

# **HISTORY EDUCATION IN BORDERLINE TERRITORY**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Indonesian government policies that emphasize economic growth and national stability, characterized by authoritarian and centralized government in the past, inflict a disparity in regional growth. The control of central government to the region, seems to disturb the sense of justice and the welfare of the people on the borderline territory which are considered retarded, isolated, and marginalized. Moreover, the increasing of smuggling, human trafficking, and terrorism has been disturbing the sense of historical awareness in relation to the issue of nationality. It started from reform era followed by regional autonomy policy gives space to the region government to balance the local development. This article discussed, first: The importance of History education in borderline territory, Second: ethnic historical concept and regional studies in borderline territory, third: ethnical integration based on sociocultural aspect of national character reinforcement in borderline, and fourth: history education development to increase the competitiveness, which also expected to strengthen the nationalism in borderline territory.*

**Key words:** *history education, ethnic history and regional study, borderline territory, national character, and nationalism.*

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## **Introduction**

Indonesia is called archipelago, consists of cluster of islands which have a long bond of history between each other. On one hand, Indonesia is viewed as the islands which are surrounded by the sea. While on the other hand, it is viewed as the seas that surrounded by the islands. These facts show the importance of seas and islands for Indonesia as one of the largest archipelago in the world. Until now, the management of the islands and the seas especially those which lie in borderline territory was apparently still not up to do, where as has a strategic significance for the country's sovereignty (cf. Lopian, 2009). Besides, the problems of nation's character not only determined by the people who occupy in urban areas, but also determined by the presence of people at the borderline which are generally located in remote areas. Since ancient times, the Indonesian ancestor is known as sailors who sailed through the oceans to one island and another and dropped in to every mainland. Throughout a long migrations and historical processes, Indonesian nationalism was attached between one island and another, so that, it becomes a country – Indonesia today (Ardhana, 2011:377-403).

However, there is no-maximum awareness to develop the potential that exists at the border, that involves both of natural resources and human resources causing the emergence of distortions in the society development which in turn led to the decreasing of Indonesian character quality in the middle of global society. Inability to raise the level of competitiveness rendering border region is often used as the crime scene such as illegal logging, human trafficking, even become the passage of terrorism. How

Indonesian border is so alarming, while in the future the region will expected to grow as it did in the Strait of Malacca, which will be developed into a new development center in the Asia Pacific region.

In the past, Borneo Island was often considered as the future of Indonesia, because it has not been exploited by colonialist. While Java and Sumatra had been considered in the past, during the planting system known as "cultivation" or the plantation system (onderneming) implemented by the Dutch colonial authorities had penetrated these two islands, especially in the 19th century. It so surprised because of the fact today; Kalimantan has been widely exploited by Western businessmen and natives and if not managed properly the hope to be the nation future will be just a mere dream. An interesting thing to reveal as when we aboard to the plane and fly around the border between East Kalimantan (Indonesia) and try to compare it to the border of Sabah, or Sarawak (Malaysia) it can be seen how irregular management of the border area in East Kalimantan. Malaysia territory seems to be more organized with the oil palm plantations. While the East Kalimantan region appear once is unorganized, as a result of abandonment by businessmen's plantation or mining companies operated in the border region previously. Indonesian border region seemed well managed. Moreover, the people who stayed within the area are not many, mostly abandoned by its occupants because of the nomadic life pattern (slash and burn agriculture). In the modern era, many people leave the border region in an effort to seek fortune as labor in the neighbor country. The border region is still considered to be the

“backyard” of a country, so it seems as underdeveloped, retarded, and filled with shades of poverty. That is the picture of our borders of our country. Whether it adjacent with other country by land or by the sea. The importance is to understand the land concept that involves mountains, valleys, hills which are considered to be the barrier among social groups and the sea concept that are not considered to preclude a relationship between the islands, but it can integrate the community in establishing a sense of Indonesian nationality. Moreover, many Indonesian territory that adjacent with other countries that are not only contiguous land areas such as Papua and East Timor, but also contiguous sea as contained in Sebatik island, East Kalimantan province. In the past, land and sea were considered as a barrier to development, but in the reality on the border area with another country, land and sea became the integrating factor among the population with the other one, because there are ethnicity similarities, although they have different citizenship.

