



Ethnic Mobility and the Formation of Political Identity in Indonesia*

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Abstract:

Indonesia is an archipelagic country that has many tribes and cultures, which make Indonesia a multi-cultural country. There are 5 religions recognized in Indonesia based on the Law of the Republic of Indonesia, namely: Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Confucianism. This research is related to ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity in Indonesia which is currently very interesting to be discussed by various researchers around the world, not only in Indonesia. In this study, researcher discuss ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity based on history that has occurred in Indonesia to date. The Indonesian nation Indonesia adheres to the Pancasila ideology so that the national ideology has a major influence on the unity and integrity of the nation. In this study, researcher also examined the ideological values of Pancasila and the nation's unifying motto called Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. This study uses a qualitative descriptive approach in which the researcher conducts a descriptive elaboration of ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity in Indonesia and ethnic participation in political parties in Indonesia. The results of the study show that in the past there were still many Indonesian people who considered themselves local residents and were reluctant to accept other ethnic groups to occupy certain positions in an area, including political positions. The separatist movement that emerged in an area due to the inequality of one region with another, such as the islands of Java and Sumatra, had caused inter-ethnic conflict and many people were anti-Chinese in the 90s. However, currently, Indonesia has provided space for various tribes and religions to be involved in political development in Indonesia based on Pancasila and the 1945 Constitution. Indonesia as a multiethnic country has upheld democratic freedoms for all nations and provided regional autonomy policies for each region in order to improve public welfare.

Keywords: Ethnic mobility; Multicultural; Ethnic participation; Political identity; Public welfare

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Mobilitas etnis dan pembentukan identitas politik di Indonesia

Abstrak :

Indonesia adalah negara kepulauan yang memiliki banyak suku dan budaya, yang membuat Indonesia negara multikultural. Ada 5 agama yang diakui di Indonesia berdasarkan hukum Republik Indonesia, yaitu: Islam, Kekristenan, Hinduisme, Buddha, dan Konfusianisme. Penelitian ini berkaitan dengan mobilitas etnis dan pembentukan identitas politik di Indonesia yang saat ini sangat menarik untuk dibahas oleh berbagai peneliti di seluruh dunia, tidak hanya di Indonesia. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti membahas mobilitas etnis dan pembentukan identitas politik berdasarkan sejarah yang telah terjadi di Indonesia hingga saat ini. Bangsa Indonesia mematuhi ideologi Pancasila sehingga ideologi nasional memiliki pengaruh besar pada kesatuan dan integritas bangsa. Dalam penelitian ini, peneliti juga memeriksa nilai-nilai ideologi Pancasila dan motto kesatuan bangsa yang disebut Bhinneka Tunggal Ika. Penelitian ini menggunakan pendekatan deskriptif kualitatif, di mana peneliti melakukan penjelasan tentang mobilitas etnis dan pembentukan identitas politik di Indonesia dan partisipasi etnis dalam partai politik di Indonesia. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa di masa lalu masih banyak orang Indonesia yang menganggap diri mereka sebagai penduduk setempat dan enggan menerima kelompok etnis lain untuk menduduki posisi tertentu di suatu daerah, termasuk posisi politik. Gerakan separatis yang muncul di suatu daerah karena ketidaksetaraan satu wilayah dengan yang lain, seperti pulau-pulau Jawa dan Sumatra, telah menyebabkan konflik antar etnis dan banyak orang anti-Cina pada tahun 1990-an. Namun, saat ini, Indonesia telah menyediakan ruang bagi berbagai suku dan agama untuk terlibat dalam perkembangan politik di Indonesia berdasarkan Pancasila dan Konstitusi 1945. Indonesia sebagai negara multietnis telah mempertahankan kebebasan demokratis untuk semua bangsa dan menyediakan kebijakan otonomi regional untuk setiap wilayah untuk meningkatkan kesejahteraan masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: Etnis Mobilitas; Multikultural; Partisipasi Etnis; Identitas Politik; Pelayanan Publik

Этническая мобильность и формирование политической идентичности в Индонезии

Абстракт:

