

Collective Memory as Tool of Identity Assimilation: Case Study - Glodok, Jakarta

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Abstract: Identity issues become one of the political campaign tools especially to the ethnic issue of Chinese descendants that goes along with religious issue in the process of local leader election in Jakarta. In this paper, the study examines the process of identity assimilation that occurred in the Glodok area as an effort to anticipate the possible conflicts between local Muslims as the majority in the majority area of ethnic Chinese. The case study employs symbolic interactionist paradigm as the theoretical framework. The result is that the process of identity accommodation and assimilation occurring in Glodok is primarily based on collective memory and shared experience. The awareness of the resident that Glodok as familiar territory needs to be preserved, furthermore, the identity as a part of Glodok society becomes an alternative identity to overcome the diversity that occurred in Glodok. The awareness of this alternative identity affects the process of assimilation while forming shared experience.

1 INTRODUCTION

Ethnic-based politic has a long story in Indonesia. Since the Dutch colonization era, Ethnicity has been used as the state ideology especially toward Chinese ethnic that divide into other with ethnic consciousness through social stratification and by encouraging the development of ethnic-based parties (L. Suryadinata, 2011). Even though in New-Order era of Indonesia ethnic-based parties were banned, however, ethnic-based politic shifted to "Indonesianisasi" (to make something or someone to become Indonesian) the minority, especially toward Chinese ethnic. Suharto depoliticized the Chinese ethnic by restricting their activity to economic-field. In the fall of Suharto, Chinese-Indonesian became the victim of the conflict. Their shop was ransacked, looted, and burned down; many were attacked; and numerous ethnic Chinese women tortured, raped, and killed (L. Suryadinata, 2011). Glodok area in Jakarta was one of the Chinese ethnic areas that affected by the chaos.

Nowadays in the post-reform era, Issue of ethnic identity is still becoming one of the socio-political issues in Jakarta. One of the closest is the ethnicity issue that promotes to be campaign material for the local leader election of Jakarta. Ethnic identity and religious is the most common issue happened in the elections process. The issue of ethnic identity is

widely heard as one of the socio-political issues in Jakarta lately. One of the closest is the ethnics issue that is used as campaign material for the Jakarta regional head election. Ethnic and religious identity is the most common issue in Jakarta regional head elections process. Indigenous ethnic and Chinese ethnic issues are part of the political campaign that has been going on.

It is an exciting topic to discuss the contestation of ethnic identity in Jakarta. Glodok becomes an area known as a region with a majority of ethnic Chinese descent, and non-Chinese became a minority in the Glodok environment. Unlike in other cities like Semarang which has Chinatown, Glodok can be the Chinatown in Jakarta. The existence of Chinese descendants in Jakarta has passed a long history. Onghokham writes that the presence of ethnic Chinese community has started from the colonial period where J.P. Coen at the time captured several hundred Chinese and took him to Batavia which was just built at that moment (Onghokham, 1983). Currently, ethnic majority in Indonesia are indigenous and Muslim, while the outside of these two identities is considered to be a minority. Historically, there was the assimilation of identity from ethnic Chinese towards ethnic majority until the term of crossbreed came into existence. The Chinese community in Indonesia is slowly following the majority life until the term "Cina Cukur"

emerged (Onghokham, 1983). So what if the opposite happens? Indigenous Muslims who are considered the majority become a minority in the Glodok area.

Glodok is one of the areas in Jakarta that is part of the "Old City". Since the reign of the Dutch East Indies, this area is also known as the largest Chinatown in Batavia. The majority of Glodok residents are of Chinese descent. Today Glodok is known as one of the electronic sales centers in Jakarta, Indonesia. Administratively, this area is a sub-district included in the Taman Sari sub-district, West Jakarta.

