



Press Nationalism: A Case Study of the Role of Medan Prijaji In Growing National Awareness

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ABSTRACT

As an interesting study theme, nationalism or other terms related to it also have their own uniqueness and complexity. This is because nationalism is often written with a capital letter 'N'. That is, it is already associated as an ideology as well as other ideologies such as Marxism, Socialism, and so on. However, what I will discuss in this work is not Nationalism with 'N', but nationalism with 'n'. At first glance, what is the meaning of a capital letter or not, but later in the discussion it will have a big impact. What is meant by nationalism by 'n' is not as an ideology, but a sense of nationality. Or in other terms it is also called national consciousness. This model of nationalism will be our discussion. A national consciousness sown in the dry fields of the colony called the Dutch East Indies. Not farmers or cultivators, but journalists who sow the seeds of national awareness through the media in the form of newspapers. In this case, the newspaper in question is, of course, the newspaper that initiated the effort to foster national awareness. and the choice fell on a newspaper published in 1907, Medan Prijaji, with a journalist with a strong character, RM Tirto Adhi Soerjo. This newspaper was chosen because apart from being a pioneer in the effort to raise awareness of 'us' as a nation, he also has a firm political stance. From jargon to articles, this newspaper, which had a circulation of 2000, really drew a firm line between 'us' and 'you'.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Nationalism awareness or what is more familiar to the ears with the term 'nationalism', is a topic of conversation that is almost timeless with age (Muhammad, 2016). It seems, this will continue and continue to be discussed as long as this country still has residents. This theme is important and therefore always up to date because of its nature which is part of the discussion of national identity, in which there is a thread of stories about the process of forming a nation. Even in a somewhat hyperbolic but I think correct style, Hobsbawm illustrates that human history on this planet Earth will not be understood without first understanding the term "nation" and the vocabulary that comes from it, of course including "national" and "nationalism" in all forms and polemics discussion (Nata, 2019).

Besides that, what we call 'nationalism' seems to be the fuel for the speed of a large ark called the nation with a group of people originating from the ethnic community as its passengers (Aziz & Mat, 2017). And the fuel must continue to burn blazing for the speed of the ark across the vast

ocean to an island called independence as the ark was intended from the start. However, do all the crew recognize what the fuel called "nationalism" is? It seems that not all of them understand it, not all of the passengers on the ship named the nation know where the fuel for "nationalism" came from. Or maybe not all of the passengers know what the form of the fuel called "nationalism" looks like (Agussalim, 2013).

Regarding this, I remember how in elementary school up to high school, history lessons provided information about where national awareness came from (Martaulina, 2018). And it seems that we are not much different, because we were formed in the same education system, by the same regime. From there I gained a knowledge that nationalism or national awareness was born by a great momentum. A momentum called National Awakening. We know that the consequence of mentioning the two words "resurrection" and "national" is to bring up two words that do not seem to want to be far from that moment (Nafi, 2018), "Boedi Oetomo". Why is that? Who knows! Because we have been taught that way. We have been taught that the womb that gave birth to the moment of national awakening is a modern organization whose locomotive is Boedi Oetomo.

In the book that was banned by the New Order rulers, I found valuable information that made me both happy and surprised because I had never found such information in history books that I had read before (of course the New Order version). One of the many valuable information relates to the national awakening or the forerunner to the rise of national consciousness. Uniquely, Bung Pram not only saw the revival side of the modern organization factor (which is also different from the ruling version), but also saw it from the media aspect, in this case the press. As a result, in this work he describes how the press, including Medan Prijaji, plays an important role in burning national awareness, especially among the educated (Nugraheni, nd).

However, even though the book has been widely circulated and widely read by academics, and many have followed like-minded works, discussions about the press and nationalism still have the same fate. It is still a topic that is often overlooked, or even forgotten (Fathurahman, 2015). Perhaps the assumption that the existence of the press has received less attention is due to a lack of understanding of how important this instrument is to be legitimate when it is aimed at ordinary people. But it becomes a bit ambiguous and it's a shame when academics still haven't opened their eyes about this. Regarding the fact that the road is still not busy, I decided to bring up this important theme to write about (WM, 2016).

