

NATION STATE AND THE LOSS OF CROSS CULTURAL COMMUNICATION IN ACEH POST CONFLICT AND TSUNAMI

Iswadi iswaditajmorawa@gmail.com University of Al-Muslim Bireuen Aceh, Indonesia

ABSTRACT

This research article is concerned with the loss of cross cultural communication as a result of the establishment of a nation state based on political principles and concepts which will also give birth to what is called a national culture where the substance is the various ethnic groups in Indonesia. The aim of this research is to build a collective awareness where the establishment of a nation state does not have to destroy the existing of its substance. This article is a qualitative descriptive research where various existing data are processed qualitatively and the results are presented descriptively. The results of the research show that the Acehnese people have always had the political desire to establish a nation state, but it seems to have failed because the existence of Indonesian national political power as a fixed price that Aceh must become an integral part of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI). In the situation and condition like this, it seems that New Aceh, namely Aceh post-conflict and tsunami, inevitably has to submit and comply with various regulations that exist nationally in Indonesia. Meanwhile, Aceh, which is also known to have various local wisdoms and various ways of life, seems to no longer be able to be used as a reinforcement of Acehnese culture itself, which will also have an impact on the loss of cross cultural communication in Indonesia, where everything must refer to national culture. Until now, Aceh is still within Indonesia's geographical and political territory, but culturally it seems that Aceh still lives in a dualism between maintaining its ethnic culture or being absorbed into the Indonesian national system as a nation state. In the situation and condition like this, it seems that cultural communication will become weak or even disappear due to the power of Indonesian national political and cultural hegemony, where it must also be realized that post-conflict and tsunami Acehnese society is a multiethnic and multi-cultural society. This means that cross cultural communication within a nation state is very important and does not only prioritize political communication which so far has tended to be seen as being between interests and profits, and even far from values that can provide learning in our lives.

Keywords: Nation state, cross cultural communication, Aceh post conflict and tsunami

1. Introduction

When Indonesia was established as a nation state, Aceh was known as a capitalcontributing area by various other communities living in various other geographical regions of Indonesia (AD Pirous, 2005). However, the people of Aceh essentially do not want to admit that they are citizens of the Indonesian nation, although it must be acknowledged that Aceh has provided political support for an Indonesian nation state whose aim is to be free from Dutch colonialism and other nations on this earth. Because this is not in accordance with the principles of humanity and justice as this is also included in the 1945 constitution of the Republic of Indonesia (*UUD 1945*). However, on the contrary, the Indonesian state has conditioned Aceh until now that Aceh is an integral part that cannot be separated from the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia (*NKRI*) both now and in the future (see: Helsinki Agreement, August 15, 2005).

If we think further about the situation and condition above, it shows that Aceh postconflict and tsunami still seems to have to be rebound by a political agreement, namely the Helsinki agreement, so that it cannot leave the territory of the Republic of Indonesia. This proves that Aceh is important, not only as a contributor of capital because of its natural wealth, but also for its political support as a strengthening of Indonesia's existence as a nation state (Abdullah, 2011). Unfortunately, Aceh's various supports for Indonesia have so far been seen as either existing or non-existent, and what is even more ironic is that Aceh has been conditioned as an area of military operations which has created a prolonged conflict situation. In the situation and condition like this, it is not surprising that people from outside Aceh will always assume that to this day they view Aceh with a security approach. In other words, whatever is related to Aceh, other people will also relate it to the security situation, and still think that Aceh is synonymous with "unsafe" or identical as a conflict area (Al Chaidar, 1998).

The situation above is of course very detrimental to the people of Aceh in general which will have an impact on the emergence of continuous negative stereotypes which will ultimately be considered as truth. This means that by conditioning Aceh as an "unsafe" region in a broad sense, this will also condition the people of Aceh and people from outside Aceh as an "inhibitor" further in social communication, economic communication, and also cultural communication. In other words, a "security approach" seems to have become a necessity in looking at Aceh and its various activities in Acehnese society in general (Alfian, 2005).