In "Hikayat Jakarta" (1998) by Willard Hanna in *Tionghoa dalam puseran kekuasaan* (Setiono, 2008), the governor-general of the VOC who ruled until 1929, Jan Pieterszoon Coen, believed that Chinese people were "... a resilient nation, diligent and likes to work ... There is no energy that is more suitable for our purposes or that can be mobilized equally easily than the Chinese. "So, no wonder many Chinese communities then lived around the south of the Dutch fortress (now the Old City of Jakarta). the Chinese had lived in Glodok in the mid-17th century based on the conclusions of Heuken referring to the Chronicle of *Kai-ba-li-dai shij* (Chinese Chronicle in Batavia) compiled in the 18th century, saying, "Around 1650, Chinese Lieutenant Guo Xun Guan established a temple to honor the Guan-Yin in the Glodok area (Heuken, 1997).

"After Baron van Imhoff became Governor General in Batavia, ethnic Chinese were concentrated in one place outside the Citadel of the city which is now called Glodok," wrote Hembing Wijayakusuma in *Pembantaian massal, 1740: tragedi berdarah Angke*. the cause the rebellion known as Geger Pacinan. The Chinese fought the colonial government in 1740. There are around 20,000 Chinese who are victims. Even because of the incident, the river flow that was not far from the Glodok area turned into a blood red color. As a result of this incident, to facilitate the detainees against Chinese ethnicity, since then the Dutch East Indies Government issued a regulation called *Wijkenstelsel*, in which the Chinese ethnicity is only allowed to stay in the Glodok area and prohibited from living inside the city walls. But precisely because of this regulation the business life in the Glodok area is growing rapidly. At Glodok, they make buildings stronger than before. This area then has a crowded market, and the port is not too far from Glodok (Wijayakusuma, 2005).

There are four temples that are 300 years old and still stand firm, like the economic strength of the Chinese in Indonesia. Dozens of shops have opened down and practice and countless traders of Chinese medicine are sold freely at kiosk shops, and

shopping centers. Statistical data shows that the population composition of Glodok is around 82 percent of the 12 thousand residents in their urban areas of Chinese descent. So, the non-chinese is much smaller than the Chinese in Glodok and become the minority.

This paper shows the relationships of ethnic in the Glodok area, especially in the Petak Sembilan area and how each ethnic group relates to each other without losing their respective identities, using symbolic interactionist paradigm as the theoretical framework and qualitative fieldwork research as the method of the field observation and in-depth interview. Furthermore, this study presents the process of identifying each other as individual and groups that each of them is different without harming the harmony or causing the conflict especially, the emergence of prejudices against ethnic Chinese by those who identify themselves as part of the indigenous majority.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW: IDENTITY ASSIMILATION

Identity is a must. Every individual in this world has unique identity based on their unique personality trait. An it's a nature to human to construct their own uniqueness whenever they interact with other in social life. This uniqueness was the identity of each individual and has their social aspect as the identity show up in coexistence with other individual.

Current studies shows that ethnicity refers to the identification of a group based on a perceived cultural distinctiveness that makes the group into a group of "people". And this identification make us to admit that we live in diversity of identities and ethnics.

Mohd Yusof Bakar (Bakar, 2013) wrote that in this ethnic diversity can lead to identity conflict. So, to avoid the conflict and preserve pace. A country choose their collective identity like Indonesia with Indonesia Raya or Malaysia with 1Malaysia Concept. The two country mentioned was the country with multi-ethnic identity that live coexistence and assimilating the various ethnic to one national identity. His study was discuss about the assimilation process and the discourse of the needs of assimilation or preserve local identities.

Assimilation describe with the term 'melting pot' as the popular concept beside pluralism and multiculturalism. But the popular audience prefers to identify assimilation as a process of melting pot, where all identities and cultures blends together as

another unique identity. thereafter the process of assimilation that happens in nation like Indonesia, Malaysia, and Thailand as “that process of adjustment or accomodation which occurs between the members of two (or more) different races, if their contact is prolonged and if the necessary psychic conditions are present” with the result being “group homogeneity to a greater less degree” just as stated by Sarah Simon. Furthermore Bakar wrote that he agreed with the concept Peter Kivisto (2004) that assimilation boiled down to finding ways to live cooperatively, playing by common rules that define the parameters of intergroup conflict. It entailed the creation of a shared national identity, which of necessity required certain commonalities, such as shared language and core cultural values. However, it also permitted the persistence of ethnic identities and affiliations. Assimilation was thus not construed as antithetical to amulticultural society; it did not require cultural homogeneity.