This problem was raised by taking the background of the colonial period with Medan Prijaji as the press at that time. I do this not without reason (Halimi, 2016). First, why the colonial period, because this will help us to find the genealogical roots of the birth process of national consciousness. Second, why the press, because so far when talking about the issue of rising national consciousness, the focus of the discussion has always been on one name, Boedi Oetomo. This view seems to give the impression that the modern organization, which still has a Javanese-centric character, is the only contributor to the rise of national consciousness (Aji, 2014).

Although recently there have been many different views on who the midwife is who helps the process of creating national awareness, such as the thesis proposed by MC Ricklefs that the milestone of national awakening was not Boedi Oetomo, but the PNI (Indonesian National Party) which was founded on July 4, 1927 by Bung Karno (Kumorotomo & Purbokusumo, 2020). Another opinion came from Ahmad Syafii Maarif. He seemed to be trying to find a middle ground regarding the moment of the birth of a national awakening or national consciousness. The middle way is to carry out the Youth Pledge Day. Of course, this is only a partial view, because there are various other opinions that will be born based on the background of the perspective of the group or person who gives the view. A centrist Islamic group, for example, will definitely carry the Sarekat Islam as a milestone for national awakening (Sarwono, 2012). I will discuss this in chapter II of this paper in the section on nationalism. Also included in that section I will explain why in the first sections I put quotation marks on the word nationalism (Heryanto, 2015).

2. RESEARCH METHOD

In research for the purpose of writing scientific papers or theses, the author uses a qualitative research method based on literature with an analytical descriptive approach, namely by giving a general explanation regarding nationalism and analysis more focused on the Medan Prijaji

Newspaper. And as an important factor in the research process, of course I need the data that I get from two types of data, namely primary and secondary. Primary data is the data that I obtained in the form of the publication of Medan Prijaji in the third year. 1909. While secondary data is supporting data that I took from various sources such as books, journals, magazines, newspapers, videos containing interviews or other sources related to the research topic.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

3.1 Linguafranca as National Identity

After in the second chapter we have discussed the theory of how the press constructs a reality called the nation, then in this section we will give a little emphasis on how language is not only a complement to identity, but more than that it is a means of forming a nation. Of course, it is still in order to explain the role of the press, in this case Medan Prijaji, to play its role in colonial exploitation to finally give language a place to assert itself as an important instrument in the formation of a nation. As Loomba quotes Ben Anderson, in the midst of the process of forging ties between communities that never see each other, newspapers play the role of creating a shared culture, interests, and vocabulary that create a certain 'printed language'.

As Perry Anderson said in "Modernity and Revolution", culture is consciousness formulated by language activity. Language is the practice of consciousness, like consciousness, arising only from necessity; the need for association with other human beings. In other words, certain consciousness is the product of certain social relations. We certainly still remember how the nation is also assumed as a 'certain social relationship'.

Now what about language and nation in relation to the topic of our discussion. In the case of Medan Prijaji, of course, we can see at a glance that the lingua franca is used as the operational language of the print media. However, it turns out that the lingua franca which was originally "wandering" in the markets as a trading language has transformed into something that is not just a transmission between sellers and buyers. Under Medan Prijaji's upbringing, the language which eventually became our national language, metamorphosed into a cultural identity as well as a political one, which drew a firm line between "us" and "you".

