

# The Development of Indonesian Maritime Thinking in a Security Perspective

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**Abstract:** This paper discusses the development of views on Indonesia maritime from the perspective of security theory. This article sees that the view of the maritime world is still very much dominated by the traditional view of security which emphasises military threats to Indonesian territory. The dominance of such views to a certain degree has ruled out the importance of aspects of non-traditional security threats such as the security of the marine environment and sea sources and has also made a lack of attention to the development of marine resources for a long time.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

This paper discusses the development of views on the importance of sea and maritime for Indonesia from a security perspective. In this paper, the concept of security is divided into two parts, namely traditional and non-traditional security. Traditional security is associated with armed threats to the security and sovereignty of the state while non-traditional security relates primarily to broader threats such as economics, social, political and environmental to individuals (Buzan et al., 1998). This paper sees that the difficulties in realising Indonesia as a maritime country are partly related to traditional security views that are still dominant.

Discussions about Indonesia as a maritime state from security concepts are essential in several ways. First, the dominant view of security threats provides an overview of how policy will be taken. The view does not directly affect policy, but from the dominant view that develops, one can understand the direction and orientation of decision makers at a time. The security paradigm becomes the focus of attention of this paper because the discourse on the development of the Indonesian maritime world is inseparable from the views on the security of the Republic of Indonesia (RI). The crucial concepts such as the archipelagic

state, *Wawasan Nusantara* (archipelago insight) and the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) have a security assumption behind it.

Second, the discussion of the development of Indonesia's maritime views is still under-discussed in various literature. Generally, studies are more directed at obstacles and practical efforts to develop maritime. Material aspects like this are, of course, important because people may have concrete solutions. However, this view cannot describe the slow development of Indonesian maritime, and the slow change in mindset, which in this case has caused the sea to be long neglected. The sea, for example, is considered not to be a 'front page' or starting point for development and defence strategies. This paper, therefore, attempts to fill this gap.

In our literature review, generally studies on Indonesia's maritime future are associated with a lack of elite commitment (Syalendra, 2017), lack of funds and infrastructure (Latifah and Larasati, 2017). Lack of commitment makes it difficult to make a convincing and compact decision to develop maritime resources, especially with the presence of around 13 institutions that take care of the sea without coordination (Agastia, 2017).<sup>1</sup> Likewise, a lot of analysis was done to discuss the challenges of infrastructure development, logistics and coast guard capabilities (Sambhi, 2015).

<sup>1</sup> The institutions are, among others, Navy (TNI-AL), the Police, the Civil Service Investigators of ten different

ministries – including Customs and Fisheries – and the fledgling Maritime Security Agency (Bakamla).

Third, regarding to the two things above, the main problem in Indonesia's maritime development is paradigmatic<sup>2</sup> in that there lies a dominant view that places the sea from the aspect of the threat of military security. The dominant paradigm has not made the sea essential and urgent for the development and progress of the Indonesian economy for many years. Therefore, the development of the dominant view of the sea needs to have a place in analysing the Indonesian maritime world. The answer to this problem cannot be sought only from material causes such as lack of facilities, infrastructure and resources, because even countries with limited marine resources can become strong maritime countries both regarding their maritime and economic capabilities.

## 2 METHODS

Our paper is based on research on how ideas, discourses and views develop and become dominant. Investigations on ideas and discourses have become one of the most interesting and developing methods to date (Checkel, 2017). In constructivism theories, for example, there is an assumption that what is essential to pay attention to is not the material or the events, but the ideas and how people interpret the events. Of course, the events that occur are essential but what is more important to pay attention to is how ideas or views are formed and strengthened and how people give meaning to those events. These strengthening views intertwine into an agreement of the subjects which are often referred to as intersubjective understanding and become a kind of social facts such as practices, institutions, values, assumptions and norms that must be revealed by the researcher (Jackson and Sørensen, 2006).

Departing from such methodological assumptions, we try to explore some views about Indonesia as a maritime state and how the views are fought for and intertwine with each other. We use interviews and literature searches to find similarities and differences in views about the concept of the Indonesian maritime country. We conducted interviews with more than 20 experts and practitioners whose works relate to the maritime world. Then this is complemented by views obtained

through seminars pertaining to maritime issues. Data from interviews were strengthened by a literature review of the conceptions of Indonesian maritime world both written by domestic and foreign experts.

