Building a Nationalist-Religious Border Society in Tanjungpinang, Riau Islands

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Abstract. The wave of transnational religious movements has penetrated Tanjungpinang, Riau Islands, and threatened the nationalism of the people. It is worst by the lack of attention from the central government in developing border areas, which has become a problem for the nation's integrity and the pride of cultural religion in Tanjungpinang. Likewise, the national political condition after the 2019 presidential election has divided society which resulted in the strengthening of the stigma of 'nationalists are not religious, but religious are not nationalists. Therefore, it is important to build a nationalist-religious border society in Tanjungpinang. The people of Tanjungpinang must be a people who are proud of their nation-state and obedient to their religion. This literature study-based article explores how to build a nationalist-religious border society in Tanjungpinang. Data collection was carried out by searching the literature. After the data is collected, data analysis is carried out interactively and continuously until it is deemed sufficient. This article offers two important efforts to build a religious-nationalist Tanjungpinang society. At first, the importance of massively inculcating religious inclusive values and nationalism in the world of education. Second, the synergy of community development cooperation between state structural forces and religious authorities must continue to be strengthened.

Keywords: Nationalist-religious; border society; religious moderation

1. Introduction

Tanjungpinang is the capital of the Riau Islands. Geographically, some parts of Tanjungpinang are lowlands, swamp areas, and mangroves, and some are hills, making Tanjungpinang land very contoured and varied. The population of Tanjungpinang is the majority of the Malays, who are the original inhabitants of Tanjungpinang. In addition, in Tanjungpinang, ethnic Chinese, Bugis, and Javanese have intersected for hundreds of years and became permanent residents during the sultanate of Johor Riau and Residentie Riouw. There are many ethnic Chinese on Jalan Merdeka and Pagar Batu. There are many Bugis ethnic groups in Bugis Village. While ethnic Javanese began to come to Tanjungpinang in 1960, the settlement was called Kampung Jawa. The language used in Tanjungpinang is Classical Malay which is almost the same as the language used by the people in Singapore, Johor, Selangor, Pahang, to Malacca, therefore since the previous Riau Government, the city of Tanjungpinang has become the center of Malay culture. In addition to the Malay language, the Tanjungpinang people, who are ethnic Chinese, use Tiochiu and Hokken languages.

The people of Tanjungpinang are famous for various cultures from various ethnic Malays, Javanese, Minangkabau, Bugis, and Chinese. The ethnic Malays who inhabit Batam and other

islands consist of two versions, the first version, ethnic Malay originating from the Malay Peninsula, known as ethnic Millensia, and the second version, ethnic Malay originating from the Jambi area. The people of Tanjungpinang divide the two population groups into only two ethnicities, Malay and Chinese. Usually, community groups other than Chinese, the Tanjungpinang people refer to them as ethnic Malays, such as Minang, Sundanese, Bugis, Ambonese, Javanese, Acehnese, and others. The tolerance between ethnic Malays and Chinese along the coast of Tanjungpinang is clear evidence that the people of Tanjungpinang live in harmony and peace.

This harmony did not come suddenly but with a long-standing cultural effort in the lives of the Malay and Chinese ethnic communities in Tanjungpinang [1]. The existence of ethnic Chinese who inhabit most of the Sengarang villages has occurred since the Dutch colonial era. First, the colonials imported the Chinese to be employed in the mines. Then the ethnic Chinese community established a Chinese house of worship in the Sengarang area. The oldest Chinese place of worship in Tanjungpinang has become one of the mainstay tourist attractions visited by many domestic and foreign tourists.

Ethnic Malay is the largest ethnic group inhabiting Tanjungpinang. Malay culture in Tanungpinang produces various relics from the past in the form of objects and non-objects. The collapse of the Majapahit kingdom led to the development of Islamic empires in the Malay area and Tanjungpinang. Namely the Riau Lingga Sultanate [2]. This sultanate left many cultural sites used as cultural heritage for the Riau Islands province. The presence of ethnic Malays can be found on the island of Penyengat with its historical and socio-cultural destinations. The oldest mosque in Tanjungpinang, the Grand Mosque of the Sultan of Riau, built in 1803 AD, is an Islamic cultural heritage. And in the mosque, there are also handwritten Quran relics [3].

