-ethnic arena. The Comaroffs' state that this is where we witness Cohen's "situational ethnicity" (Erikson 1993; Banks 2000), ie "the strategic management of personal identity for social and material gain" (Comaroff 1992: 62) and which, further in this chapter, Nagata (1974) also accommodates within social mobility and expediency.

However, as a local bourgeoisie emerges and reaches toward and enters the dominant class, they must make a choice: whether to 'deny' their ethnic identity (which denotes their former position) or to maintain it, but be in a contradictory position with the other members of the primary class. The paradox is apparent; the dimensions of their identities are at odds with one another thus creating role strain. Comaroff mentions the 'black white men' of Africa, (Anderson also makes a similar point with reference to nationalism in Imagined Communities, Chapter 4).

If communal action is determined by ethnic groupings then the action will reaffirm the strength of ethnicity as a social principle. In this way, the apparently 'ascribed' character of ethnic identity is maintained and perpetuated, as is the notion that ethnic groups are bounded units (where in fact they are frequently more porous and, as Nagata (1974) considers, contextual).

At the individual level, the movement into upward mobility alters the relationship between ethnicity and class because it creates internal differentiation within groups and that leads to the emergence of a bourgeois element. From this, a gap appears between class and ethnic affiliation.

This is the paradox between collective action and individual action and it is ethnic political movements that appear to seek to resolve this dissonance, ie upwardly mobile members join or lead these groups. Yet there is a certain discomfort in the dualistic features of these movements.

Although they can have an impact in leading to liberal reforms, these political movements do not in essence remove the structure of subordination. In fact, it could be said that it simply becomes hidden by the pursuit of individual achievement. By not dealing with the issue of class and ethnicity, collective inequality becomes further ingrained and thus ethnicity becomes a contributory factor toward the maturing of marked asymmetries within post-colonial capitalist society. It could be said that by creating the basis for a stratified division of labour and by supporting the possibility of upward mobility and achievement, the movement away from the ethnic underclass is condoned. In doing so it thus consolidates, but also disparages and demeans their lower position.

The Comaroff's five propositions describe a dialectical process, which presents and analyses the issues surrounding 'the signs and practices of inequality' (1992: 66) that were stimulated by the colonial 'infusion'. These structures then manifested in ethnicity which, according to the Comaroffs, further acted on and consolidated them. However, this dynamic does not come to a halt.

At the individual level, as people seek to change their status or move between groups the potential for oscillation of identity becomes apparent, and at times can create role strain. This notion of a shifting identity resonates with Nagata's study of ethnic identity, which follows below. In a sense, Erikson develops the Comaroffs' final point further. According to him, the more that the notion of ethnicity is appropriated by groups, especially those in the subordinate position, the more the 'theory' is absorbed into 'practice' in society and

the less 'useful' it becomes as a means to describe and explain the phenomena observed.

> "The situation may be one of parameter collapse (Ardener's apt term) where our concept of culture and ethnicity, formerly defining concepts par excellence, collapse into the defined space – rather than serving as conceptual footholds, they become part of the social reality which needs to be accounted for" (Erikson 1993)

Erikson considers that ethnicity could be replaced in future with new terms such as "traditionalism", "politicized culture" among others. The reflexive quality is part of an on-going process of change, transformation and development; the Comaroffs describe it as the "dialectic . . . between structure and practice that, in time, reproduces and/or transforms the character of the social order itself" (1992: 60). To the Comaroff's this change may happen from within. However, change could as easily occur through outside influence, ie through diffusion. Erikson mentions Peter Worsley (The Three Worlds: Culture and Development, 1984) who remarked that the "Tamils in Sri Lanka, before the separatist Tamil Eelam movement emerged, must have watched newsreels from the West Bank informing them about the Palestinian struggle" (Worsley, 1984 in Erikson, 1993). The point is that exposure to the global community, through increased media communications such as the Internet, must play an influential role in shaping the relations of the local community.