This paper agreed with he view about assimilation as attempt to find a way of living together but Bakar not clearly explain the process an tools to make assimilation happens.

In the study of Peter swift about Kuy people of Cambodia that different from Khmer as majority of Cambodian and assimilate to khmer identity. Swift wrote that Kuy people has extremely similar with khmer in term of ohysical appearance and material culture but differently in language. The assimilation that happen in Cambodia was like shifting identities as Kuy or as Khmer. It happens because the stigmatization of Kuy identities and trend to be Khmer (Swift, 2013).

As the process of assimilation, Cambodian Kuy shifting their identitiy as Khmer and speak as khmer in Khmer language. Swift argued that language loss was the important aspect of the assimilation process of Cambodian Kuy to be a Khmer. In other word, the process assimilation that happen in Cambodia is a melting process. Not like melting pot concept that tend to make a new identity, in this study, Cambodian Kuy melt in Khmer identity an lost the only differentiator of Kuy to Khmer that was language. With the similiarity of physical appearance of Cambodian Kuy and Cambodian Khmer and similiarity in language, The coexistence identity become one as Khmer.

In another study about identity assimilation, Yuki Ooi discussing about chinese migrant in Chicago. Ooi argued that chinese’s migrant in Chicago maintain their ties to their original country not because the failure of assimilating in the current country. But doing the assimilation with chinese

identity consiousness and build an ethnic organization Chinese Equal Rights League in 1892.

The process of identity assimilation attempt together with transnationalism. They are chinese in one side and american in other side, or in other word they construct chinese-american as an new identity without loosing their ties with their origin country. This chinese american was chinese who life and behave as an american. It defined assimilation by referring to activities such as cutting off queues, wearing Western clothes, speaking English, making the United States one’s permanent home, and refraining from smoking opium, prostitution, and gambling (Ooi, 2008).

Ooi study was discuss how assimilation with the melting pot concept happen. With chinese-american rising as a new identity for chinese migrant. This identity also overcome clan identity.

Ajrouch and Jamal have study about identity of arabic-americans. Unlike chinese-american that take american lifestyle as process of assimilation, arab-american carefully chose the aspect of white identity to adopt for their life.

“Our findings illustrate that a white racial identity is negotiable based on a variety of ethnic traits, helping us to better understand the process of assimilation. Whereas immigrants are ascribed an ethnic or racial identity at their arrival, the fact is that they actively restructure or reconstruct these identities to suit their particular national and religious profile as well as their everyday needs” (Ajrouch & Jamal, 2007).

Deniz N. Duru (2016) studied about coexistence of identities and collective memory in Turkey. The study was held ind Burgaz, Turkey with antropological point of view and partisipative research as the method.

“I chose Burgaz as my fieldwork site because of its diverse population and because it was one of the rare places where people collectively resisted the 1955 riots, one of the most signifi cant events of Republican Turkish history in that it resulted in a mass migration of remaining Greek Orthodox from Istanbul, primarily to Greece. I aimed to understand the diversity that still exists in Burgaz, and how persons who consider themselves “Burgazlı” understand that diversity” (Duru, 2016).

Duru argued that The Lausanne Treaty of 1923 provided the framework for this coexistence/ toleration in turkey include Burgaz as well. But as logical consequence of coexistence/toleration led to homogenization processes: the construction of ethnic and national differences led to violence; forced

migrations; oppression towards “minorities; conflicts over territory, shared space, and borders; and changed demographics of the region.

Duru’s approach to “conviviality,” on the other hand, highlighted the cohesions and tensions that emerge from shared lifestyles and class difference, and how these tensions are managed in daily life and create a sense of place and belonging. This conviviality constructed in shared memory of people of Burgaz as part of their daily life. In 1955 riot, Burgaz islanders collectively resisted the riots and protected their island from being invaded by outsiders. The shared memories of daily life and conviviality had created such a strong Burgaz identity that it overcame ethnic and religious identities in times of crisis. The discursive effect of these memories is a type of “Burgaz ideology,” a sense of belonging to Burgaz that is also infused with a moral discourse about how a “real” Burgazli should behave, both in everyday life and in times of crisis (Duru, 2016).