Индонезия - это архипелаг, в котором много племен и культур, что делает Индонезию многокультурной страной. Существует 5 религий, признанных в Индонезии на основе закона Республики Индонезия, а именно: ислам, христианство, индуизм, буддизм и конфуцианство. Это исследование связано с этнической мобильностью и формированием политической идентичности в Индонезии, что в настоящее время очень интересно для обсуждения различными исследователями по всему миру, не только в Индонезии. В этом исследовании исследователь обсуждает этническую мобильность и формирование политической идентичности на основе истории, которая имела место в Индонезии на сегодняшний день. Индонезийская нация Индонезия придерживается идеологии Панкасылы, так что национальная идеология оказывает большое влияние на единство и целостность нации. В этом исследовании исследователь также изучил идеологические ценности Панкасылы и единственный девиз нации под названием Бхиннека Тюня Ика. В этом исследовании используется качественный описательный подход, в котором исследователь проводит описательную разработку этнической мобильности и формирования политической самобытности в Индонезии и этнического участия в политических партиях в Индонезии. Результаты исследования показывают, что в прошлом в Индонезии по-прежнему было много индонезийцев, которые считали себя местными жителями и не желали принимать другие этнические группы для занятия определенных должностей в той или иной области, включая политические позиции. Сепаратистское движение, возникшее в одном районе из-за неравенства одного региона с другим, например острова Ява и Суматра, вызвало межэтнический конфликт, и многие люди были антикитайцами в 90-х годах. Однако в настоящее время Индонезия предоставила возможность различным племенам и религиям участвовать в политическом развитии в Индонезии на основе Панкасылы и Конституции 1945 года. Индонезия, являясь многонациональной страной, поддерживает демократические свободы для всех народов и обеспечивает региональную политику автономии для каждого региона в целях улучшения благосостояния населения.

Ключевые слова: Этническая мобильность; Мультикультурность; Этническое участие; Политическая идентичность; Общественное благо

A. INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is one of the countries with the most ethnic groups in the world. Data on ethnicity in Indonesia was first produced through a Population Census in 1930 by the Dutch Government. However, in the New Order era, this data collection was halted due to a 'political taboo' that saw that discussing ethnicity was an effort that could threaten the integrity of the nation. Only seventy years later, in the Reformation era, data on ethnicity began to be collected again by the Central Bureau of Statistics through the Population Census in 2000 and continued in the 2010 Population Census ([Abdilah, 2002](#)).

It is known that Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country which has 17.000 islands. This is marked by significant ethnocultural diversity in Indonesia and there are around 1.340 ethnic groups who can speak 707 languages. However, Indonesia's population continues to grow. While at the time of Indonesia's independence, the population of this country was around 70 million people, at the beginning of the 21st century there were around 266 million people, which makes Indonesia one of the most populous countries in the world inhabited by representatives from various countries and ethnic groups ([Arie, 2005](#)). Even though globalization has had a major impact on changing the world community's perspective, in Indonesia the majority of the population still adheres to cultural and religious values and adheres to local traditions.

Ethnic mobility is a very popular issue in the contemporary world, not only in Indonesia. Many researchers throughout the country discuss ethnic mobility and the distribution of ethnic groups. The greatest ethnic mobility in Indonesia occurred during Indonesia's second president, namely President Soeharto who stayed in power between 1967 and 1968. At that time there was a significant movement of ethnic Javanese to Sumatran, which was called the five-year development program. This five-year development program gave rise to a movement called Transmigration which could trigger the beginning of ethnic mobility in Indonesia after the Dutch and Japanese colonization of Indonesia.

In fact, the transmigration program has existed since the time of Indonesia's first president, namely President Soekarno, who stated in 1927 that this program was considered an important national program at that time. This program was a means of opening and developing production and agricultural areas in regional development. Then transmigration was made a priority program for Indonesia's long-term development, which was expected to

improve the living standards of transmigrants and indigenous people in the destination area.

Initially, the people from the island of Java were reluctant to move to the island of Sumatra, but based on official government orders and regulations, the people accepted the program. In 1969 the population spread not only from the island of Java to the island of Sumatra but to other islands on direct orders from President Soeharto. At this time, the regulations were contained in Law Number 3 of 1972 concerning Basic Provisions for Transmigration. Furthermore, the implementing regulations for this law were also stipulated, namely regulation number 42 of 1973 concerning the implementation of transmigration. Based on these regulations, there are two types of transmigration, namely: general transmigration which is the implementation of transmigration funded by the government, and voluntary transmigration which is transmigration financed by individuals without government intervention. This transmigration program ended when Indonesia's second president, President Soeharto, resigned from the presidency in 1998 which resulted in political and economic turmoil in Indonesia.

According to the results of the Indonesian population census, there are around 1,340 ethnic groups and each of these ethnic groups is spread across various parts of Indonesia. Javanese are the largest ethnic group in Indonesia, constituting 41% of the total population ([Arie, 2005](#)). They mainly live on the island of Java, but millions of them have moved to various islands and even migrated abroad, for example to Malaysia and Suriname. Sundanese, Batak, and Madurese are the next largest ethnic groups in Indonesia. There are many isolated ethnic groups, especially in Kalimantan and Papua, the number is few, sometimes hundreds of people, but the group ties are very strong.

Various ethnic groups in Indonesia are trying to be directly involved in Indonesia's political development ([Buchari, 2014](#)). The formation of political identity in Indonesia is related to the ethnic revival that has occurred in various parts of Indonesia. Identity politics in this context is understood as an opportunity for participation in politics as an individual or group power struggle based on identity associated with race, ethnicity, gender, and religion. Sometimes regional sentiment due to the exploitation of the issue of "indigenous people" between local residents and immigrants often becomes an issue in Indonesian politics ([Erman & Albintani, 2018](#)).