The selection of respondents was carried out through a combination of criteria of expertise, their involvement and figure about the Indonesian maritime world. Expertise related to their views and relevant publications as reference material. The practitioners interviewed were due to their experience and involvement with the maritime world. We also see the figure of the person based on media reports and references from experts. This literature study complements each other and becomes part of the triangulation process to ensure the correctness of the interview results or vice versa. We also try to get information about Juanda Declaration, the struggle to get recognition from the international community at the United Nations Conference on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), how it was received, then how the concept of the archipelagic state was included in the grand *Wawasan Nusantara* concept. We also try to explore data about crucial moments in which the term archipelago state (*Negara Kepulauan*) develops into a maritime state. This paradigmatic change is explored from interviews and the written materials

## 3 RESULTS

Indonesia is the largest archipelagic country on the planet which has tremendous marine assets. The country also has sovereignty over the deep sea in the concept of archipelagic state recognised by UNCLOS since 1982. In its history, Indonesia, with vast seas and rivers covering 70 per cent of its regions, also has maritime kingdoms and seafarers who sailed as far as Australia and Taiwan. However, Indonesia is not considered a maritime country in the sense that the source of income for the country does not originate from marine resources. In contrast to countries that are not considered archipelago states such as Singapore, Korea and Japan whose industry and economy come from trade and transport by sea, Indonesia does not make the sea a significant source of the economy and industry.

<sup>2</sup> Apart from academic understanding, the notion of paradigm is also used in terms of "world view". This relates to terms relating to experience, beliefs and values that affect the way a person feels reality and responds to that perception. In this context "paradigm shift" means a change in how a particular society regulates and

understands reality. The "dominant paradigm" refers to values, or systems of thought, in the most standardized and widely held societies at certain times. The dominant paradigm is shaped both by the cultural background of the community and by the context of historical moments.

In our search, the concept of security plays a vital role in the thinking and policies taken regarding to Indonesian maritime affairs. This paper divides the development of the thinking into three parts. The first period viewed in the period after independence till the issuance of the Juanda Declaration. The second period was after the issuance of the Juanda Declaration until the recognition of the principle of the archipelagic state. The third period was after the fall of President Suharto or during the democratic system.

In the first period, in various literature, views on the archipelago and the concerns of vulnerable Indonesia can be found from Muhammad Yamin's statement before the *Konstituante* who wanted the territory of Indonesia covering Malaysia which he considered as would make Indonesia more protected and safe (Butcher, 2009). Although the idea was challenged because it was considered as expansionist by Hatta, concerns about the Indonesian archipelago continued.

In the late 1950s, a committee was conducted to study the issue of sea sovereignty, but this group worked slowly so that Chairul Saleh challenged Mochtar Kusumaatmadja a marine law expert to find the best way to obtain Indonesia sovereignty over its deep sea. The government at that time wanted protection for the Indonesian sea area which was freely used by the Dutch government to terrorise the Indonesian government which was fighting to liberate West Irian.<sup>3</sup>

Mochtar then proposed the boundaries of Indonesia's sovereignty by drawing from the outer ends of the outer islands that surrounded Indonesia, so that Indonesia controlled the deep sea that separated the islands so far. The deep sea was previously free sea because the sovereign boundary from the original land was only three nautical miles. Mochtar's proposal was later adopted by Prime Minister Djuanda in 1957 and declared to be the so-called Juanda Doctrine.

The second period in the development of maritime thinking is the period of the struggle for the concept to be recognised internationally. The concept was challenged by various countries that had the principle that the sea belongs to all. The challenges mainly came from large countries that feel their marine interests were threatened. Indonesia, therefore, needed to think about how to overcome this challenge and still at the same time have its sovereignty over the sea. One of the proposed proposals is the provision of

free passages for large ships to pass through Indonesia.

In the atmosphere of the active rejection, the struggle for recognition of Indonesia sea sovereignty was tough. From the figure directly involved in this process, Hasyim Djalal told how the struggle for international recognition. According to Djalal, Mochtar Kusumaatmadja was very involved in this process. He negotiated everywhere and was sometimes assisted by Djalal. According to Djalal, his position was only as a batter that brought Indonesia's position as challenging as possible in various forums, and Professor Mochtar just finished and searched for a solution.<sup>4</sup> From the hearing to the hearing Indonesia's position was strengthened and gained support, so that finally in the UNCLOS III in 1982 the principle of the archipelagic state was approved.