It is not surprising that the conditioning of *a "security approach"* will actually result in mutual suspicion towards local communities and people from outside Aceh. This mutual suspicion could have started from the emergence of *"negative thoughts"* which over time would also lead to the emergence of various negative stereotypes about Aceh which were not necessarily true and would actually give rise to new divisions and conflicts (Betrand, 2004). Not only that, economic investment from various foreign countries also seems difficult for security reasons. Likewise, the world of tourism also seems difficult to develop because it is seen as unsafe and uncomfortable. For this reason, it is necessary to understand here that when we look at Aceh, it is certainly not only from a political perspective, which so far has led us to forget and be complacent that Aceh has various local wisdoms which function to solve problems without problems. Likewise, the people of Aceh also have various cultural products which reflect various moral values and didactic values, which should need to be studied and reconsidered as a cross-cultural understanding (Harun, 2009).

Furthermore, we can think about that the "security approach" is essentially a political concept that is used to indicate the existence of controlled security and political stability within a nation state, even though the facts appear different. This means that whatever the political concept and its implementation through political communication within a nation state, it still seems to tend to serve interests as well as to gain material benefits. Meanwhile, cultural communication tends to inform something related to the moral values and various other didactic values which can build a collective awareness about the more substantive values of human life (Bustamam Ahmad, 2012). However, unfortunately, up to now, various collective awareness of human values, as depicted through various cultural products in Aceh after the conflict and tsunami, also seems to have been hegemonized by the power of material culture through various political conspiracies of interest and profit. For this reason, this research article is entitled: *The nation state and the loss of cross cultural communication in Aceh post conflict and tsunami*.

2.METHOD

This article is descriptive qualitative research where various existing data are collected and analyzed qualitatively, and the results are presented descriptively. Data collection techniques were carried out through literature studies such as journals, books, the internet, and various data collected through desk observation related to the title of this research. After that, data classification was carried out based on existing points related to the main problem in this research. Furthermore, the data analysis was carried out and the results of the data analysis were presented in several points descriptively. After that, conclude the overall research results from the beginning to the end of the research concisely so that the



reader can easily understand it as a contribution of thinking. The results of this research of course will be published further in both national and international journals.

3.RESEARCH RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Aceh in political and cultural dualism

As mentioned in the introduction above, when a nation state called Indonesia was established, even though Aceh had provided political support and even capital support, culturally the Acehnese people did not seem to be integrated into a national culture. This is because the Acehnese do not seem to feel like Indonesian citizens in the political concept (Hylland Eriksen, 2002). This means that the political support of the Acehnese people for the existence of the Indonesian nation state here is on humanitarian grounds to avoid colonialism by the Dutch and other colonial nations in the world and not on the basis of the same political will to establish Indonesia. Meanwhile, culturally, the people of Aceh seem to have their own cultural strength as ethnic citizens who are integrated with all their ethnicities and various ethnic cultures (Hugronje, 2019).

In other words, until now Aceh is still in a situation and condition of political and cultural dualism. On the one hand, the Acehnese people have been politically positioned as national citizens automatically when a nation state was established. On the other hand, Acehnese are belong to one of ethnic groups who have been integrated with various ethnic cultures that have existed evolutionarily for centuries. However, the integrity of Acehnese ethnic culture has been denied, its existence in the midst of a nation state and its identity as a national culture has even been replaced. In the situation and condition like this, it seems that Acehnese ethnic culture is becoming weak and even being lost by very strong political hegemony.

Acehnese people live like at a cross road with two forked roads. But it seems there is no choice as to which path to take. It is not surprising that in conditions like these the people of Aceh have chosen their own political path by trying to establish their own nation state based on Islamic law but failed due to national political forces. Furthermore, through a long process of struggle it seems that this political failure must be continued to realize the political desire to try again to establish a nation state with a different political concept, namely a nation state based on Acehannese ethnicity, but this has still not been successful (Damanik, 2010). Even though the people of Aceh are still seen as having cultural capital that can support the political power of the Acehnese nation if they succeed in establishing an Acehnese nation-state based on the Acehnese ethnic group. However, what has happened up to now is that if we take the cultural path, it is always perceived as something that is seen as contrary to Islamic law and not in accordance with national culture.