The formation of identity politics in Indonesia is manifested in the desire to include ethnic values in official regulations at the regional level. The process of forming political identity in Indonesia can lead to ethnic

strengthening, this often occurs during regional head elections in presidential elections in Indonesia ([Haboddin, 2012](#)). Each ethnicity pays attention to which ethnicity this or that candidate comes from. Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 23 of 2014 concerning regional government is the basis of ethnic groups, bearing in mind that before the reform era, the issue of ethnic identity politics in Indonesia could be suppressed. However, this law allows the ethnic majority to show its existence ([Panggabean, 2018](#)). Mixed marriages caused by ethnic mobility are also sometimes a serious problem in Indonesia considering that regional sentiments often arise in political upheavals in Indonesia.

Problems in the context of ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity in Indonesia have emerged even before the independence of the Republic of Indonesia. Since then government policy has undergone many changes. Various ethnic groups in Indonesia may have their own characteristics in the formation of political identity in Indonesia. So that scientific understanding of the processes and problems of ethnic mobility and the formation of identity politics in Indonesia provides a basis for the government to make policies in Indonesia.

B. METHODS

The method used in this research is a qualitative research method with a descriptive analysis approach. According to Moleong ([2018](#)), the qualitative research model is rooted in natural settings as a whole, relies on humans as a research tool, uses qualitative methods, conducts inductive data analysis, directs research objectives to theoretical findings from the basis, is descriptive in nature, limits studies based on focus and have a set of criteria to check the validity of the data.

This research was conducted by collecting data related to ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity in Indonesia. In this research, researchers examine more deeply about ethnic mobility and the formation of political identity in Indonesia and examine it based on actual facts. In addition, the data sources in this study also come from secondary data sources. Secondary data sources are data sources that are carried out by reading, studying, citing, and reviewing the literature, archives, articles, documents, and other supporting materials related to the problem to be studied ([Farida & Setiawan, 2018](#)).

C. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

1. Concepts of Ethnicity and Ethnic Identity in Indonesia

The word ethnic comes from the Greek word "ethnos", which means a person or group of people (community/people), traditional (folk). The use of the word "ethnic" is also widely used to refer to certain groups of people who have differences that arise from differences in places of residence, cultural, linguistic, religious differences, even differences in appearance within the same human race. According to Zvyagelskaya, ethnicity can be interpreted as a form of social organization of cultural differences ([Kirchanov, 2019](#)). Ethnic identity, the ideas shared by members of a particular ethnic group about a common history, culture, traditions, place of origin, which are formed in the process of interaction with other peoples ([Mahpudin, 2019](#)).

Ethnicity is the basic classification of a social organization whose membership is based on the same origin, history, culture, religion and language and maintains one's identity through various ways and traditions that are maintained, such as Chinese ethnicity, Arab ethnicity, and Indian Tamil ethnicity ([Munauwarah, 2011](#)). The term ethnicity is also used for tribes considered to be native Indonesians for example Bugis, Minang, Javanese, Batak, Sasak and other ethnicities. The term inland tribe is starting to be abandoned because it is associated with primitiveness, while the term ethnicity is considered more neutral. The Indonesian Encyclopedia states that what is meant by ethnicity is a social group within a social or cultural system that has a certain meaning or position because of heredity, customs, religion, language, and others.

According to Soejono Sukamto ([Palupi, 2019](#)), the concept of ethnicity is a human association (human subgroup) that is united by the awareness of the similarity of a certain culture or subculture, or because of the similarity of race, religion, national origin, even a certain role or function. Because ethnicity is an extension of culture and culture is formed by a group of people who produce a culture that comes from the habits of its members.

There are usually three main approaches to understanding ethnicity ([Bertrand, 2004](#)): a). Primordialist; b). Instrumental; c). and Constructivist. The primordial approach recognizes ethnicity as a kind of objective reality that has developed in the process of evolution and is distinguished by a common culture and anthropological characteristics. The instrumentalist approach is based on the consideration of ethnicity in the socio-psychological plane. In the

need to overcome alienation or solve certain problems, information connections unite separate groups, providing and maintaining their commonality.

Proponents of the constructivist approach consider ethnicity as a certain way of formulating set of ideas about the existing cultural and historical community, created (constructed) by the top of society (political and cultural elite), which transmits these ideas to the masses. Ethnicity, according to this approach, has a subjective nature.