As stated previously, the Comaroffs' approach to the development of ethnicity was chosen because it could be used to keenly illustrate the situation in the Deep South of Thailand. In the desire to create defined boundaries between Siam and Malaysia at the turn of the 19th to the 20th century, the former kingdom of Patani, which in a sense acted as a buffer zone was split in two. Thus this decision was influenced by the nature of the colonial era: control of tributary states from the center was replaced by focus on the borders and boundaries of the newly created nation-state. The population that came under Thai rule was transformed from subjects of a kingdom to a troublesome ethnic minority, reluctant to assimilate, whereas those under Malay rule were more rapidly integrated. With reference to point 3, ethnicity arose as a result of asymmetrical relations in Thailand, whereas in Malaysia a more totemic path was followed.

This theory is used to illustrate the relationship between the Siamese and the Malay-speaking peoples of the South and the development of ethnicity. Illustrating the Comaroffs point regarding the division of labour, the continued appointment of government officials from Bangkok to positions of power in Southern contributed to a resentment that in part continues to the present. It has at times been exacerbated by of

many of those appointed being corrupt and having a greater interest in meeting the demands of their superiors in Bangkok than the needs of those in the local community. Thus the perceptions of 'other' have closely matched the attitudes described in the theory. Notwithstanding the research of White and Prachuabmoh (1983), other more contemporary writers on the South have drawn attention to an historical lack of trust between Bangkok appointed officials, and local residents which continues to the present, albeit in a slightly more muted form. (Cornish 1997; Ruohomaki 1999; Vandergeest 1993). Thongchai Winichakul's concept of "Thai-ness" (1994: 5) further discussed in Chapter III clearly mirrors notions of difference as described in point 2.

The separatist movement of the 1980's arose out of the inequalities and asymmetrical power relations between the Centre and the South. However, it has been the issue of religious practice that has come to be the strongest expression of it. Islam offers precise guidelines for a total integrated way of life that cannot be compromised or compartmentalized. Buddhism is the dominant religion in Thailand and is integrally woven into the nature of Thai identity. The issue of reform within Islam has further added to the identity of the Malay-speaking Thai Muslims in Southern Thailand.

The Comaroffs discussion of social mobility is demonstrated in Chapter III through the description of Malay-speaking Thai Muslim citizens who seek employment in Malaysia, and Malay- speaking Thai Muslim citizens within academia who seek career advancement. It is this point that also most clearly demonstrates the notion of an oscillating, situational, plural identity, as presented by Nagata.

Whereas the focus of the Comaroffs' theory was the evolution of ethnicity through unequal power relations, Nagata's approach offers a greater close up of the negotiation of ethnic identity.

The static, bounded notions of ethnic identity often apparent within Euro-American thought, according to Dentan (1976), do not fit with the experience of Southeast Asia. He suggests that in the region people often manœuvre their identity, that it is flexible. This occurs because multiculturation in the area "provides many people with a series of identities which they can don and doff as particular interactions dictate" " . . . In some parts of Southeast Asia, 'ethnicity' is thus sometimes a matter of manners and masks appropriate to particular times and places . . ." (Dentan 1976: 77).

Nagata's (1974) concept of the oscillation of ethnic identity is referred to for this reason, and Hall's (1996) more recent examination of identity is employed as it extends and

develops issues raised by both Dentan and Nagata. The idea that identity is plural, fragmentary and relational has been perceived as an issue of our postmodern existence. However, that viewpoint is framed in the linear, rational perspective of Western thought or, as Dentan might say, an historically conditioned Euro-American monolithic form. Berger notes that,

> "All over the region, different worldviews, religious traditions and even schools of moral thought have existed side by side quite amicably, and individuals have often utilized different traditions, simultaneously or at different stages of life, in a manner that seems illogical or irreverent to a Western observer." (Berger 1999)

Thus, furthermore, this flexibility occurs not just situationally, but also through time. Dentan notes an accelerated rate of change can create such rapid shifts in identity that the effects can be felt in the distance and discordance between one generation and another.