In Duru’s Study of Burgaz, shared memory become one of most important aspect of identity assimilation. Conviviality become the core of memories that shared and construct the solidarity that rise over the differences in Burgaz and this construction of memories highlighted in shared lifestyle that happens in Burgaz daily life. The difference between what happened in Burgaz and Glodok is that highlighted shared lifestyle. Contrasting for Burgaz, in Glodok, social interaction tend to be rational relation. Glodok as one of economic activities center in Jakarta tend to construct rational and economical relation in social daily life.

3 IDENTITY, RACE, AND ETHNICITY: THE PROCESS OF IDENTIFICATION

Identity has been an important issue in everyday life, for example, an identity that social interactions in daily life such as nicknames, addresses, religions, tribes and other personal identities. The example shows that identity is the aspect to interrelate individuals in the social world. Then, the further question arises, does identity exist as an individual differentiator? The answer may not be as simple as the question, but it is just the process of identifying an individual as part of the social community. The process occurs in the classification and individual association to a particular social community, the

differences, and the similarities make up the individual identity.

“Identity, whether personal or collective, is about staying (partially) the same in the context of others. Thus, identity is always related to difference and demarcation. In both personal as well as collective identity dynamics, both inclusion and exclusion, and often also discrimination, are principally implied. Ethnicity is an aspect or variant of collective identity” (Antweiler, 2015).

The mentioned identity is one of the basic identities in the process of becoming. Thus, Jenkins stated that identity could only be understood as a process of identification (R. Jenkins, 2008). So, identity is an entity of the continual process, the system of formation and self-meaning of the individual to his interaction with other individuals. This process occurs openly and continuously to both the social world of distinction and self-affirmation as well as individual associations with the social world.

What about race and ethnicity? Some of the debates about these two concepts are in either a deterministic or innate identity position. A, as a Chinese descent determined by blood or genetic links as well as other individuals such as B who were born from native parents. Does an identity form in the process of social interaction? The deterministic concept seems to lead to an answer that race and ethnicity as fixed identities whereas one's race and ethnicity also undergo the process of negotiation. This paper concludes that identity is an identification process, so the implications for racial and ethnic become a concept and also a process of being. It is undeniable that innate identity also affects the process of self-identification. In its interaction, the individual continues to experience the process of negotiating to the identity that has been built. Social context, such as social, political, and economic conditions, influences negotiations on racial and ethnic identification processes. The racial and national symbol can take on specific forms within a particular spatial and historical context (Solomos & Back, 1995). In the same argument, Karner also explained that While 'race' is primarily associated with physical characteristics, it is now widely acknowledged that 'races' are social constructs rather than biological givens; the choices of physical markers are assumed to be racial characteristics and historically and culturally variables (C. Karner, 2007).

The concept of identity, race, and ethnicity at this stage moves into identification, radicalization, and racialism. Social context influences and affects these three concepts as an open process. The three concepts also impact the social behavior associated with it. The process includes negotiation with the social context that occurs, for instance, when people

interact with other people, they need to know about each other to make the conversation running, just like a student will act with gender, race, or religion. Therefore, identity as the whole concept connects the act and behavior of peoples in social interaction.

Ethnicity tend to known as a form of cultural identity. That is, culture provides the content and meaning of ethnicity, such as a shared history, ideology, shared symbols, and system of meaning. At the same time, ethnicity is also understood as a political identity that, in some cases, may be coupled with ethnic nationalism or conflict (Yuan, 2015). Banton wrote that ethnic was an adjective as improvement of the uses of term 'race'. It was a practical classification to identifying a distinctive people with a common culture evident in their shared history, language and other characteristics (Banton, 2018).

4 ETHNICITY IN SYMBOLIC INTERACTIONISM

Malesevic defines ethnicity as noncitizen who inhabits 'our land' (S. Malesevic, 2004). so did Giddens say that ethnicity is all about differentiating a group from other. He said that ethnicity is an idea that purely social in meaning. Ethnicity refers to the cultural practices and outlooks of a given community of people that set apart from the others (A. Giddens, 2006). Also, the usual distortions that occur were prejudice and discrimination. These two social concepts become part of the exclusion of certain groups by other groups, especially the majority. This distinct ethnic identity receives different treatment in social interaction. In the context of this paper, what about indigenous minorities in the Glodok against the majority of Chinese ethnicity? As a note, the use of the word ethnic itself is a form of exclusion to the identity of a particular group.