From what is explained above, it seems that Aceh is indeed in a dualism between political interests and rebuilding the identity of the Acehnese people with all their ethnicity which is inherent in the Acehnese way of life which existed long before the founding of the Indonesian nation state. This means that long before Indonesia was declared its existence on August 17, 1945, the Acehnese already existed by occupying a certain geographical area and were seen as having an established way of life as reflected through their various local wisdom (Betrand, 2004). This means that the Acehnese are not immigrants like Chinese people in Indonesia and other parts of the world. The Acehnese here are an ethnic group that already has an Islamic culture and civilization. That's why the Acehnese are one hundred percent Muslim. But why does Acehnese ethnic culture, which is based on Islamic law, seem to be slowly disappearing and even disappearing in the midst of the Indonesian nation state? It is possible that apart from this happening due to the existence of strong national political forces, it also seems that politics has become the "commander" among Acehnese society both in the past and in the post-conflict and tsunami period.

Nation state, political communication, and the loss of cultural communication

As explained above, the existence of a nation state is a political concept. Therefore, if we think further, the geographical areas of a nation state is only exist in a political concept, where the original ownership of the territory of a nation state is a certain ethnic group which existed long before the declaration of a nation state itself. Likewise, national culture also only exists and lives in political concepts. What form or product of national culture here is of course also unclear. That is why other nations from various parts of the world such as America, Australia, and also people from Europe, for example, usually always refer to one of the cultural products found in Indonesia by mentioning or adding the ethnic name of the owner (M. Ditiro, 2013). For example: *Saman Gayo dance, Ranup Lampuan dance, and seudati from Aceh, Balinese dance, Jogja Batik, Malay dance, Riau Malay language,* and so on. Furthermore, even though Malay has been made as national language, the foreigners usually just call it *"language"* or *"bahasa"* without adding the word Indonesian, and the meaning of the word *"language"* or *"bahasa"* here is substantially the *Malay language* and its legitimate cultural owners here are Malays.

In other words, respect for various cultural products owned by their legal owners as cultural heritage is important, because they contain moral values, didactic values, and also reflect various local wisdom, etc. which can create a new awareness again for all of us who appreciate the culture. But unfortunately, until now, it seems that cultural appreciation has turned into political appreciation which is seen as bringing various material benefits. The meaning here is that society in general has experienced a change in thinking paradigm which tends to be oriented towards physical materials and money rather than having to choose the profits in the form of learning values in our life (Sugihen, 2009).

That is why currently political communication is seen as more important than cultural communication which seems to have been denigrated and perceived as something that cannot make money for society in general. It is not surprising that various problems that have occurred in this country always take the path of political communication, although the results is always in conflict. Various conflict incidents not only occurred in the Aceh region, but also in various other regions such as Sumatra, Riau, Batam, and others. This means that there has been a solution to existing problems but it still brings new problems as if we have lost various cultural methods (Fiske, 2004). In fact, all of us, including Aceh, are known to have various local wisdom which functions to solve problems without problems. This is what is meant by what has been stated in the title of the article above, that so far we have lost cross cultural communication and have indeed been conditioned to the political communication.

If we think further, Aceh post-conflict and tsunami is a "new Aceh" which in essence also came into being through a process of political communication between nations which we know as the "Helsinki Agreement" on August 15 2005. However, the new Aceh post-conflict and tsunami here is not a new nation state, but it is clear in the Helsinki agreement that Aceh is still an integral part of the Indonesian nation state. Therefore, this agreement is essentially to maintain peace between the independent Aceh movement (GAM) and the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia through a political approach and security approach , which in this case has been facilitated by Finland. For Indonesia, a security approach is considered very important in order to maintain political and economic stability, which inevitably has to be acknowledged that the political and economic situation and conditions in Aceh have never been stable so far. It is ironic that Aceh post-conflict and tsunami is still seen as the poorest region in Sumatra. For this reason, perhaps it is time for us to return to studying the successful culture of the Acehnese in the past which is believed to have existed, but was not recorded in national history books. For this reason, the research on the history of Aceh also needs to be carried out further in the future.