Ethnic identities are malleable, diverse and not always politicized. Identities defined in racial, religious and cultural terms may be fixed over a long period of time, but they may also change. Voluntary or forced conversion, conquest and redrawing of political boundaries, or colonial policy are all examples of events that can change them ([Martin, 2002](#)). In addition, any single individual has multiple, overlapping ethnic identities as a member of a religious, cultural, or regional group. Which identity becomes the stronger source of group differentiation can vary from one set of circumstances to another. Moreover, these identities do not necessarily become sources of competition for resources, access to the state, or conflict. Although group differentiation may be predominant, it may not affect the structure of socio-political organizations or the nature of political mobilization ([Nordholt & Klinken, 2014](#)).

Ethnicity can also be called a social category or social identity ([Sarumpaet, 2012](#)). That is, ethnicity is a concept created on the basis of social characteristics that a group of people possesses, which distinguishes it from other groups. Ethnicity is a property of relationships between groups in which cultural differences between groups are transmitted systematically and continuously. These relationships are relational and situational, in which ethnic characters are involved. Differences between ethnic groups can lead to ethnocentric behavior (over-attachment to ethnic members), prejudice, and other negative behaviors that show up in visible actions such as discriminatory actions and sound actions that show up in the use of language. Both of these types of actions and other negative actions create the potential for inter-ethnic conflict ([Marina et al, 2020](#)).

According to Voskresensky (2008), ethnicity as a means of mobilization can only be used when and where the opposition of "us" and "them" is considered mutually exclusive, as "their" desire to obscure "our" culture. Identity brings an ethnic group to the brink of extinction and dissolution within the dominant ethnic group (or claiming such dominance).

2. The Development of Ethnic Groups in Indonesia

Indonesia is inhabited by many people with various levels of social status. All experts involved in the country's ethnography pay attention to the diversity and abundance of social life in Indonesia. Muhammad Jaspian analyzes a number of structures that are very different from each other: "From nomadic societies in Sumatra with no social stratification, to capitalist societies in modern commercial and industrial cities such as Jakarta, Surabaya, and Bandung." Before the emergence of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, there were many large and small kingdoms in the archipelago ([Lestari, 2019](#)). These small kingdoms appeared on the island of Dayak or Kalimantan Island. Around 2000 BC, there was a migration of speakers of the Austronesian Gaoshan ethnicity from East Asia to Taiwan, then to the Philippines, then south to Indonesia, and east to the Pacific. They are the ancestors of the tribes in the archipelago. This is strongly supported by data on genetic origins. It turns out that searching for links using the similarity of language use also gives the same results ([Buhari, 2014](#)).

After the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Indonesia in 1945, the government tried to use some of the community's traditions, especially the gotong royong tradition, to solve pressing agrarian problems, in particular, to establish cooperatives. Indonesians are Indonesian citizens regardless of race, ethnicity, or religion. Indonesia is a multicultural archipelago with diverse ethnic groups who speak different languages, cultures, and beliefs ([Buchari, 2014](#)). The population of Indonesia according to the 2010 national census was 237.64 million people, and 10 years later when the 2020 population census was carried out it had increased by 32.50 million people to be precise 270.20 million people. 51% of Indonesia's population lives on the island of Java, which is one of the most densely populated islands in the world. Approximately 95% of Indonesia's population are indigenous (dominantly Javanese), while the remaining 5% are Indonesians who come from abroad, such as Arab, Chinese, Indian origin, and others ([Haboddin, 2012](#)).

Currently, there are around 1.340 ethnic groups, according to the 2010 census of the Central Bureau of Statistics, which include (Pangabean, 2018):

- a) Java Island: Javanese (including Banyumasan, Bavian, Tenggerese), Sundanese (including Bedouin), Banten, Cirebon, Betawi, Arab, Chinese, and Indian;
- b) Madura: Madurese;

- c) Sumatra: Malay, Batak (including Toba, Angkola, Karo, Mandaling, Pakpak, and Simalungun), Minangkabau, Aceh, Lampung, Komering, and Palembang;
- d) Kalimantan: Dayak tribe of 268 tribes, Banjar, Kutai, Berau, Bajau;
- e) Sulawesi: Bugi, Makassar, Mandara, Buton, Tolaki, Minahasa, Mongondo, Sangir, Kaili, Gorontalo, Toraja;
- f) Lesser Sunda Islands: Bali, Sasak, Flores, Sumba, Sumbawa, Timor;
- g) Maluku: Ambon, Nuaulu, Manusela, Vemale, Tanimbar;
- h) Papua, namely the Papuan ethnic group consisting of 466 ethnic groups, including the Dani, Bauzi, and Asmat tribes.

Meanwhile, as time went on, a small number of Indians, Arabs, and Chinese came and settled in several places in the archipelago since ancient times during the ancient kingdoms. However, waves of immigration grew rapidly during the colonial period. A group of migrant ethnicities who mostly live in urban areas, such as Chinese, Arabs, or Balinese, as well as mixed (Indonesian-European) communities, were formed during the Dutch East Indies colonial period. The population of Indo-colonial origin in Indonesia declined due to World War II and the Indonesian revolution for independence. Most of them emigrated or repatriated abroad, for example to the Netherlands or other countries.