In this case, the "we" and "you" that I mean of course are none other than the "ruling nation" and "ruling nation". And this is an important instrument for the Nation which began as a separate group of ethnic communities who are experiencing a fever of awareness of something outside of themselves. Reality that is collected and constructed in the assumption of a nation entity. And in the end, in Tirta's newspaper, language really draws the line between an oppressed and backward-imaged Nation and the Barbarians who are imaged as 'civilized', or to borrow Lenin's term "Civilized Barbarism", and describes how behind the glamorous glamour. The "civilized" life of two cities, London and Paris, turns out to be a scary face from the monster of Capitalism. And in the context of the archipelago,

About how language works to construct a nation. This is an interesting discussion. First, we recall that our nation is formed from a collection of ethnic communities. This means that both, namely nation and ethnicity, are the same group of phenomena, with different awareness. Awareness that was initially only in the form of 'we' within the boundaries of ethnicity was transformed by expanding the reach to 'us' to become not only based on genes and ethnicity, but more open and into a collective consciousness. This is possible because of the mass media which is able to "fold the distance" so that the process of sharing awareness with "us" becomes more massive and effective.

In the view of De Fleur and Ball-Rokeach, there are various ways the mass media influence language, one of which is by creating new terms. In historical clusters during the colonial occupation, we can see how modern educational traditions introduce new terms that are closely related and influential with movements such as *vergadering*, *voordracht* (speech), *accoord* (agree), *vakbonden* (labor union), communism, Islamism, and of course. Nationalism Takashi Shiraishi said that this new term is a sign of a new form of political movement that has its roots in the Malay language. And according to Shiraishi, "To understand this problem, it is enough to remember Tirtoadhisoerjo". 5 In relation to Medan Prijaji, the new term coined is the term 'nation', namely "the

nation that ruled" and the nation that ruled". We know that at that time, the word nation was usually synonymous with ethnicity, for example the Javanese, the Batak people, and the like.

Constructivism views such as Peter Berger and those from Marxists also share the same view, that the use of language in a social process is aimed not only at defining, but also constructing reality in certain power relations. Of course, we are not in the section to discuss the politics of language in depth, however, the use of a lingua franca is a strategic choice in an effort to spread collective awareness considering that language is used by more layers of the population. Of course, this choice became effective considering that what Medan Prijaji was actually doing was a counter-hegemony to the discourses spread by the colonial rulers, both regarding colonialism as a practice of political economy and culture that was infiltrated in between.

3.2 Medan Prijaji's Criticism of the Ruler

As I wrote in the second chapter, in the work entitled *Press and Massa*, Njoto said that "the newspapers cannot take a middle path or be impartial". I quote this view again as an emphasis that in a situation like Medan Prijaji grows and develops, namely in the nuances of colonial exploitation of the colonized land nation, or to borrow the term Medan Prijaji colonization 'a nation that rules' over a 'ruled nation', it is impossible for a letter to the news to not take sides or be neutral considering the basic nature of Medan Prijaji as a political press.

This also explains that from the jargon, the newspaper bearing the symbol of the archery knight, which had a circulation of two thousand copies, has already determined which direction its alignment is aimed at. The side with the oppressed people who are identified with the name 'the nation's oppressed' is articulated in biting writings. Both fiction and non-fiction, both have a crushing power that lands on the temples of power. Due to its offensive and cynical writing style, this politically savvy newspaper often gets backlash from those who feel that its disgrace has been exposed.

Because of its consistency in guarding the oppressed, Medan Prijaji was also given the title as a newspaper carrying advocacy journalism. The condition of Medan Prijaji like that is a sign of how much the newspaper has the power of advocacy and because of that it is not only present, but also small. A situation where *teekenend dat de kleine man in den journalist zijn verdendiger ziet.*", that the little people see journalists as their defenders.

The themes of critical newspaper articles that often undermine these authorities are varied. However, two of them that are striking and in line with our theme are the themes surrounding criticism of the rulers on the one hand and 'national sentiment' on the other. However, actually both sides have the same goal and sometimes the two themes are contained in one article, a critique of the 'ruling nation' which will later bear consequences in the form of the birth of a sense of 'we'. That "we" i.e. "the nation that governs" are different, and must say no to "them" who are none other than "the nation that governs."