NAGATA'S 'OSCILLATING' ETHNIC IDENTITY

Nagata's study (1974) demonstrates the flexibility and plural nature of ethnic identity. In the introduction to her research she focuses on the many assumptions that have been made regarding ethnicity and ethnic identity. She observes that until Barth (1969) little attention had been paid to the criteria for defining ethnicity, and she further highlights the lack of attention given to the dynamic aspects of changes in ethnic identity.

She indicates that a common assumption made regarding ethnicity is that ethnic boundaries are considered to be "fairly rigidly structured in the sense that membership is usually unambiguous, an 'all or nothing' matter" (1974: 332). Her theory demonstrates the rigidity and inadequacy of this approach.

She draws attention to the one-dimensional view of assimilationist models which suggest over-simplistic categories of ethnic and non-ethnic. She somewhat ironically observes that within this model the notion of individuals 'moving' into the dominant culture is described "less as a changing of status than as a shedding of ethnicity" (Nagata 1974: 332).

In her view, it is wrong to assume that ethnic boundaries are rigidly constructed and that membership is all or nothing. It is also incorrect and misguided to consider that partial assimilation, ambiguity, or a lack of clarity regarding ethnic status is abnormal, undesirable or leads to neurosis.

She notes that the criteria used by anthropologists to define ethnic ties have included cultural traits, areas of social interaction and the sense of identity. Thus the conditions for

defining ethnic ties can take many forms and observes that "depending on the criteria selected for definition, different groups and boundaries will become salient" (1974: 333) and thus different clusterings and frequencies of ethnic groups will occur "according to whether the diagnostic features are taken to be language of habitual use, place of birth, origin of one or the other parent, religion and so forth" (1974: 333).

Furthermore, the assumption that specific cultural features have immutability for particular ethnic groups is also misleading. Nagata observes that "the same cultural features can be used contextually, sometimes to express differences, or to express commonality" (1974: 333). She suggests that ethnic groups are in fact, "special kinds of reference groups, the invocation of which may vary according to particular factors of the broader social situation, rather than a fixed anchorage to which the individual is unambiguously bound" (1974: 333)

She proposes that "some individuals may therefore oscillate rather freely from one ethnic reference group to another, without, however, becoming involved in role conflict or marginality, and that this may prove to be adaptive at both the social and personal levels" (1974: 333).

Her research confirms her propositions. Intensive participant-observation was used to gather data, as direct questioning "can never elicit the complexity of the oscillation of an individual in social interaction, nor the spontaneity of his reactions in ethnic terms. Once asked to reflect consciously and rationally on ethnic affiliation, the dynamic aspect is lost" (1974: 339). The oscillation of ethnic identity is observed in social situations where the individual wishes to either identify with one particular group or temporarily reorient his or herself with a different group by showing a degree of affinity. This oscillation can also work in reverse where the individual, although having some connection to a particular group, may emphasise a different aspect of ethnic identity in order to dissociate from it. Criticism of another member of the same reference group can be condoned through reference to another aspect of the individual's ethnic identity. Positive attitudes are more likely to be used and to be confirmed through a common or shared identity.

Oscillation further manifests in situations of both expediency and social mobility. In the former, it is in the interest of the individual to make a connection to a shared ethnicity. In the latter, it may be necessary for the individual to distance his or herself from another in order to achieve a higher status. The individual may employ what Nagata calls "ethnic fictions" whereby the person of lower occupational status is 'labelled' as possessing a different ethnic status which may not in fact be the case.

The process of oscillation is not "a source or consequence of personal stress for the individuals involved, but it may indeed be a form of positive adaptation to a fluid situation through the use of ethnic roles to the best possible personal advantage" (Nagata 1974: 346)

Nagata's study observes and records the oscillation of ethnic identity. This ability to shift and emphasise different aspects of identity thus presupposes a core of features within identity that can, in a subconscious sense, be selected and employed depending on the circumstance, (and it is suggested here that these core features could act as the 'tools' for the Comaroffs' primordial 'marking' of difference).