How the socio-cultural environment, economics and politics can be understood in the context of Indonesian nationality in the border region? It is difficult to understand the concept of Indonesian nationality, without considering the historical aspects that has integrated various people who have different ethnic groups, religions, languages, and cultures. Indonesian Independence History was proclaimed on August 17, 1945, extraordinary impact in that gave relation to the status of every citizen who formerly colonized then transformed into an independent nation. This is the evident, that in just a matter of a very meaningful day when Indonesia was declared an independent state, on

August 17, 1945 every exist ethnic groups simultaneously realized, that they were no longer as tribes, that are scattered without any bond, but then has a state has a spaceand becomes a nation of Indonesia (nation-state building).

This is the meaning of an independent nation, and we were awakened, that without the independence we were a member of a different ethnic from one tribe to anothers, without any sense of Indonesian nationalism. The concept of nationalism stars, when the highest individual consciousness of the group surrender to nationality, then nationalism is born. It means when the highest individual consciousness of the group surrender to nationality which implies that collective or group consciousness, or a tribe has been joining in the context of collective consciousness in the form of nationalism consciousness.

The understanding of the importance of historical awareness like this seems to have elaborated comprehensively considering some conflict issues that arise in the border areas not only because of political factors alone, but also because of economic factors and socio-cultural factors (Ardhana, 2012), so it is necessary to obtain a better understanding of national consciousness in the border region. Knowing the importance of historical awareness to the people who stay at the border region, if we want to strengthen the sense of nationalism, not just those who live in developed area in big cities, but also for them who live in the border region that is still retarded, isolated, and underdeveloped. It is considered very urgent to strengthening border line historical material in relation to the curriculum in 2013, where the history curriculum is in

it. Therefore, it is considered significant to look at the borders' historical aspects that need to be loaded in the curriculum taught in schools located in the border region.

Since the beginning of the reform era in 1998 and the concept of regional autonomy (decentralization) was rolled out in 2001, it occurs of paradigm changes for government authority in regional areas (Ulaen, 2003: 175). The emphasis is to start realizing the importance of developing the areas that a little bit ignored in the New Order era, causing the development of disparity, imbalance of economic growth and increasing poverty. So, government policy in the reform era pursuing the vocational schools in the border area between Indonesia and neighbor countries should be appreciated. The education policy is very significant, not only to enhance the public's sense of justice prosperity in the border region, but also expecting the citizen in the border region to strengthen their sense of Indonesia nationality, without easily provoked by other foreign powers. In this context, it is important for education provider, especially who deal with the substance of history education, that the curriculum of the border region is a must. Therefore, the borderline territory is an important theme that should be discussed in multidimensional, because it is not only a problem of Indonesia republic, but also considering the historical relationship of the population who become citizens of other countries. This is where the discussion of border issues is necessary not only comprehensively, but also comparatively considering inhabitants' dynamics and conditions of the neighbor country.

### **History of Ethnic Consciousness (Ethno-History) and Area Studies**

As we know that the concept of boundaries or national borders is not a stiff socio-cultural concept that separates the ethnic that live in the border territory, but rather as a political concept related to border demarcation issues based on a concept of the political unity of the country. In this case, at the surface, there is a choice of becoming an Indonesian citizen or a citizen of Malaysia. While at the community level (grassroots), usually they do not distinguish themselves become any citizenship. This means in general, the concept does not seem important to them, because long before the modern state was formed, they actually have a relationship of ethnicity among ethnic groups that exist in the region.

However, in reality when the modern state is established, so the necessity of choosing the citizenship should to be done. This is a requirement of a modern state establishment must have territory, population, and government. The relationship between the inhabitants of borderline territory in daily life was existed before the formation of the modern state since long time ago. Such as in the old days when colonial era, often political power issues that took place in the center of the colonial power, had no effect on the lives of the residents of border communities. But it would be important, if there was dispute about the border issues with the neighbor countries, so the understanding of border residents is important.

For example in Kalimantan, ethnic migration becomes an important study

to conduct because of the ethnicity relationship between the population in Indonesian Kalimantan with a population of Malaysian, Kalimantan, and Brunei Darussalam. Ethnic relations have occurred since prehistoric, so that in history during both of British colonial rule in Malaysia and the Dutch in Indonesia, they seemed not too much disturbed by the colonization activities (cf. Magenda, 1991). Also not surprisingly, if historical evidence were not found in the border region too often at least, if it has something to do with the issue of political control of the colonial rulers to the border territory, they will mentioned border region in the UK and Dutch government documents. It's certainly a different description, when compared to the power dynamics of colonial rule that occurs in the centers area, especially in urban areas. This also means that as the authority in the monarchy or sultanate centered in the royal or the sultan palace, and there where their rule of the power and rarely touches the marginalized areas (remote areas).