As previously stated, native Indonesians are referred to as indigenous peoples, while immigrant tribes are referred to as non-indigenous people, referred to as "Penduduk Pribumi" in Indonesian. The following are immigrant ethnic groups (Erb et al, 2005):

1. Chinese - This ethnic group is the most significant foreign ethnic minority in Indonesia. Chinese people have inhabited Indonesia since the 15th century when there was a big wave in the 18th and 19th centuries related to trading activities, which then had a major impact on trade and economic activities in Indonesia. Most Chinese people are concentrated in areas called "Chinatown" in several Indonesian provinces such as Jakarta, North Sumatra, Central Java, East Java, Riau Archipelago, and West Kalimantan.

2. Arabs - According to historical records, the arrival of Arabs in Indonesia was to spread Islam. Many assimilate into local ethnic groups such as the Betawi, Malay, Acehnese, Minangkabau, Javanese, and Sundanese; However, several cities in Indonesia have many Arabs who retain their culture

and identity, which is called "Kampung Arab". This area is spread across all cities in Indonesia, a significant number can be found in Banda Aceh, Padang, Medan, Jakarta, Banten, Bogor, Semarang, Surabaya, Gresik, Banyuwangi and many other coastal cities in Indonesia.

3. Indians – They are mostly Tamils and Punjabis although not as big as Chinese and Arabic. They were concentrated in a large number of urban centers such as Pasar Baru in Jakarta and Kampung Keling (now Kampung Madrasa) in Medan. This important area is called "Little India".

4. Metis - An ethnic origin from a mixture of ethnic origins in Indonesia and Europe (mostly Dutch), they emerged in the Indian and Dutch periods. During the colonial period, their number was greater, but after Indonesia's independence, most of them chose to leave for the Netherlands. The number of Indo-Europeans as an ethnic group declined after the main emigration from Indonesia after World War II.

5. The Turks - Indeed, there is no written evidence regarding the spread of the Turks in the archipelago, but the Turks have a very close relationship with the spread of Islam in the archipelago through the Aceh tribe. The Turkic people in Indonesia are closely related to the mention of the Romans, who were first introduced through Arabic and Persian literature. The name Rum has at least appeared since the 679-1280 century BC, which was long before the rise of the Ottoman empire, Persian and Turkish literature in the archipelago used the term Rum when talking about Byzantium or sometimes for the Roman empire. So that at that time the royal flag in the Aceh region was almost similar to the Turkish flag and most of the people who lived in the Aceh area still had kinship relations with the Turks caused by cross-marriage between nations.

6. Pakistanis - This ethnic group is also known as Khoja, Koja, Kujo, and Tambol. The Koja people are usually from the Kutch, Kathiawar, and Gujarat regions of India and are Muslim, but they prefer Pakistan over India due to their religion. They come from the warrior caste. At first Pakistani people came to Indonesia for the purpose of trading and spreading Islam, but gradually they felt at home and preferred to live and have families in Indonesia. In Indonesia, most Pakistani citizens are called "Pekojan".

7. Japanese - Japanese people migrated to Indonesia during the Dutch East Indies colonial era; However, after their defeat in World War II, their numbers dwindled, so a small proportion of former Japanese soldiers still live in Indonesia and become Indonesian citizens. The recent development of the Japanese population in Indonesia has been driven by an increase in Japanese

business and investment in Indonesia since the 1970s, and most of them are expatriates who still retain their Japanese citizenship. A large number of Japanese emigrants lived in Indonesia, especially in Jakarta, Palembang, Lampung, and Bali.

8. Koreans - The existence of Korean citizens in Indonesia has existed for a long time. There is one of the main figures of the Indonesian independence movement, Komarudin (Korean name: Yang Chil-song) is ethnically Korean. However, they are the newest ethnic group in Indonesia. This is mainly due to the growth of Korean businesses and investments in Indonesia, and most of them are expatriates who still have Korean citizenship. Ethnic Koreans are concentrated in areas called "Koreatown" in several districts in Indonesia such as Jakarta.

3. Ethnic Mobility in Indonesia

In the Indonesian context the rise of primordialist sentiment which then sparked regionalist sentiment and politicization as Indonesia entered in a reform era ([Lestari, 2019](#)). In the ethnic format, primordial sentiments are reflected in attempts to include primordial values in regional regulations, the division of state administrative regions, the desire to obtain special autonomy, and the emergence of a separatist movement in Indonesia. Meanwhile, in a religious context, the primitive feeling is reflected, for example, in various attempts to include religious values in the process of making policies and regional regulations that make a city identical with a particular religion.