However, as much as ethnic identity can be situationally flexible, so too it must thus follow that these core features are also fluid, dynamic and changing. As we observe in Chapter III, Chavivun (1989) locates ethnic identity within the context of culture and considers its core features to include religion and language. However, as she acknowledges in her research, at the time of her study the changes within Islam had led to the creation and labeling of different groups within the religion – those retaining the old ways were termed the 'old generation', and those promoting reform were called the 'new generation'. However, individuals in both groups of course considered their ethnic identity as Malay. Another example of change which is also more fully discussed in Chapter III refers to the use and form of the Malay language. The language, considered a core feature of Malay ethnic identity is not growing or developing and is in fact acquiring more words from Thai.

Thus, the point of this section is to consolidate Nagata's situational approach to ethnic identity by adding that the oscillation she identifies must derive from a basis of core aspects (which in the case of the Malay Muslims in the South of Thailand can be identified as religion, language and culture), and, furthermore, that these aspects too develop and change.

Thus with regard to the ethnographic data, a link can be drawn between the plural aspects that feed the oscillation of ethnic identity and the plural aspects that are apparent within healing practice.

HALL'S 'SUTURING' CULTURAL IDENTITY

Nagata's (1974) research notes that few people are aware of the switching and shifting they perform in their assertion of ethnic identity; there is little or no conscious choice at work. The oscillation evident in the discussion of ethnic identity thus extends and can be

applied to identity per se. The plurality of form within ethnic identity necessitates a denial of the notion of identity as unified and integrated. It is this deconstruction of identity which has lead to much debate in recent years.

According to Hall (1996), the deconstruction of the concept of identity places it between the old and the new, ie where elements of the former approach, although reworked, are employed in order to move the debate forward.

As we have seen with Nagata's research, the question of identity emerges in the relationship between subjects and discourse. It is this process which Hall (1996) calls 'identification'. Although a process, identification does also refer to more fixed conditions such as the material and symbolic resources that maintain it.

Identification is commonly held to mean the recognition of some common origin and shared characteristics with another person, group or ideal. However, as Hall points out, in the end, identification exists through contingency. Thus, although it can be 'attached' to conditions, there is no total merging or blending absorption. As a process of articulation, Hall calls identification 'a suturing', ie it represents a connection at a particular point in time.

The process of identification marks and ties symbolic boundaries, and by doing so consolidates what remains outside from what is retained inside. This fluidity and plurality lends Hall to agree with Freud in considering identification as ambivalent. Furthermore, identifications with different ideals are not necessarily smooth and harmonious. Diverse and conflicting demands may co-exist, and thus can potentially lead to role strain. Hall's concept of identity is a strategic and positional one, and does not then signal an essentialist or stable, unchangeable core. Thus, there is no true or collective self which unites a people with a shared history or ancestry. There is no center that creates a primordial 'belongingness'.

According to Hall, "identities are never unified, and in late modem times increasingly fragmented and fractured; never singular but multiply constructed across different, often intersecting and antagonistic, discourses, practices and positions" (Hall 1996: 4).

Identities are constantly in a state of change and transformation, and require the resources of history, language and culture "in the process of **becoming** rather than **being** . . . Identity relates to the invention of tradition as much as to tradition itself . . ." which Hall terms (quoting from Gilroy 1994) "'the changing same': not the so-called return to roots

but-a-coming-to-terms-with our 'routes'" (Hall 1996: 4). Identities derive from the narrativization of the self which although 'fictional' does not detract from its effectiveness in discourse. Identity arises from the dynamic of subject and discourse at the point of suture, the meeting point.

CONCLUSION

The presentation of Hall's concept turns a full circle back to the discussion of the composition of the role and practice of adaptive healers. The purpose of this chapter has been to present a coherent structure that can be employed to enable the dynamic of traditional healing practice to be seen to sustain the phenomenon of ethnic identity.