Typology of colonial government power did not seem different from the authority of the kingdom. This condition allowed people or tribes who lived in the border areas to be loose and detached from the political control of the colonial rulers. The existence of this condition allowed the relations between the members of the tribe were inseparable, even though politically they have to choose their citizenship status in the era of modern nations' formation of modern nations in general Asia, and particularly in Southeast Asia, including Indonesia.

Any partition in the sense of political citizenship status imposed by the modern

state and government, do not daunt them to integrate in the social and cultural issues, because in the political concept is not reinstated. There are some fundamental reasons about those interdependencies. Beside to political problems that is based on the difference in nationality, their dependence is determined also by their geographical conditions in Indonesian Borneo that is isolated compared to the population in Malaysian Borneo.

The results of our study with researchers from the Sarawak Development Institute in 2004, entitled, "Border of Kinship and Ethnicity: Cross Border Relations Between the Kelalan Valley, Sarawak, and the Bawan Valley, East Kalimantan" indicates inequality among the population on the border of East Kalimantan Indonesia and Malaysia Sarawak, so causing the dependence of the economy with the across country (Ardhana, Jayl Langub, and Chew, 2004). The example is not only Dayak ethnic who had a common ancestor in Kalimantan with Sarawak in Ba Kelalan (Malaysia) and Long Bawan in Krayan, East Kalimantan (Indonesia), but because they are separated by differences of nationality, so it is given a different name. For example, the Dayak community in Malaysia is called by LunBawan, while the Dayak tribe in the region of East Kalimantan, Indonesia is called by *Lun Dayeh*.

Although the control of each state to the dynamics of the population is not strong enough, but the attitude that wants to hegemony appear among those and try to compete with others to create a dependency between one another. The exist of economic disparities, is not only because of the areas are isolated (Landlocked area),

especially in the East Kalimantan region of Indonesia, but also them to depends to the economic development in neighbor communities. Both in Sarawak, and also in Sabah, Malaysia.

### **Ethnic Integration and “Ulu Padas” Concepts**

Ethnic migration occurred in the border region shows the dynamics movement of people that are directly carrying cultural and social traditions, economic and political to the visited region. Although they are spread out in the visited region, but they still maintain their cultural traditions. It is not difficult for them to distinguish between intra-ethnic originate from the same ancestry. For example as among ethnic Dayak, they still distinguish among the *Dayak Bidayuh*, *Dayak Punan*, *Dayak Long Bawan*, *Dayak Lun Dayeh*, and so on which have the specific characteristics. A long history of migration gives them reason to have different sense of history among another.

Among *Dayak Lun Dayeh* who migrated around the region of East Kalimantan Indonesia has a sense of history that is predominantly influenced by the Indonesia nationality, while for the LunBawan tribe who migrated around the region of Malaysia, Sarawak, certainly strongly influenced by Malaysia. Although often occurs social friction between them, but this does not mean there is no dialogue between the two ethnic groups of different nationalities, but has an origin and a common ancestor.

The only differences are is the dynamics of geography, history, and political history that distinguish between these two ethnic groups. It can be seen how the intensity

of the British colonialism of Sarawak and Sabah Malaysia has a different dynamics to the existing ethnic Dayak in East Kalimantan under the Dutch colonialism.

When the Japanese colonialism era between the years 1942-1945, both of colonial authorities seemed both resigned. The political conditions give space for the Japanese to influence the two ethnic groups. More-over, after the propaganda that the Japanese, who also came from Asia, that they want to be “leader, protector, and The Light of Asia”.

The war slogan delivered by Japanese soldiers apparently was welcomed by the ethnic groups. At the very least, the promise to provide independence for Indonesia gained attention among them. This occurs when declaration of Indonesian independence was reported on August 17, 1945 that they change the status of the colonized tribes, together with other ethnic in Indonesia that became independent in the unity of the nation and state of Indonesia.

As the news of the proclamation was delivered, it can be said that the Japanese occupation did not last long, and not succeeded in filling the dream to unify Asia under the rule of the Dai Nippon, because allied forces under British and Dutch landed back. Also, when they were at the mercy of the Allies, they become war victim in the border region.

Bad communication induced the two ethnic groups who did not know what exactly happening in the centers. What is clear in the border region where a fierce battle took place British ship was shot down in the border of Sarawak, Long Bawan and Krayan district of East Kalimantan. Besides, when it reported

about the formation of Malaysia in 1960, they did not know exactly what was going on. On the one hand, ethnic groups in Indonesia still retained the independence of Indonesia that had been delivered, while ethnic groups in Malaysia also welcomes the freedom given to them by the British government in the 1960s (1967).