According to Buhari ([2014](#)), the Indonesian state is inseparable from a multicultural society that has a main identity, namely a national identity. A multicultural society, as a rule, is in a stable, cohesive, lively and comfortable state, if it meets certain conditions. These conditions include a power structure based on agreement, constitutional rights that can be taken collectively, a just and impartial state, a common culture shaped by multiculturalism and multicultural education, and having a pluralistic view of national identity.

Ethnic mobility in Indonesia is related to the emergence of identity politics in various regions, which is caused by democratization and decentralization in the framework of the real implementation of regional autonomy ([Haboddin, 2012](#)). The growth of identity politics in various regions is believed to be able to increase ethnic mobility, and inspire local cultural values and the aspirations of the people in an area. Ethnic mobility is also believed to be an ethnic movement in strengthening the power of certain ethnic

groups and can also give a good impression through the unification of various ethnic groups in an area. Ethnic mobility in Indonesia occurred through various stages, from the Dutch colonial period (colonialization period), Japanese colonialism, and the New Order period, to the reform of the Indonesian government.

Huntington states that religious factors, cultural factors in the past, political factors and economic factors based on experiences during the Old Order and New Order in Indonesia, among these four factors, cultural factors (political culture), especially ethnic culture, are seen as a subculture that can be an obstacle to the growth of democracy in Indonesia. It is believed that many ethnic cultures in Indonesia have characters that are incompatible with the spirit of democracy, such as traits or characteristics that show "superiority" or "ethnocentrism" that look down on other groups, on the one hand, this will hinder the growth of democracy, with on the other hand, it will cause ethnic conflicts and resistance from others ([Buchari, 2014](#)).

In the context of socio-cultural and political realities, the emergence of ethnicity intensely and totally in the dynamics of Indonesian politics is not something that just appears. In fact, an ethnicity has emerged, namely to sue and question everything related to the issue of justice, justice for all the suffering in the form of marginalization and discrimination in various areas of life that they experienced for a very long period of time in the past (the era of the New Order regime) ([Prayudi, 2004](#)).

Identity politics based on ethnic identities in local communities arose along with the state system, which ensured the existence of a multicultural society from a critical point of view, measured by the diversity that arose in political struggle ([Panggabean, 2018](#)). From a conservative point of view, such as Kymlicka's thinking on multiculturalism, namely the claim that multiculturalism arises from thoughts that assume that culture is the basic foundation of a multicultural society. Therefore, the ideal political system should give every cultural group an equal opportunity to express their identity and aspirations. In this regard, a specific policy is needed to take into account national and ethnic differences, which can be seen in at least three forms ([Koroteeva, 1999](#)): a). The right to self-government; b). Multi-ethnic rights in the form of positive steps to eradicate discrimination and prejudice; c). Right of special representation.

The conservative view sees culture as something ready to create a multicultural society, while the critical view sees culture as a dynamic process towards a multicultural society.

Ethnic mobility in Indonesia has been observed by researchers in Indonesia since the struggle of the Indonesian nation changed from a physical struggle to a struggle against the organization. This struggle was noted by many experts and scientists who founded the Budi Utomo organization and joined it in May 1908. Budi Utomo's organization was mainly focused on Java and Madura. Then, in the following years, a youth organization was formed that was also based on ethnic identity, such as: Jong Java, Jong Sumatranen Bond, Studenden Vereniging Minahasa, Jong Ambon and several other regional organizations such as Pasundans, Betawi people, Timorese. Alliance. Finally, all these regional organizations made a commitment to unite in 1928. This period was an arena for rebellion and unification of various ethnic groups to realize the independence dream of the Indonesian nation ([Mahpudin, 2019](#)).

Ethnic groups in Indonesia before the independence period and before the reformation period were divided into 2 groups, the first was called local or indigenous ethnic groups, and the second was called immigrant or non-indigenous ethnic groups. The ethnic group that caused the most controversy were the Chinese. The sentiment that arose in the Chinese ethnic group from the pre-independence period continued in Indonesia after the reformation. Many of the prejudices expressed by the natives suggest that the Dutch colonial government always gave priority to the Chinese population. So there is envy towards the group that occupies the lowest social class in the Chinese ethnic group who are actually immigrants causing unrest in the indigenous community. In the early 20th century, various Indonesian national movements began to emerge seeking to end colonial rule and establish a state of Indonesian nationality. As a result of this movement, the various nationalist parties became the basis for the creation of national symbols such as the national language, the national flag, and the national anthem. However, at that time, the Chinese began to be forced out of various national movements. This is marked by the creation of socio-political organizations based on ethnic or racial groups. Various nationalist movements that existed at the time, such as the Indonesian Nationalist Party (PNI), the Indonesian Party (Partindo), the New Indonesia Nationalist Party (PNI Baru) and the Greater Indonesia Party (Parindra) also renounced non-indigenous membership. Even one of the most influential movements of the time, such as Sarekat Islam, was anti-Chinese ([Palupi, 2019](#)).