Various cultural traditions of the Chinese community in Tanjungpinang have become cultural tourism objects, such as the Ke Bulan, Dragon, Boat, Race, and Sea Prayer traditions. The uniqueness of this Sembahyang Laut tradition is to commemorate the services of heroes from the Chinese ethnic group. The Chinese community carries out this tradition by wrapping offerings in banana leaves containing foods such as sticky rice or pop change, which are then washed into the water to feed the spirits of the ancient Chinese heroes. The Chinese community also believes that doing this can provide safety for fishermen who are at sea. This tradition was not only witnessed by the Chinese community. But the people living around the Old Court and Tiga Jua also enlivened and saw this tradition because this tradition coincides with the Dragon Boatsrace festival, which is shaped like a red dragon's head as a distinctive symbol of the Chinese ethnic group [4].

However, the currents of transnational religious movements and national political situations have shaped the face of Tanjungpinang city. The wave of global religious movements has penetrated Tanjungpinang and threatened the nationalism of the people. Compounded by the lack of attention from the central government in developing border area communities, it becomes a problem for the nation's integrity and the pride of cultural religion in Tanjungpinang. Likewise, the national political condition after the 2019 presidential election has divided society, strengthening the stigma of 'nationalists are not religious; religious are not nationalists.'

Therefore, it is very important to build a nationalist-religious border society in Tanjungpinang. The people of Tanjungpinang must be proud of their nation-state and obedient to their religion. This article offers two important efforts to build a nationalist-religious Tanjungpinang community, *first,* massively inculcating religious inclusive values and nationalism in the world of education. *Second,* the synergy of community development cooperation between state structural forces and religious authorities must continue to be strengthened.

2. Research Method

This article is the result of library research. This research was carried out systematically, from collecting, processing, and analyzing data to providing conclusions from existing data. The data in this study were sourced from various library materials such as books, journal articles, notes, documents, and other library materials relevant to the discussion. Data collection techniques were carried out by searching the literature on the debate on identity politics, transnational religious movements, and nationalist-religious concepts. After the data is collected, data analysis is carried out interactively and continuously until it is deemed sufficient. Data analysis in this study uses data analysis techniques Miles and Huberman models, where data analysis is carried out with the stages of data reduction, data display, and conclusion [5].

3. Results and Discussion

3.1 The Dynamics of Identity Politics and Society Disintegration

Identity politics in Indonesia manifests in two major forces: religious groups and nationalist groups. If identity politics is not anticipated wisely and appropriately, it will collapse the stability of the Indonesian state [6]. Identity politics in Indonesia is more related to issues of ethnicity, religion, and local interests, which are generally represented by the elites with their respective articulations. For Syafii, identity politics will not harm as long as the ideals of the nation's founders of national unity and integration align with Pancasila as the philosophical basis of the state, not the majority religion (Islam)[7].

The plurality of identities in Indonesia is threatened by identity politics which leads to the destruction of the long-maintained integrity of religious life. Identity politics in the life of the nation and state forms a large current of dominance for a group interest that extorts and eliminates opposing groups or minority groups [8]. The identity politics that dominates Indonesia today is religious identity politics which presents the exclusivism of the Muslim majority group in Indonesia. It is also exacerbated by the dynamics of Indonesian politics, which tend to use religious issues to maintain political power and cause socio-religious conflicts.

In contrast to existing studies, other studies show that the substance of the existence of religious identity politics is not the main factor that contributes to the destruction of integrity. Still, the identity of nationalism is also the trigger for disharmony in identity politics in Indonesia [9]. In fact, for Yeni, religious identity (Islam) is one of the foundations for upholding the essence of Indonesian nationalism. So identity politics in Indonesia should be responded to by providing the widest possible space and access to the public to prove that religion (Islam) and nationalism are in line and have one goal. They are not allowing the conflict between the two to widen by presenting policies and news containing propaganda.

Identity politics forms a space for the creation of community integration. Identity politics does not only jeopardize the state's position in building its vertical relationship with citizens. But it is also vulnerable and very dangerous in horizontal relations between Indonesian citizens. Therefore, efforts should be made to create an Indonesian society that is nationalist-religious, a society that is proud of its nation-state and is obedient to its religion. The strengthening of identity politics that disrupts the stability of the state shows that serious efforts are needed from

all components of the state to strengthen the nation's ideology. Relying on the form alone is ineffective, so citizens' contributions are required to maintain the nation's ideology.

Strengthening the nation's ideology requires the contribution of every citizen as part of the power born itself. Citizens can contribute to enhancing the paradigm of the importance of national unity. Citizens can also raise awareness that the state is on the verge of collapse if citizens prioritize the interests of group identity rather than national identity. Every citizen can create public space in life activities in society by promoting inclusiveness. Inclusive means that it is open to anyone regardless of the background of the various identities that exist. One factor that triggers disintegration in society is the pattern of exclusive life activities where different people or communities are considered separate from them.