Security approaches, Islamic law, and the loss of cultural reinforcement in Aceh post conflict and tsunami

A security approach is very important in a nation state, not only for the sake of existing political stability, but also for making various political, economic, social and cultural policies in a calm, comfortable and safe manner. In other words, the security approach is essentially to strengthen the government management in making decisions for the benefit of human life in general properly and correctly. However, unfortunately an excessive security approach will also bring excessive power arrogance and political hegemony. So that excessive arrogance of power will also have an impact on behavior that destroys human values, as it was the case in Aceh during the conflict. It is not surprising that Aceh has been used as a military operations area , and at the same time as an area of prolonged conflict and must be resolved using a security approach as well.

In line with the time when security operations took place through extended government hands, of coursewithout realizing it, at the same time there had also been *"destruction"* of values, including the values contained in Aceh's various cultural heritages in general. For this reason, various cultural activities are automatically stopped for the reasons of security for the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia. It is not surprising that after the conflict and tsunami it seemed that various cultural activities in Aceh were getting weaker day by day and were even unable to strengthen the existence of the Acehnese people with all of their ethnicity which had been attached to them for centuries. It is not fitting that various local cultures and various local wisdoms in Aceh should just disappear because of the political power of Indonesia. For this reason, various efforts need to be made to revitalize Acehnese culture post conflict and tsunami (Avonius, 2005).

In the efforts to restrengthen toward the Acehnese ethnicity as the characteristic and identity of the Acehnese people, of course it must be within the framework of Islamic law. This is also the case with what has happened to the Minangkabau community in West Sumatra, for example "custom is based on sharia, sharia is based on the book of Allah" namely the Alqur'an and Hadith. Therefore, we can reflect again that Islamic law in Aceh should not be perceived as an obstacle to various cultural activities in Aceh, but rather as a legitimizing reinforcement of what is permitted and what is prohibited related to cultural issues of the Acehnese people. For this reason, the Aceh Ulama Council in this case is certainly very necessary, not only those that are prohibited and permitted, but also those that are normative based on Islamic law (Ibrahim, 2004). This is very important because so far cultural researchers still seem to think that all Acehnese cultural products are Islamic. For this reason, cross cultural communication which also involves the Acehnese Ulama Council and Islamic religious experts is of course still very necessary so that we no longer make mistakes and mistakes in cross cultural understanding and cross cultural communication within the Indonesian nation state.

4.CONCLUSION

The establishment of a nation state should not destroy the substance of its own nation's citizens, where the substance of the nation's citizens of the Indonesian nation state are various ethnic groups that existed long before the founding of the Indonesian nation state itself. These various ethnic groups have lived and developed for centuries in an evolutionary way with their various ethnic cultures and their respective ethnicities, including the Acehnese ethnic group which has the right to live with its culture. For this reason, we should not treat discrimination and even criminalize the various advantages and disadvantages that exist towards the various ethnic groups that exist as citizens of the Indonesian nation and at the same time they are also citizens of their respective ethnic groups.



Perhaps we can learn from America's experience as a nation state that is also multiethnic and multi-cultural. We can think about here that initially America would try to merge its various ethnic groups and cultures into what they called the American nation through a concept called the "melting pot" concept. The concept of "melting pot" here is like if we are blending various types of fruit or vegetables, so that when we have finished blending them all, we will no longer know what type of fruit or vegetable has a clear name before blending. The concept of "*melting pot*" here America seems to have failed in trying to accommodate the various problems of its ethnic groups and cultures. For this reason, the American nation state seems to have had to change the concept of "melting pot" with a concept that is more in line with the name "salad bowl", which is like the food called "pecal"in Indonesia, but after being given the name "pecal", it seems that there are various types of vegetables contained in "pecal", the type and name are still visible. In Indonesia, we already have what is called "Unity in Diversity" or "Bhinika Tunggal Ika" that is, even though we are different, we are still one as the Indonesian nation. However, unfortunately, various nuances of political interests still seem to occur which might be used as further study and hopefully the article can be useful for all of us.

5. REFERENCES

Abdullah, 2011. Membedah Sejarah Aceh. Banda Aceh : Bandar Publishing.

AD Pirous, Prof., Dkk., 2005. Aceh Kembali Ke Masa Depan. Jakarta: IKJ Press.