According to Park and Burgess in Malesevic, there are at least four stages that will occur in ethnic interactions, contact/competition, conflict, accommodation, and assimilation. The two stages mentioned earlier describe the interaction. Competition is considered to be a natural thing in interaction. Awareness of the identity competition occurs in this social interaction which brings the interaction into the circle of conflict. When the conflict determines the individual position within the community, the conflict confirms that position in the society. In this conflict comes to renegotiate the position of each identity such as community position, strength, and dominance respectively. As a further process in addressing the conflicts and

accommodation occurs, restructuring social hierarchy and renegotiation of power relationships between identities continue in this process through social interaction.

Furthermore, re-interpreting the meaning of symbols or even re-symbolizing occurs in social interaction. This process involves memory, tendencies, sentiments, and individual behavior in society that affects the identity of the interaction process. At this stage, there is the assimilation of identity between each other, each of it determines the position of identity.

Throughout the process of identity interaction, the individual interprets the experience of each of it and bring it to the experience. Prejudice, tendency, and suspicion of existing ethnicity become the media of the negotiation process as well as a means of putting dominance between one another. The prejudices in the socialization process also influence the interpretation of individuals involved in the main of conflicts that exist.

5 ADDRESSING IDENTITY CONFLICTS IN GLODOK

Petak Sembilan area in Glodok is a region with a majority of Chinese ethnicity, so the indigenous Muslim who is considered the majority in Indonesia become a minority in that area. As the majority, the social life in Glodok applies Chinese culture on a daily basis. Indigenous peoples recognize that their position in the area as a minority, therefore in the process of socialization as minority communities make conscious efforts to strengthen the sustainability of life in the area, also, to anticipate conflict among ethnic which are based in the Glodok. Although an inherent identity conflict persists, at least there are two prominent issues of identity that are ethnic and religious.

The relation of these two issues, prejudices against each other form a hegemony between one another. For example, is the assumption that Chinese ethnic as the ethnic who tend to be greedy and stingy, especially in economic activities, and for the Indigenous Muslims who are considered to be noisy, especially in the process of worship. In this context, there are contact and competition between identities in the Glodok. Each group maintains the identity and continues to socialize with each other.

The center of this conflict proceeds to the process of socializing values and identity to each other until they accommodate others. Some values are raised as a unifying value in the essence of the neighborhood, tolerance of existing differences and common memory form, the basis of this assimilation

process. Stets and Burke write that identity has a procedure in the process of interaction of the identity establishment (J.E Stets, P.J Burke, 2000). According to Stets and Burke, the identity of the individual is a system that consisting of multiple identities, whether the identity that comes from individual associations or their social community. Self-identification (internal) activation procedure is similar to a switch on and off the lights. Human will choose to activate a particular identity in a social situation consciously. It means that individual identities tend to be constructed depending on the context of the current situation. As the consequences of identity activation, the identity that activated affect the behavior of human. Identity is activated relate to the situation but individu's manners tied to identity.

In the Glodok community, as an effort to accommodate the identity conflict that occurred, the individuals involved in social interaction bring an appropriate identity with the social conditions. Some of the identities raised at this stage of territorial identity and as a neighborhood. Thus, it became the concept of brotherhood (with basic neighborhood) as residents of Glodok Petak Sembilan area. The application of this identity is one form to influence behavior and increase the effect of the social environment. In other words, the process of activation of identity occurs based on what they need as an individual who is facing the ongoing social conditions.

Accommodation and assimilation in the Glodok community are supported by collective memory as well as interaction experience among individuals. Collective memories are widely shared from individual memories, or memories which initially held a few individuals in a community. That is the commonality of memories held by the members of a society (W. Hitst, G. Echterhoff, 2008). Garagozov adds that collective memory formed by the shared stories of the past accepted by all members and developed into something called "common sense" that the majority has accepted (R. Garagozov, 2009).