According to local experience, they do not know exactly what was going on between Indonesia and Malaysia, because according to him, their daily life has not changed much, compared to the centers of power. It means that since long time ago the border area received less attention, from anyone who became ruler in the region.

What can be learned from their experiences under both the imperialism was just suffering. They were feel untouched by so many programs delivered by both imperialist that just wanted to exploit their territory. So, when they were no longer expressed as a colonized nation, they also thought their lives were not changes. For ethnic groups in Malaysia, it may be felt a change, because the federal form allows the changes.

Unlike the border areas in Indonesia, especially in East Kalimantan, there are not many changes when compared to what happened to their neighbors in Malaysia. This is the source of their dependence with Malaysian. They have firmly become an Indonesian citizen or a Malaysian citizen politically, but what about the social culture?

This is the concern of the ethnic groups in the border region. Those who have the awareness of tribal ancestors that came from the same ethnic, treid to recreate the memories of what they had in the past.

One of the ways is to visiting each other every Independence Day celebration held at the border of their respective areas. For example, Lun Bawan ethnic of Sarawak (Malaysia) has always been visiting Long Midang border area (East Kalimantan) Indonesia in Indonesian independence celebrations moment on August 17 every year. They held various sporting events, bazaars and so on. This is a significant media to unify the retained tribal sense, although they have different citizenship status between citizens of Indonesia and Malaysia. It is not surprising, in the mountainous areas such as in Sabah, Malaysia believe that the stone at *Ulu Padas* area the people that is able to unify their ethnic consciousness. Both ethnic groups of different nationalities assume that the Ulu Padas can be a media to unify their traditions, social and cultural aspects of the past, present, and the future.

### **History of Education, Competitiveness, and Indonesianness Strengthening**

The issue of border history is very complex and multidimensional. It needs to be considered from two sides that are between the Indonesian states and also across the country related to the dynamics of the socio-cultural, economic and politics in the border area. If viewed from state politics aspects there are a clear and straight separation between the two ethnic groups that inhabit the border region as an Indonesian citizen or as a citizen of Malaysia.

As for the conditions in border areas such as in Long Bawan (East Kalimantan) Indonesia adjacent to Ba Kelalan (Sarawak) Malaysia, it is often that Lun Dayeh East

Kalimantans' communities are unable to compete with Lun Bawan in Sarawak Malaysia. They are often empowered, because the location of Lun Dayeh in Long Bawan was isolated (Landlocked area) in the sense of the lack of infrastructure directed to the region. This conditions led to the situation that they become dependent to Malaysia for daily necessities such as gas supplies, sugar, soap, instant noodles, cooking oil and so on, because the subsidies from the government were very limited and the arrival from Surabaya, Makassar and Pare-Pare ( Sulawesi) often late to the border region. This condition is made an opportunity for traders to manipulate stock of Malaysian goods and the prices. Meanwhile, Lun Bawan people in Malaysia do not have such problems as Lun Dayeh in East Kalimantan.

This condition allows the very strong economic dependence on the community of Lun Dayeh and Lun Bawan. Rice or padee was planted by Lun Dayeh ethnic and sold to traders or people of Sarawak such as Lun Bawan who changed its name to Bario Rice or Malaysia Rice. The rice prices are determined by a Malaysian trader who usually sold to Kuching, capital city of Sarawak, even up to Kuala Lumpur, the capital of Malaysian (Ardhana, 2007: 375). In fact, even for the development of tourism the people in border area is highly depended on Malaysia. Foreign tourists who are visiting Long Bawean area have been managed by agents Sarawak. In fact, the hotels usually carried in the border area of Sarawak in Malaysia.

This condition shows the weak competitiveness of Indonesia's citizen who lived in the border areas, when compared to the inhabitant in the border of Malaysia.

It is not only about the natural resources that are often mocked, but also issues such as human resource issues (Indonesian Workers) employed in Sarawak and Sabah in Malaysia. Therefore, it can be seen how the Indonesian people who inhabit in the borderline territory are unable to compete with neighbor communities (Ardhana and Maunati, 2010a: 36-63).

In order to improve the characters of ethnic Lun Dayeh needs to be pursued to explore and recognize the values of local wisdom that has been inherited from generation to generation, but seems to be eroded by the times, so that the students, youth groups began to recognize the values of wisdom that are born and thrive in their communities. By exploring the values of local wisdom contained in the community, hopefully they do not lose their own identity, but can retain their potential as social and cultural capital, which in turn can be able to increase the nation character in a broader context. Something should be appreciated, although they were from the same Dayak tribe ethnic, but ethnic *Lun Dayeh* do not want to change the name after the name Lun Bawan. This is one of concern and the viability of the high values of the community to maintain their identity. In the concept of identity it is said that an identity will appear when it is recognized by the other (Maunati, 2000 and Maunati, 2003).