When Sukarno was replaced, President Suharto also continued this struggle. Even in 1975, the struggle for the concept of an archipelago state was considered a part to strengthen the concept of the *Wawasan Nusantara* (Lemhannas, 1982; Pane, 2015). The *Wawasan Nusantara* is a comprehensive concept in the form of insight into Indonesia that covers all aspects of ideology, politics, economics, social, culture, defence and security. President Suharto gave Mochtar a broader opportunity to promote this concept, especially when he became Foreign Minister for two periods (1978-1988) (Pane, 2015). The legal approaches are then continued to resolve the boundaries of the Republic of Indonesia affected by the UNCLOS decision particularly with neighbouring countries such as Singapore, Malaysia, the Philippines and Australia.

The third period in the development of maritime thinking was during the post-Suharto era. Although sovereignty over the deep sea was recognised, attention to the use of marine assets only emerged when the New Order government under Suharto fell. There have been many talks that the Indonesia sea is neglected, and its resources were under-explored. The Habibie government that replaced Suharto did not have time to work on the sea because of his busy work to make political reform and to overcome the problem of East Timor. However, during the time of President Abdurrahman Wahid, attention to the maritime world began to reappear. President Wahid heard various proposals in the community and finally decided to form the Ministry of Maritime Affairs. He also rotated the armed forces chief of staff who had always been the right of the Army to all forces. After the

<sup>3</sup> Interview with Ambassador Hasjim Djalal, Jakarta 23 May 2018.

<sup>4</sup> Interview with Ambassador Hasjim Djalal, Jakarta 23 May 2018.

change of President to Megawati and then to President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono the Ministry was maintained, even though its function was not yet real. Attention to the function of this ministry is also not significant as evidenced by the small facilities including offices at the beginning.<sup>5</sup>

However, this change, from several studies and interviews, has not changed much marine policy. Indonesian sea defence, in general, was also not developed because defence design remained normal with an emphasis on the superiority of the Army in strategic planning (Marzuki, 2018). In one interview, it was also said that the sea was still not seriously protected because the Navy's ability was not significantly improved and there was no specific strategy originating from the sea.<sup>6</sup>

Similarly, Arif and Kurniawan (2017) say that defence design that sees domestic threats as the main threat has become a strategic culture that overshadows the Navy's reluctance to play a prominent role in defending Indonesia's sea from external threats. Various resource persons such as Daniel and a Naval Officer<sup>7</sup> showed that attention to the sea was still far away. The paradigm in the community has not changed much. They still see land as a starting point for thinking and even consider the sea to be just an extension of the land, such as in the thought of building bridges between islands.<sup>8</sup>

In the survey conducted by CSIS between April and May 2013, the definition of security was still dominated by threats to national security. The study shows that 34 per cent of respondents, for example, consider terrorism a threat and 19 per cent consider border incursion as a threat. Also, other threats include foreign aggression and communism are also included in the perception of threats to the country. The only non-traditional security issue that gets attention is climate change, which is 1 per cent.

Although the GMF has been declared, the dominance of the view is also still on seeing Indonesia's security from the security aspect against the threat of Indonesian sovereignty. As said by Syailendra (2017), in dealing with China, the main actors in Indonesia's policymaking, see the threat as a threat to the integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Indonesia. President Jokowi, for example, ensured

that China would not interfere with Indonesia's sovereignty by supporting efforts to arrest Chinese ships. Meanwhile, the Navy wants an increase in the budget to protect the Indonesian sea area. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs in its capacity also tries to defend the territory of Indonesia's sovereignty through diplomacy and engagement with China. In this context, only the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries is concerned about non-traditional security aspects, especially for managing marine resources as part of food security for Indonesia.<sup>9</sup>

## 4 DISCUSSION

The findings above show that the debate about Indonesia's maritime world is still dominated by and defined in term of military security threats. Of course, the discussion is significant for Indonesia's vast sea area. However, more than that, concepts such as the *Wawasan Nusantara* that combine both land and sea dimensions turned out to be developing more towards land heavy. The defence strategy remains designed to overcome internal security problems such as terrorists and separatists and ideological threats such as communists and radical Islamic groups. In other words, the concepts of archipelagic state and *Wawasan Nusantara* does not bring changes to security strategies, especially in dealing with external enemies that threaten Indonesia's marine sovereignty.