In this regard, there are not one or two problems raised by the Bumiputra generating newspaper from its slumber. He also highlighted not a few cases related to the arbitrary behavior of the rulers, both Europeans and indigenous peoples who were united with the ruling nation. It may be that the confrontational character in guarding the case of the weak and the criticism of this ruler makes Medan Prijaji often have to deal with the law. Next, we will look at a news story published by Medan Prijaji regarding his criticisms of the authorities, one of which is Medan Prijaji's criticism in an effort to help the people of the Bapangan village over the long-tailed practice of Aspirant Controleur Purworedjo, A. Simon.

3.3 Medan Prijaji's National Sentiment: A Nation That Will Rule and A Nation That Will Rule

In the simplest sense, colonialism can be interpreted as the exploitation of the colonialists over the land of the colonies or colonies. While a clearer understanding can be seen as stated by Ronald Horvath: "It seems generally, if not universally, agreed that colonialism is a form of domination- the control by individuals or groups over the territory and/or behavior of other individuals or groups. Colonialism has also been seen as a form of exploitation, with emphasis on economic variables, as in the Marxist-Leninist literature, and as a culture-change process, as in anthropology"

From the quote above, it can be broadly concluded that the essence of colonialism is exploitation by individuals or groups, which can have an impact not only economically, but also

culturally. A similar view but somewhat different from the emphasis on economic exploitation is also reflected in Marco's statement that according to him, colonialism is "...the capitalist of Europe..." which Marco considers "to agree with the capitalist nation, aka make a big Maatschappij, and his mind scratching oeing, jaitoe sucking the blood of Kromo....".

This opinion indicates that the impact of colonialism is not only confined to the economic sphere but also moves and influences other aspects such as social order. Regarding this, we can see through the history of colonialism which after blindly enforced forced cultivation, in turn implemented economic liberalization in the archipelago. As a result of the implementation of this system, foreign private capital flows rapidly and finally economic activities based on industrialization are established. In short, factories were established and rice fields turned into plantations. This began with the implementation of a land rental system that changed the social order of the community. The positive side of this change is the erosion of feudalism, but the negative side gives birth to people's poverty.

Ania Loomba defines colonialism as the conquest and control of land and people's ownership by 'others'. More specifically, in the case of European colonialism over colonial lands it is referred to as modern colonialism. This was done to distinguish it from the old colonialism which was the conquests of the Aztecs, Incas, Rome, and so on. In the Marxist view, modern colonialism is in line with the establishment of Western European capitalism, while the old colonialism is at the pre-capitalist stage.

4. CONCLUSION

Through the discussion about Medan Prijaji and its role in sowing the seeds of national awareness through sentiments built with identities that directly draw the line, we will meet the essence of our nationalism, the character of our nation. From the confrontational style of Medan Prijaji as a medium with the spirit of advocacy journalism that defends the oppressed from the 'nation who is under orders', we will find a sign that the character of our nation is anti-colonial. will discover the essence of our national consciousness which is built right on the anti-colonial attitude. Regarding this anti-colonial attitude, he clearly pointed out that the colonialists or invaders were the ruling nation, as well as their cronies who were willing to become the screws for the colonial machine that grinds the fate of the nation's children, which he calls a governed nation. which must rise up against as a unified nation which in the space of imagination is woven through the print media. It seems we have to recall the term colonialism which dug its own grave with a hoe branded with ethical politics. That as a result of the ethical politics that gave birth to many intellectuals, and supported by advances in printing technology, Thus, the movement of intellectuals through the world of newspapers was born that was able to establish a sense of attachment between the ruled nations of the archipelago, which distorted the initial colonial ideals of uniting the archipelago as a colony into a field of national liberation. And finally, there is a colonialism parable, like a laying hen who had to have a heart attack in the midst of her busy life in producing, because she could not hold back the great shock when she had to witness a Garuda hatch from one of its eggs, which was fertilized by a spirit of resistance.

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