

Territorial Politics and Identity Recognition: A Struggle for Communal Sovereignty in Finding Destiny

At least two essential things regarding sovereignty are always discussed: territory and identity. Sovereignty is the right of every community inhabiting the territory of a Nation-State. Meanwhile, as crucial elements of sovereignty, territorial politics and identity recognition can encourage transformation as an effort to face global challenges. Some obstacles that arise are colonialism in new forms, such as imperialism, inequality, exclusivity, and access restrictions.

As part of a discussion of global issues, this edition examines communal struggles to protect territory and recognize identity. Through comparisons between regions, which are the focus of research in published articles, territory is synonymous with how people claim their identity to obtain equal rights and fair access. Politics is part of the legitimacy of power that displays an identity recognized in a certain period and region. Thus, optimal regional development and equal welfare distribution are some of the main goals of identity recognition.

Ronaa Nisa'us Sholikhah explains how Indonesia and Malaysia promote Islamic hospitality to overcome the problem of Islamophobia through a friendly Islamic concept. Both countries also implemented Islamic indigenization as an effort to build a global image and strength in fighting terrorism that is often identified with Islam. Indigenization is a method that is considered more effective, considering that both Indonesia and Malaysia are archipelagic countries with diverse ethnic and religious backgrounds. Moreover, both countries are committed to bringing friendly Islam as an identity through Islam Nusantara in Indonesia and Islam Hadhari in Malaysia. Those Islamic identities experience a dynamic journey related to each country's political parties and general elections.

The issue of child marriage in the Philippines is one of the concerns of civil society organizations in the Bangsamoro Islamic community. They involve youth as active agents to combat and reduce the practice of child marriage. Yasmin Abdurahim Tagorda further wrote that the advocacy process for children's rights, especially efforts to reject child marriage, encountered various obstacles, especially in forming and formalizing organizations that strategically involve the participation and abilities of young people legally. Then there is the issue of local values and local culture, which sometimes overshadow the "rise" of child marriage. One way to open access space for these organizations is by optimizing their social networks, such as collaborating with Bangsamoro Muslim intellectuals and women's organizations. One of the keys to their success is how they can navigate complex and complicated institutional networks so that they can support these advocacy needs, for example, the passing of a law that criminalizes child marriage.

This edition consists of two articles focusing on developing tourist villages and their relevance to management involving local elites. Ratna Istriyani's article observes the development of tourist villages in the Turi area as the success of human capital, which can mobilize physical and social capital through leadership. Several figures known as sociopreneurship create collective awareness of local communities so that they can accelerate economic profits and maintain cultural and environmental assets. One underlined

research finding is how villages ultimately open up space for transformation by improving relationships with capital from outside parties through strengthening networks. At the same time, Merlia Prastiwi observed that the Madura regional government, through the tourism office, is trying to provide and support religious-based tourist areas that are friendly to people with disabilities. Several things of concern include providing and facilitating access to worship facilities and religious tourism. This strategy becomes a discourse on regional economic growth that is socially just and is expected to become a well-known regional identity. The government and society must implement inclusive development, especially in tourism branding. Even though several challenges, especially regarding the facilities and principles of equal distribution of inclusive growth in each region of Madura, are not the same, the government realizes that branding Madura Island's inclusive religious tourism can be a starting point for realizing equal access and economic improvement.

Adi Joko Purwanto wrote the final article in this edition, which discusses the success of ASEAN WAY in maintaining the stability and security of the ASEAN region in the Indo-Pacific strategy discourse. ASEAN countries realize that ASEAN's position is crucial for global politics, especially as a reference for the interests and contestation of China and the United States. As a country that initiated the ASEAN Outlook on the Indo-Pacific, Indonesia emphasizes its contribution to maintaining peace, freedom, and prosperity through dialogue and cooperation. These efforts are significant in dealing with tensions in the Indo-Pacific region. The ASEAN WAY has received support from major powers such as the United States, China, Russia, Japan, India, and Australia. In particular, ASEAN member countries must strengthen their centrality and unity in balancing the big powers.

In claiming territory and identity by a group of people or a nation-state, struggle is a necessity. Both will continuously develop and change into weaknesses and strengths. However, sovereignty is non-negotiable when it comes to finding destiny.

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