Society tends to form two patterns of communal (social) ties, namely 'Intra-communal ties' and 'Inter-communal ties [10]. In an organization that builds intra-communal ties, social relations are only carried out by the same group or community [1]. They live their daily lives intensively with each other because they feel they belong to the same community. They are separated and closed off from other communities. These intra-communal ties potentially lead to communal violence when there are external shocks, tensions, or rumors between communities. At the same time, inter-communal ties are patterns of social relations consisting of various communities. They live side by side, visit, tolerate and mingle with each other. This inter-communal bond will create communal peace because they try to escape all differences despite external shocks, tensions, or rumors between communities. Each element no longer feels separate but becomes a unified whole on behalf of the Indonesian nation and state.

3.2 Transnational Religious Movements in Tanjungpinang

The emergence and development of transnational religious movements in Indonesia were accompanied by the end of the New Order regime[11]. Historically, three multinational religious groups in Indonesia were originally born and developed in the Middle East. The three groups are Hizb ut-Tahrir, Muslim Brotherhood, and Salafiyah [12]. In some literature, many scholars use the term Wahhabi to describe Salafi thought in Saudi Arabia, which is based on the reviews of Muhammad bin Abdul Wahab, known [13].

Muhammad Syaoki added that the Transnational Islamic movement includes Ahmadiyah and Tablighi Jamaat. These movements have different affiliations, ranging from spiritual, thought, and political aspects [12]. In general, transnational religious activities in Indonesia, including their political parties, have different agendas from moderate Islamic organizations such as Muhammadiyah, NU, and nationalist parties. However, in the last few years since its emergence, transnational religious movements have "successfully" changed the face of Indonesian Islam from becoming aggressive, violent, intolerant, and full of hatred. So far, Indonesian Islam is known to be gentle, tolerant, and peaceful [14].

Generally, transnational religious movements regard every other Muslim different from them as less Islamic. So they infiltrate mosques, educational institutions, government and private institutions, and moderate Islamic organizations. especially Muhammadiyah and NU, to turn it hard and rigid. They claim to fight for and defend Islam, whereas they are protecting and fighting for a narrow understanding within their ideological frame and political platform, not Islam itself. They try hard to control Muhammadiyah and NU because both are strong Islamic organizations with the most followers. In addition, these groups consider Muhammadiyah and NU as the main obstacles to achieving their political agenda because both have long fought for the substance of Islamic values, not the formalization of Islam in the form of a state or the application of sharia as positive law [13].

The transnational hardline movement and its accomplices in Indonesia have been infiltrating Muhammadiyah for a long time. At the Muhammadiyah Congress in July 2005 in Malang, agents of hardline groups, including PKS and Hizbut Tahrir Indonesia (HTI) cadres, dominated many forums and succeeded in electing several sympathizers of the hardline movement to become chairman of the Muhammadiyah Central Executive. In addition to Muhammadiyah, infiltration has also occurred systematically against NU. The reality of the strategic function of the mosque encourages hardline groups to continue to try to seize and control the mosque in every possible way. Including those that were never thought of except by the intruders themselves. KH. Mu'adz Thahir, Chair of PCNU Pati, Central Java, told about hardline groups who managed to get into NU mosques by providing free cleaning services [13].

In Tanjungpinang, waves of transnational religious movements can be traced in the post-New Order Indonesian political landscape. The emergence of the Salafi community in Tanjungpinang, who voiced the discourse of returning to the Qur'an and Sunnah by understanding the Prophet's companions in every aspect of life, is a manifestation of the spread of the transnational Islamic movement in Tanjungpinang. The strength of the Salafi religious doctrine raises the belief in a single truth. Therefore, groups that disagree with them are perceived as groups that tend to be misguided and must be invited to return to the right path [10].

The presence of transnational religious movements such as Jama'ah Tabligh in Tanjungpinang is to spread Muslim propaganda by interacting directly among people. As a way of conveying his message en masse by visiting citizens' residences to strengthen relations and reform every individual in society. The distinctive character of the Tablighi Jama'ah is to prioritize the missionary spirit, spread Islam, and work in an atmosphere of mutual love and harmony. High fighting spirit in broadcasting Islam [14]. Transnational religious movements such as Hizbut Tahrir have also emerged and developed in Tanjungpinang, which were eventually dissolved by the Ministry of Law and Human Rights of the Republic of Indonesia on 19 July 2017. Civilization; demonstrating against the plan to increase fuel prices in 2014; demonstration related to the Ahok case in 2016.

