Political Contribution of the Sultanate of Ternate to Regional Government in North Maluku Province 1999-2023

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Abstract

This study aims to identify the political contribution of the Ternate Sultanate to the regional government of North Maluku province. The Ternate Sultanate has an important role in the dynamics of political power that occurs in the Maluku Kieraha region whose territory stretches across the Maluku Islands, Sulawesi, Papua, and borders of the Philippines, Australia, and Papua New Guinea. In this region, four sultanates ruled, namely Ternate, Tidore, Bacan and Jailolo. From 1999 to 2019, the Ternate Sultanate was at a crossroads along with the political dynamics in the Republic of Indonesia after the reformation. The results of this study indicate that during the observation period, the Ternate Sultanate contributed to resolving horizontal conflicts that occurred in Maluku and North Maluku, playing a role in strengthening regional autonomy in the North Maluku province, laying down a good democratic and development order for the development of the Maluku Kieraha region.

Keywords: *Political Contribution, Ternate Sultanate, North Maluku Province.*

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A. INTRODUCTION

The collapse of the New Order regime in 1998 not only opened up opportunities for freedom for the political life of the Indonesian nation, but also fostered the desire of political figures, religious figures, businessmen, and intellectuals to regain power and strength. The return of past political entities at the local level can be understood as a political transition process that has been going on since the end of the New Order regime (Ahlstrom et al., 2020). This process has implications for the shift in the power relations between central and regional institutions. This shift went hand in hand with the declining credibility of the state and its institutions. This situation was used as momentum by old forces, including feudalistic powers in the regions, to rise again to fight for their rights to power in their territories (Murid, n.d).

One of the enduring traditional powers today is the Sultanate of Ternate. The Sultan's role persists due to his status as a role model in community life, which has become a long-standing tradition in Ternate society. The strategic position of the Sultan in the community's life fosters the belief that the Sultan and the palace serve as the focal point of traditional customs, culture, and the kingdom's magical-religious center. The value system legitimizing the Sultan as a religious leader (amir mukminin) or Apostle's successor (Tubaddilur Rasul) has led to the belief that the Sultan possesses magical abilities that ensure protection, safety, and welfare for all his subjects (Adnan, 2023).

Moreover, this magical and mythological conception is used as justification that the source of authority/government power obtained by the Sultans of Ternate in ruling comes from a source that is considered sacred, namely God. Belief and religion dominate the Ternate community and the position of the sultan in society is strongly supported by religious beliefs. This reasoning underpins the belief that only those from the Sultan's lineage are entitled to maintain power (Song, 2021). This magical-religious legitimacy renders the palace not just the Sultan and his family's residence but also the embodiment of the nation with a complete government structure. Consequently, the Sultan and his palace form an inseparable entity that mutually reinforces one another. A Sultan lacks political significance without the palace's support. A Sultan without a palace will face a reduction in social status, which Clifford Geertz describes as a declining status (Ratnawati & Santoso, 2021).

After Indonesia's independence, President Soekarno's government exiled Iskandar Muhammad Djabir Sjah to Jakarta as a political prisoner in 1951, until he died in 1975. All activities and implementation of government were carried out by the council of 18. until the end of Soekarno's government. Almost all access leading to local power interests was ensured to be isolated.

The enactment of Law No. 22 of 1999 concerning Regional Autonomy and Law No. 46 of 1999 concerning the expansion of the North Maluku province in the Reformation era was a momentum for the rise of the elite of the Ternate Sultanate, which was previously confined by government domination, to build a power base based on historical claims and cultural identities that it possessed. The sustainability of the Sultanate elites showed their important role not only in terms of how they adapted to environmental changes but also in occupying positions and having a significant influence on the dynamics of the development of government politics. One of the important impacts that had a major influence on the rise of customary power was the presence of the autonomy law (later changed to Law No. 32 of 2004) which was the provision of opportunities for autonomous regions to carry out direct Regional Head Elections (Kaneko et al., 2024).

For North Maluku, the adoption of regional autonomy presents both a significant opportunity and a challenge. This move has invigorated the desire to resurrect local powers. Consequently, politics has been revitalized through the formation of political parties under the banner of political reform and democratization. In this atmosphere of decentralization and political transformation, ethnicity emerged as a key factor in mobilizing cultural identity within the political context of the post-Soeharto period (Barter & Wangge, 2022).

North Maluku Province stands alone based on Law no. 46 of 1999, October 4, 1999, was designated as the birthday of North Maluku Province. It has an area of 31,982.50 square kilometers and consists of 805 large and small islands, its population reached 1.28 million people according to the 2020 population census. At the beginning of its establishment, North Maluku Province had its capital in Ternate located at the foot of Mount Gamalama. However, after 11 years of transition and infrastructure preparation, precisely on August 4, 2010, the capital of North Maluku Province was

moved to Sofifi which is located in Halmahera. Administratively, this province is divided into 8 regencies and 2 cities, 116 sub-districts, and 1,199 villages.