Our findings show that Indonesia has indeed won its sovereignty over the sea at UNCLOS. In the context of the international order, this is a significant contribution. As stated by Oegroseno (2009), this is Indonesia's contribution to the world or in Acharya's terms, Indonesia contributes to "norm subsidiarity" (Acharya, 2011). This perspective also shows that third world countries like Indonesia are active agents in understanding international concepts introduced by Western countries. Indonesia adjusts the sovereignty aspect with its geographical needs and strives to get it in the world. With UNCLOS, Indonesia invites neighbours to comply with international regulations. According to Oegroseno (2009), if we do not refer to this rule, how we can relate well in modern society

<sup>5</sup> Speech of Mr. Havas Oegroseno, Indonesia Deputy Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries, at The Asia Foundation, Washington DC, Apr 1, 2016.

<sup>6</sup> Anonymous Interview with a Navy Commander, Jakarta, May 24, 2018

<sup>7</sup> Anonymous Interview with a Navy Commander, Jakarta, May 24, 2018

<sup>8</sup> Speech of Muhammad Daniel on Workshop of Global Maritime Fulcrum, University of Jember, 4 June 2018.

<sup>9</sup> Speech of Minister of Marine Affairs and Fisheries of the Republic of Indonesia, Ms. Susi Pudjiastuti at the RSIS Distinguished Public Lecture 27 August 2015.

today. Western countries can be a reference and example to solve sea problems.

However, the security and sovereignty paradigms continue to change. If third world countries, especially those who are members of ASEAN, still strongly emphasise the principle of military threats and territorial sovereignty, such as non-intervention on the affairs of other countries, the international world begins to open itself by seeing sovereignty more flexible. This facts was driven by cases of poverty and hunger that require humanitarian intervention. Likewise, the case of torture or massacre of citizens by a country raises the demands of a country to fulfil its responsibility to protect.

In our analysis, the slow attention to the potential of the sea is because Indonesia is still fixated on the traditional definition of sovereignty which emphasizes the principle of non-intervention even though the world has changed. So, when we have obtained sea sovereignty, some consider the struggle is over, and we can be calmer and feel safe because the area is legally protected and recognized by the international community. This feeling of calm is also needed to enable development to continue. However, development, in this case, seems to be done in the context of land development from natural resources such as mining and timber and ignore sea potentials. Likewise, agriculture is a concern with considerations for advancing Indonesian villages that are left behind. In a further study, we see that the Indonesia weak maritime vision and identity is also related to how the government understands national security. In various concepts, security is often defined as traditional and non-traditional security. Traditional security is defined as security from military threats and other armed conflicts against the state and is therefore state-centric. While non-traditional security is an expansion of security threats which includes non-military threats such as economic, environmental, social and political, directed not only at the state but also at the individuals. In Indonesia, the threat to the authority of the state has so far originated from within the country. Some come from areas that want to be independent or to get more equitable development treatment. The rebels also came from the land not from the sea and because of that Indonesia developed the Army as the central pillar of defence and neglected the Navy and Air Force which were considered to have no threat because their operations were not on land.

Although GMF has already been declared, business, as usual, applies to marine activities (Marzuki, 2018). Even in the defence sector, the Indonesian Navy is reluctant to play a dominant role

where they should develop as part of GMF (Arif and Kurniawan, 2017). In current terms, the sea remains a backyard, not a front page. In the GNF, the view of traditional security in safeguarding sea sovereignty also occurs with the sinking of foreign ships, including the clashes with the Chinese coast guard in the Natuna Sea. People really appreciate President Jokowi's move to challenge China's threat in that region and saw that as courage to uphold Indonesia's sovereignty from every foreign threat. In short, the traditional security paradigm remains the dominant view in Indonesia in viewing the maritime world

## 5 CONCLUSIONS

This paper shows that the understanding of security conception is fundamental in Indonesian maritime discourse. Indonesian security has long been defined in three important and related matters. First, security is defined as the enforcement of territorial sovereignty that is free from foreign intervention. Therefore, Indonesia needs de jure recognition of its land and sea. Second, this paradigm is reinforced from geographical assumptions and historical experiences. The geographical assumption is that Indonesia is a country that is strategically located and rich in natural resources that makes other countries want to intervene. Third, historical experience in upholding Indonesia's sovereignty and unity, especially in the New Order era, was defined as coming from domestic security threats such as communists and separatist groups.

This paper does not assume that such discourses is not essential but wants to explain that such views have marginalized the importance of the sea in the lives of Indonesian people. Understanding of the narrow and undeveloped security conception make people believe that security threats are only military threats. This is in many ways directing development priorities and defence orientations within the domestic area and ignoring maritime development. In the future, the campaign to change people's thinking paradigm that the sea is not only crucial in the context of sovereignty but also relevant to be managed for the welfare of society is one of the essential conditions for continued development towards Indonesia's maritime glory.

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