- Afifa, H., 2013. Perang Aceh. Yogyakarta : Pustaka Tiro.
- Agnes, Michael, 1985. Webster's New World College Dictionary. Wiley Publishing, Inc.
- Al-Chaidar, 1998. Aceh Bersimbah Darah. Jakarta : Alkautsar.

-----, 1999. Gerakan Aceh Merdeka. Jakarta : Madani Press.

- Alfian, Teuku Ibrahim,2005. *Wajah Aceh Dalam Lintasan Sejarah*. Yogyakarta: Gadjah Mada University Press.
- Alqur'an, surat alhujarat, ayat 13.
- Amirulhadi, 2017. Aceh : Sejarah, Budaya, dan Tradisi. Jakarta : Yayasan Pustaka Obor Indonesia.
- Avonius, L. DKK., 2005. Revitalisasi Adat di Indonesia dan Aceh. Banda Aceh : ICAIOS.
- Baharuddin AR, 2012. Aceh Antara Cinta dan Keangkuhan. Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing.
- Badruzzaman, I., 2018. Sistem Budaya Adat Aceh Dalam Membangun Kesejahteraan (Nilai Sejarah dan Dinamika Kekinian). Banda Aceh : Majelis Adat Aceh.
- Betrand, Jacques, 2004. *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia*. Cambridge : Cambridge University Press.
- Bustamam Ahmad, Kamaruzzaman, 2012. Acehnologi. Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing.
- Cassirer, Ernst, 1987. Manusia dan Kebudayaan. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Chauvel, Richard, 1990. Nasionalist, Soldiers, and Separatist. Leiden : KITLV Press.
- Colletta, Nat J. dan Umar Kayam, 1987. Kebudayaan dan Pembangunan. Jakarta: Obor Indonesia.
- Damanik, Ahmad Taufan, 2010. Dari Imajinasi Negara Islam ke Imajinasi Etno-Nasionalis. Banda Aceh : Bandar Publishing.
- Esther, Kuntjara, 2012. Gender, Bahasa, dan Kekuasaan. Jakarta : Libri Press.
- Fiske, John, 2004. *Cultural and Communication Studies*. Sebuah Pengantar Paling Komprehensif. Diterjemahkan Yosal Iriantara dan Idi Subandy Ibrahim. Yogyakarta : Jalasutra.
- Friedmen, Jonathan, 1995. Cultural Identity & Global Process.London : SAGE Publications



Geertz, Clifford, 1992. Tafsir Kebudayaan. Yogyakarta: Kanisius.