In other concept, collective memories called by social memory

social memory here designates all products that result from the operation of transindividual relations. I take the term transindividual from Simondon, who saw all involvement with technical objects –whether invention or use –as a fundamental form of communication. The 'technical object taken according to its essence, that is to say the technical object as it is invented, thought and wanted, assumed by a human subject, becomes the support and the symbol of the relation that we would like to call transindividual (Hui, 2017).

One of the strongest memories affecting the process of identity assimilation was defending the Glodok area during the riots and looting in 1998, in which ethnic Chinese became the most disadvantaged group at that moment. Chinese ethnic communities were the primary target, and Glodok as one of the centers of ethnic Chinese economic activity was also the target of the perpetrators. According to some sources, although the Chinese were victimized, all of the community of plot nine Glodok especially Non-Tionghoa helped to protect their area from the riots. Some of the problems become the reason for the cooperation; similarities of residence, territory, and colleagues in conducting economic activities. The term that emerges is "we do not want our homes ransacked by people."

Garagozov argue that traumatic experience and stress accompanied by strong emotions leave the deepest scars in the collective memory: eyewitnesses tend to share their strong emotions with others (R. Garagozov, 2009). So did the riot in 1998 that leave traumatic and emotional memories to chinese in Glodok as the victim. So, the help of the neighbor of non-chinese did leave an strong memory as deep as the trauma because related to the emotion. The simiilarity of teritory as the rational reason for the non-chinese to prevent the perpetrators go into their teritory.

Just like Duru's study in Burgaz. The simiilarity in teritory and the preventing of rencaking teritori can become something called conviviality that become shared memory.

Restructures system, values, and social identity influenced the similarities in each category of identities, such as residential similarity, economic interests, and equal values in their respective beliefs, resulting assimilation. Malesevic defining assimilation as a process of inter-penetration and fusion in which persons and groups acquire the memories, sentiments, and attitudes of other persons or groups, and, by sharing their experiences and history, are incorporated with them in a shared cultural life (S. Malesevic, 2004).

5 CONCLUSION: NATIONALISM AS ALTERNATIVE

The process of assimilating identity becomes a resolution to identify conflicts and prevents it. Construct an alternative identity through the equations contained in the identity of interacting. The identification process works along the interaction between individuals or groups. Nationalism becomes the hybrid identity of assimilation occurred between ethnic identities.

Different from the notion of nationalism in Andrain and Apter's writings stated that nationalism is an extension of ethnicity because nationalism has a primordial identity (C.F. Andrain, D.E. Apter, 1995). Values, memories, and shared experiences form a new interpretation of the social interactions while forming a shared identity become part of the process of identifying the individuals.

Nationalism is an identity that inherits from previous ethnic identity. It does not mean that ethnic identity is lost or gone into the same identity, but nationalism becomes an alternative identity that can be used in constant interaction. Back to the idea of identity, that identity, race, ethnicity, or even nationalism is the process. Thus, in the interaction of individuals and groups, to prevent the conflict, we need the construction of identity as a solution, for instance, the interaction between ethnic Chinese and indigenous in the Glodok area. Nationalism as identity also have consequence that nationalisme was process of identification and constructed with social context. So the collective memory that attached by emotion can be an aspect that activate nationalism as identity. As Stets & Burkes argued that identity consiously activated in some social situation and affect the behavior of person that tied to the identity. As part of social individu called nation, individu will behave like the social identity that activated.

Contrary from Duru's argument that nationalism led to homogenization and crystallization of ethnic and religious identities, nationalism that constructed by collective memories can be alternative identites that overcome the differences in heterogenous society and in Duru's term can become 'ideology' that coexist with multi-identities in any society and strengthen solidarity.

Finally, Park and Burgess argue that ethnic group solidarity can lose its grip over individual migrants (S. Malesevic, 2004) in colonial times, Chinese immigrants lived in Jakarta and slowly form their life and their new social identities. Otherwise, in Glodok, natives as subordinated identities construct an identity as a form of fulfillment of the social interaction processes.

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