3.3 Efforts to Build a Religious-Nationalist Tanjungpinang Society

Indonesia is a nation-state that recognizes and protects the diversity of identities (ethnic and religious), which have become an integral part of the life of the nation and state. The archipelago's history, which has experienced great civilizations of Hinduism, Buddhism, and Islam, has strengthened awareness of the importance of protecting the diversity of Indonesian national identities. The historical experience of the archipelago has shaped the dynamics between religious teachings and nationalism, which has confirmed the awareness that recognizing and protecting the diverse identities of the Indonesian people is the right choice for building the life of the nation and state. The founders of the Indonesian government realized that the state fought for and defended was not a state based on and for a particular religion. But a nation-state recognized and protected all religions, various cultures, and traditions that had become an integral part of the life of the Indonesian nation [8].

Likewise, in Tanjungpinang, the currents of global religious movements and the impact of identity politics have made some Tanjungpinang people question the relationship between nationalism and spiritual teachings. In response to this situation, they strive to build a nationalist-religious Tanjungpinang community. The people of Tanjungpinang must be proud of their nation-state and be obedient to their religion. Two important efforts to build a religious-nationalist Tanjungpinang society *first* are the importance of massively inculcating religious

inclusive values and nationalism in the world of education. *Second,* the synergy of society development cooperation between state structural forces and religious authorities must continue to be strengthened.

Inculcating inclusive religious values can be done massively in religious education. Religious education is a character building that has the potential to create exclusive thoughts and attitudes in religion. Exclusivism can develop into thoughts and actions that lead to radicalism and extremism [15]. Therefore, inclusive religious education is needed as a medium of religious moderation in caring for diversity to avoid the development of radicalism and extremism in Indonesia. Inclusive religious education can be understood as part of education to build awareness of differences so that it becomes part of efforts to manage diversity and foster peace. Inclusive religious education is transforming religious education from being oriented toward strengthening the doctrines and beliefs of one's religion to strengthening character and acceptance of diversity without neglecting their respective religious beliefs. Inclusive religious education can be a medium for managing diversity because it aims to change the educational paradigm that sees oneself in its existence with others.

In addition to teaching inclusive religious values, it is also important to inculcate the importance of nationalism massively in education. Nationalism values such as the value of justice, accepting diversity and respecting differences, and upholding the rights of others by non-discriminatory behavior can be developed through inclusive education [16]. Two strategies for teaching the values of nationalism in education are creating and maintaining an educational environment that accepts diversity and respects differences, where educational facilitators are responsible for creating a full educational environment by emphasizing mutual respect for differences. Second, education is carried out cooperatively among students, where all students work together.

Two components of the Indonesian nation that must continue to strengthen the synergy of cooperation in building a nationalist-religious Tanjungpinang society are state structures and religious authorities. The state structure is the Central Government, the Riau Islands Provincial Government, and the Tanjungpinang City Government. At the same time, religious authority is an authority in various layers, both in religious institutions, state institutions in charge of religious affairs, and religious figures. Therefore, the religious authority must be seen as a sociological phenomenon. Spiritual authority is a social construction, not a theological one. Or at least, the issue of religious authority is a form of interplay between the structure of religious beliefs and social reality [17].

State structural synergies and religious authorities in building a nationalist-religious Tanjungpinang society can be through strengthening religious moderation, which consists of four indicators. Namely, 1.) tolerance, by respecting differences and giving space for others to believe, 2.) anti-violence, not justifying acts of violence under the pretext of religion to make changes, 3.) national commitment, by accepting Pancasila as the state ideology and the 1945 Constitution and the regulations under it, 4.) accommodating or adapting, friendly in taking local traditions and culture in religious behavior [18]. When these four indicators of religious moderation can be implemented in the life of the people of Tanjungpinang, the attitude of the people of Tanjungpinang will grow and develop who are proud of their nation-state and obedient to their religion.

4. Conclusion

This paper certainly does not pretend to answer all the problems of building a nationalist-religious Tanjungpinang society. This paper is more accurately positioned as a conceptual effort to construct the Tanjungpinang society that is proud of its nation-state and obedient to its religion. The two actions offered in this paper are certainly still possible to develop. However, the two efforts must be seriously fought so that the lives of the Tanjungpinang people cannot be separated from their identity as Indonesian citizens and religious people.

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