- Haboddin, M., 2012. Menguatnya Politik Identitas Di Ranah Lokal. Jurnal Studi Pemerintahan.
- Hadi, A., 2010. Aceh, Sejarah, Budaya, dan Tradisi. Jakarta : Yayasan Pustaka Obor.
- Hadiwinata, Bob Sugeng, Dkk., 2010. Transformasi Gerakan Aceh Merdeka. Jakarta: FES.
- Harun, Mohd., 2012. Pengantar Sastra Aceh. Bandung: Citapustaka Media Perintis.
- -----., 2009. Memahami Orang Aceh. Bandung : Citapustaka Media Perintis.
- Haryono, Daniel, 2010. Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia. Jakarta : PT. Media Pustaka Phonix.
- Haslinda Muda, Hj Pocut, 2011. Tun Sri Lanang Dalam Sejarah Dua Bangsa Indonesia-Malaysia. Jakarta : Yayasan Tun Sri Lanang.
- Hasymi, A., 1977. Apa Sebab Rakyat Aceh Sanggup Berperang Puluhan Tahun Melawan Agressi Belanda. Jakarta : Bulan Bintang.
- Hermaliza, Essi, 2015. Peumulia Jamee. Banda Aceh : BPNB.
- Hugronje, C. Snouck, 2019. Orang Aceh : Budaya, Masyarakat, dan Politik Kolonial. Yogyakarta : IRCiSOD.
- Hutauruk, Ahmad Fakhri, 2020. Masuknya Islam Hingga Kolonialisme. Yayasan Kita Menulis.
- Hylland Eriksen, Thomas, 2002. Ethnicity and Nationalism. USA : Pluto Press.
- Ibrahim, Muslim, 2004. Langkah-Langkah Penerapan Syariat Islam Aceh, Dalam Penerapan Syariat Islam di Indonesia : Antara Peluang dan Tantangan. Jakarta : Global Media
- Ismail, H.Badruzzaman,2013. Sistem Budaya Adat Aceh Dalam Membangun Kesejahteraan. Banda Aceh: CV.Boebon Jaya.
- Kawilarang, Harry, 2010. Aceh Dari Sultan Iskandar Muda Ke Helsinki. Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing.
- Khairani, Cut,2015. Forms of Social Interactions of People in Coffee Shops in Banda Aceh. Proceeding the 1st Almuslim International Conference on Science, Technology, and Society.
- Koentjaraningrat, 1985. Pengantar Antropologi. Jakarta: Aksara Baru.
- -----,1987. Manusia dan Kebudayaan di Indonesia. Jakarta: Djambatan.
- -----,1997. Kebudayaan, Mentalitas dan Pembangunan. Jakarta: Gramedia.
- Kuntowijoyo, 1987. Budaya dan Masyarakat. Yogyakarta: Tiara Wacana.
- Laclau, Ernesto & Mouffe, Chantal, 2008. *Hegemoni dan Strategi Sosialis*. Yoyakarta : Resist Book.
- Lederach, JP., 1997. Building Peace : Sustainable Reconcialition in Divided Societies. Washington DC. : United States Institute of Peace Press.
- Loh Angen, Thayeb, 2014. Aceh 2025. Banda Aceh: Yatsrib Baru.
- Lombard, Denys, 2016. Kerajaan Aceh Zaman Sultan Iskandar Muda (1607 1636). Diterjemahkan oleh Winarsih Arifin. Jakarta : Gramedia.
- M.Ditiro, Tengku Hasan, 2013. Aceh Di Mata Dunia. Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing.
- Redaksi Sinar Grafis, 1999. Amandemen UUD 1945. Jakarta : Sinar Grafis.
- Reid, Anthony, 2006. Verandah of Violence : The Background to the Aceh problem.Singapore : NUS Press.
- Sinar, Tengku Luckman, 1994. *Jati Diri Melayu*. Medan : Lembaga Pembinaan dan Pengembangan Seni Budaya Melayu.
 - -----, 2004. An Indonesian Frontier : Acehnese and Other Histories of Sumatra. Singapore : NUS Press.
- Sugiyono, 2006. Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif dan R&D. Bandung : Alfabeta.
- Suyadi, 2013. Strategi Pembelajaran Pendidikan Karakter. Bandung : Remaja Rosdakarya.



- Sufi, Rusdi, dkk., 1998. Keanekaragaman Suku dan Budaya di Aceh. Banda Aceh : Balai Kajian Sejarah dan Nilai Tradisional Banda Aceh.
- Sugihen, Bahren T., 2009. *Perubahan Sosio-Kultural dan Sikap Proses Modernisasi*. Banda Aceh : Penerbit Beuna Citra.

Sulaiman, Budiman, 1979. Bahasa Aceh. Banda Aceh : Pustaka Farabi.

Syamsuddin Ishak, Otto, 2006. SAGO. Jakarta: Penerbit Aceh Kita.

-,2013. Aceh Pasca Konflik : Kontestasi 3 Varian Nasionalisme. Banda Aceh: Bandar Publishing.
- Tanpa Penulis, 1993. Undang-Undang Dasar, Pedoman Penghayatan dan Pengalaman Pancasila, Garis-Garis Besar Haluan Negara. Jakarta : BP7 Pusat.
- Thomas, Linda & Wareing, Shan,2007. *Bahasa, Masyarakat, dan Kekuasaan*.Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar.
- Troike, Muriel Saville, 1981.*Etnografi Komunikasi : Suatu Pengenalan*. Kuala Lumpur: Dewan Bahasa dan Pustaka.
- Usman, A.Rani, 2009. Etnis Cina Perantauan Di Aceh. Jakarta : Yayasan Obor Indonesia.
- Va T.Veer, Paul, 1985. Perang Aceh : Kisah Kegagalan Snouck Hurgronje. Jakarta: Grafiti Press.
- Winick, Charles, 1961. Dictionary of Anthropology. New Jersey : Littlefield, Adams& Co.