On the other hand, one should probably not assume that nationalism was the main driving force in the uprisings of the second half of the 1920s. In particular, uprisings in regions such as Banten and Minangkabau proceeded under the abstract slogan "Kemerdekaan" (Freedom), while later protests were more politicized, using the ideas of "Indonesia Merdeka", cultivating the idea of

not just a free, but an independent Indonesia. The use of political language based specifically on the idea of "Kemerdekaan" probably indicates that the nationalist idea itself, based on the institutionalization of the nationalist movement in the form of the creation of a new nation state, was not so popular among the Indonesian radical left, who preferred to play on the feelings of the social but not national discontent. At the same time, the communists sought to use Islam for their own purposes ([Erman & Albintani, 2018](#)).

As Indonesia gained independence, namely during the Japanese occupation, the awareness of ethnicity increased. The Chinese group was ruled separately from the native population and encouraged to keep their ethnic identity. Therefore, it is not surprising that the Constitution of 1945 adopted by the Nationalists provided that "the President of the Republic of Indonesia must be a native of Indonesia." This of course implicitly rejects and considers that local Chinese citizens and other Crossbreed in Indonesia are not part of the Indonesian state, and rejects the existence of Chinese citizens and other ([Mahpudin, 2019](#)). This situation has led to a lack of interaction between the Chinese and the indigenous peoples, so that various stereotypes have arisen between the two groups. The natives view the Chinese as an exclusive group that is only focused on profit in business. Meanwhile, the Chinese viewed the indigenous people as a group of lazy and extortionate people, because the indigenous people, who held high positions in the government, often blackmailed Chinese businessmen. The various factors above often led to various anti-Chinese riots.

4. Ethnic Participation in the Politics in Indonesia

Political parties are primary means or institutions that enable citizens to participate in public life. The presence of political parties in Indonesia has a long history since Dutch colonialism and is combined with the existence of other political institutions. In other words, it can be said that political parties in Indonesia are not new organizations in the life of the political system run by the people of that country. With the expansion of public suffrage in 1945, political activity in the country has moved beyond formal political institutions with the creation of various electoral and oversight bodies that regulate voter turnout during election periods. In this case, political parties are deemed necessary to gain support from various community groups spread across various regions in Indonesia ([Ross, 2011](#)).

According to Wiranda Galang, a member of the West Papua General Election Commission, the level of ethnic participation in Indonesian political parties is quite high. Currently, the General Election Commission records that the majority of people in the regions, especially in West Papua, are the basis for the victory of candidates from the regions. Various regional head candidates have tried to approach the tribal chiefs for support and the opportunity to run for governor in the West Papua region. In the 2019 Regional Head Elections, the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle still dominates the region, according to the West Papua General Election Commission. Candidates for Governor of the West Papua Region tend to work closely with candidates for Deputy Governor who are not native to the area because of their diversity in remote areas. However, political elites tend to use religious issues to gain power.

Not only in West Papua, various ethnic groups in Indonesia also always try to be able to participate in political parties. Based on data from the General Election Commission of the Republic of Indonesia, around 50% of the votes in the election were dominated by the Javanese, and the party currently in power is the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle. The strength of the party is considered significant because it influences various aspects of society. The party chaired by Megawati Sukarnoputri is in the eyes of the public the strongest party in Indonesia today and is based on Javanese ethnicity.

The following is data on political parties in Indonesia, both national parties and local parties in the 2019 elections:

Table 1. Political Parties in Indonesia in 2019

| No. | Political Party Name | Acronym | Party Status |
|-----|--|----------|----------------|
| 1. | National Awakening Party (Partai Kebangkitan Bangsa) | PKB | National Party |
| 2. | Great Indonesia Movement Party (Partai Gerakan Indonesia Raya) | GERINDRA | National Party |
| 3. | Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan) | PDIP | National Party |
| 4. | Work Group Party (Partai Golongan Karya) | GOLKAR | National Party |
| 5. | Democratic National Party (Partai Nasional Demokrat) | NASDEM | National Party |
| 6. | Indonesian Change Movement Party (Partai Gerakan Perubahan Indonesia) | GARUDA | National Party |

| | | | |
|-----|--|-----------------|----------------|
| 7. | Work Party (Partai Berkarya) | BERKARYA | National Party |
| 8. | Prosperous Justice Party (Partai Keadilan Sejahtera) | PKS | National Party |
| 9. | Indonesian Unity Party (Partai Persatuan Indonesia) | PERINDO | National Party |
| 10. | United Development Party (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan) | PPP | National Party |
| 11. | Indonesian Solidarity Party (Partai Solidaritas Indonesia) | PSI | National Party |
| 12. | National Mandate Party (Partai Amanat Nasional) | PAN | National Party |
| 13. | People's Conscience Party (Partai Hati Nurani Rakyat) | HANURA | National Party |
| 14. | Democratic Party (Partai Demokrat) | PD | National Party |
| 15. | Aceh Party (Partai Aceh) | PA | Local Party |
| 16. | Sira Party (Partai Sira) | SIRA | Local Party |
| 17. | Aceh Regional Party (Partai Daerah Aceh) | PD ACEH | Local Party |
| 18. | Nanggroe Aceh Party (Partai Nanggroe Aceh) | PNA | Local Party |
| 19. | Star Moon Party (Partai Bulan Bintang) | PBB | National Party |
| 20. | Indonesian Justice and Unity Party (Partai Keadilan dan Persatuan Indonesia) | (PKP INDONESIA) | National Party |