However, the values of Lun Dayeh identity as a community need to be explored and examined comprehensively in the context of strengthening the Indonesia local identity located on the border. As known, although the population in the border has a clear status on citizenship issues such as Indonesian citizen or as a Malaysian

citizen, so it cannot be free to come and to go out in the border region again as before the modern state formed.

All state rules must be obeyed, even though sometimes they succeeded in doing illegal trade through informal street called “rat road” (illegal roads) that has existed since their ancestors in the border area between Malaysia and Indonesia. For example Sebatik area in East Kalimantan, the location of the border area are remote from the development or progress than other place of Indonesia, then this place becomes the causes of high intensity of their dependence on their neighbor countries.

The basic needs delivery to the border areas also often have restrains, because of the harsh weather of the port in Surabaya or Makassar to Nunukan (East Kalimantan). So, the ship cannot deliver goods on time (Ardhana, 2009: 225-265). Because of that limitation, it is no wonder why the trade relations conducted by the Indonesian citizen with the Malaysian through socio-cultural relations that exist in relation to economic activity by “ups and downs economic” in the Muara Sungai in the border region. This condition shows that the socio-cultural potential implemented on economic interests and also to strengthen social cohesion between the two cultures. This can be happened, if we can understand the long history of the relationship between them, especially when it has not been the presence of the role of the modern state, as can be seen now.

Therefore, the importance of understanding the aspects of this relationship should not only gained by historians, but also by the community social commission, schools, professional associations, and so on. It is important

to begin thinking about the substance of the history curriculum taught in schools located in the border region. The understanding of the types of local plants such as orchids, herbs and other rare plants, attempted preservation as soon as possible because Borneo as a “world lungs” is not just a mere slogan, but must realized by the government policy to lower levels in society (cf. Ardhana, 2009a). Similarly as palm trees, whose management should be from upstream to downstream in order to maximize its development. Therefore, it is important to develop the agriculture and plantation history in history’s curriculum material at the border region. It is the same as in the case of mining, the need to raise the community awareness of the importance of the sustainable mining development. Therefore, it is important to fix the citizen intelligence level to avoid the social and cultural, economic, legal, and political distortion in borders. Ethnic groups map related to the composition of the population and cultural understanding of social relations that occur at the border become important. It shows the significant of the ethno-history issue and area studies perspective (Ardhana and Maunati. 2010b), which deals with the borderline territory mindset to be included in the substance of the history curriculum in the border region.

### **Conclusion**

The globalization process that occurs in all parts of the world, including in Indonesia border region is a process that cannot be avoided, so it needs to make the strategy to compile the relevant material in the history education curriculum that will be given to the students who inhabit the border region.

On one hand, the process of globalization is indeed a positive impact on national and regional development. But on the other hand, seems to have a negative impact on the community development. If it is not managed properly, It would be seen from the increasing of the various conflicts in the multidimension community, dependence with neighbor countries, and also about the fragility of cultural values concept that have rooted in the community. Therefore, it is urgent to discuss about the border issue related to the substance of history curriculum in the border region. In the central government at the macro level, the paradigm change of the security approach into welfare and sense of justice approach. At the micro level, especially in border areas, not only physical infrastructure development like road construction is needed, but also rather a holistic education development strategy to the educational infrastructure is more urgent so the next generation can compete in the global era.

Therefore, it is important to blend area study or borderline territory understanding into the school curriculum. In this case, it is necessary to fill history education curriculum with the materials related to border issues including the revitalization of local knowledge, the natural resources development related to sustainable development, and improve human resources in the context of understanding the relation of ethnicity that exist in the border. In time, the history is expected to form the values of Indonesian culture and defending the nations' sovereignty. So it can increase the sense of justice and welfare of the people at the border.

Moreover, in the future these areas area geared to develop towards the center of new civilization that is, "Asia Pacific Century" that connects the centers of progress among countries between America, Australia, and Asia. Through the area concept, the role of communities in the border areas needs to be improved greatly by increasing the community intelligence. The balance of the increase of intelligence community or ethnic group should be aligned with government policies to improve the government officer of state intelligence, so that the social culture, economics, law, and politics values can be maintained in the context of nation-state building in the era of globalization. Thus, the border region is not expected as a "backyard", but a "front window" of the Indonesian state.

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