Source: <https://infopemilu.kpu.go.id/pileg2019/verpoll/skparpol>

Based on this data, there are only 20 political parties that are legal to take part in the 2019 election. The table shows that only 4 parties are local parties and 16 are national parties. Political parties in Indonesia are regulated by the Law on Political Parties, namely Law Number 2 of 2011. In forming political parties, all levels of society who participate in them must refer to the state ideology, namely Pancasila, and refer to the 1945 Constitution.

According to Agus Fatoni, Head of the Research and Development Agency of the Ministry of Home Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, citizens are allowed to participate in political activities, including legally recognized political parties. Currently, various people from various nations are starting to realize the importance of political development, so many ethnic groups want to

participate in Indonesian political parties. Indeed, the Javanese are currently the most dominant in politics in Indonesia, but other ethnic groups, such as the Balinese, Batak, Padang, Madura, Palembang, Lampung, and many others, dominate political parties. The spread of Javanese ethnicity in various regions led to an increase in Javanese participation in party activities and continued to dominate, however, the government continued to exercise control over political parties in order to maintain political stability and manage domestic tensions.

The issue of ethnicity is a sensitive issue because it intersects with ethnic, religious, racial and intergroup values. Prohibition of the formation of political parties on the basis of ethnicity is considered a violation of human rights, because it limits the rights of citizens to express their aspirations. However, the formation of political parties based on ethnicity is seen as an act that divides unity ([Palupi, 2019](#)). However, the exception is the Aceh region which is allowed to establish local political parties based on ethnicity based on Law Number 11 of 2006 concerning the Provincial Government of Aceh, and considering that the area is a special autonomous region, all Acehnese are allowed to participate in local parties and regional political activities. belongs to the ideology of the Indonesian nation.

D. CONCLUSION

Various ethnic groups in Indonesia still maintain traditional and cultural values passed down from their ancestors before Indonesian independence. The population is spread across various islands such as Java, Sumatra, Madura, Kalimantan, Sulawesi, and Papua. Ethnic mobility in Indonesia is often associated with ethnic migration and the emergence of identity politics that occur in various regions and sometimes cause unrest in society. Meanwhile, political identity in the country is somehow connected with the principles of multiculturalism, so that ethnic values are still preserved by the people and become the hallmark of this nation. In addition, the identity of the Indonesian nation is still maintained by people in various regions. The history of the struggle of the Indonesian people against colonialism is one of the concrete manifestations that the Indonesian people still uphold the values of unity and oneness and fight for national independence. The spirit of nationalism is one of the community's efforts to maintain the integrity of the nation in today's modern era, despite the fact that there are still people who do not understand the importance of nationalism, the majority of people in this country continue to support and preserve it.

Strengthening the values of nationalism in Indonesia is also marked by the motto "Unity in Diversity" and the application of the national ideology, namely "Pancasila" which is the guideline and guideline for the Indonesian nation in organizing activities for political parties. Domestically, the activities of political parties are regulated by law and must comply with the nation's ideology so that there are no deviations from state principles. Laws on political parties in Indonesia have been amended, the first being Law No. 31 of 2002, then amended by Law No. 2 of 2008, and finally amended by Law No. 2 of 2011 concerning political parties in Indonesia.

From the results of this study, it can be seen that the participation of ethnic groups in political parties in Indonesia is quite high, and the majority are Javanese, who are around 50% more dominant in Indonesian political parties and government. As of 2019, there are 20 political parties legally permitted to participate in elections. Of the 20 parties, 16 are national parties and 4 are local parties. Currently, the ruling party in Indonesia is the Indonesian Democratic Party of Struggle "PDIP" under the leadership of Megawati Soekarno Putri, and is the largest party. Most members of this party are Javanese. Most of the ethnic sentiments that arise in Indonesia are caused by social and religious jealousy, people's demands for economic growth in the regions are the responsibility of the government to fulfill so good governance is needed in Indonesia. The Indonesian nation urgently needs to increase the value of nationalism in the face of ongoing political and ethnic turmoil. With the existence of Pancasila as the national ideology and Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as the nation's unifying motto, the Indonesian nation continues to strive to maintain its integrity and identity.

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