The expansion of North Maluku into a new province gave birth to political contestation between the elite of the sultanate and the non-sultanate. Several important issues such as; regarding the name and placement of the provincial capital, the struggle for the governor's seat, and the bureaucratic positions of the district/city government. All of these became strategic issues that were deliberately built by the local elite to seek legitimacy for their interests (Rasyid, 2024). Additionally, the establishment of North Maluku Province was accompanied by the resurgence of the Ternate Sultanate. This revival prompted Sultan Mudafar Sjah of Ternate to reinstate the royal apparatus to legitimize the Sultan's role. The competition between the elites of the Ternate Sultanate and non-sultanates extended beyond the contest for new resources; it also involved the social memory of past glories.

The rise of the Ternate Sultanate along with the new paradigm of regional autonomy is interesting to study. The emergence of Sultan Mudafar Sjah as a candidate for Governor of North Maluku, the Sultanate's efforts to revive the feudal forces that have long existed by reviving traditional institutions as the identity of traditional power, the desire of the elite of the Ternate Sultanate to be more institutionally accommodated into the formal political stage of government. This reality shows that the contribution of the Ternate Sultanate in the local political realm after independence until now is interesting to study, because for a long time, the Ternate sultans have been part of the history of politics in North Maluku, and this area was once the center of Islamic civilization, as well as the center of government and trade.

B. LITERATURE REVIEW

1. Contribution

Contribution is the contribution of a role activity, input of ideas, and so on. According to Soerjono Soekanto Contribution is also commonly known as a role, while according to Gross Mason and Mceachern, a role is part of a set of expectations known to individuals who occupy a certain social position (Carless, 2022). Contribution refers to participation, involvement, engaging oneself, or donation. In this context, contributions can be either material or actionable. Action-based contributions are behaviors performed by individuals that subsequently have a positive or negative impact on others (Landmann & Rohmann, 2020).

According to Soerjono and Djoenaesih, the contribution is participating or providing ideas, energy, and so on in activities. What is meant by contribution is giving or participating in an activity in the form of information, ideas, or energy, to achieve something that is planned (Engeström & Sannino, 2021). From the explanation above, the author can conclude that the term contribution is the role, input, ideas, and behavior carried out by individuals or entities. Thus, the role means part of the implementation of functions and tasks carried out in an activity or interest to achieve something that is expected to be meaningful (Rejeb et al., 2022).

2. Sultanate of Ternate

The Sultanate of Ternate in Maluku has survived in post-authoritarian Indonesian politics. By analyzing the political performance of the Sultan of Ternate and his immediate family, combining in-depth interviews, observations, and document studies, this researcher argues that the political achievements of the Sultan of Ternate are the result of the sultanate's efforts to transfer management and ownership of customary land to indigenous communities while maintaining maximum control, taking into account the government's efforts in agrarian reform aimed at building Indonesia from the periphery and improving the quality of life in three ways, namely arranging the agrarian structure from unequal to fair for all people, resolving conflicts in the agrarian sector and making society more prosperous. Thus the Sultan received very strong political support from traditional communities (Kurniadi, n.d.).

In implementing asset accountability, the values central to Sultan Mudaffar Sjah's approach are rooted in the Jou se Ngofangare philosophy, which is deeply ingrained in the Sultanate of Ternate. This Jou se Ngofangare Accountability gave rise to a trilogy of dimensions that promote harmony in the relationships between humans and God, humans and other humans, and humans and nature. Sultan Mudaffar's perspective on asset accountability included the belief that all wealth should benefit the people.

During his leadership in the contemporary era, Sultan Mudaffar Sjah undertook numerous efforts to protect the Sultanate's assets. He ensured accountability in various forms, including power accountability, mandate accountability, and responsibility for customary land. Additionally, he donated land for public benefit, contributing to the construction of Khairun University and the airport for the Ternate City Government.

Indonesia has experienced a significant decline in its political life amidst community participation, among others, by traditional Muslim communities. As a result, attention is drawn to the religious teachings obtained by traditional Muslims to adapt to social or political life in Indonesia (Syam et al., 2020). The results show that traditional Muslims who appear rigid, doctrinal, and intolerant of newly developing ideas are influenced by literal perceptions. In addition, strong local culture and attitudes carried out in religious rituals to maintain hereditary traditions have also created various attitudes of traditional Muslims towards politics in Indonesia (Arsal et al., 2023).

3. Customs and Culture of the Sultanate of Ternate

Ternate is rich in wise advice that is preserved sustainably. Dalil moro, dalil tifa, dola bololo, mantra, cum-cum, legend, rorasa and tamsil. These poems are in the form of literature or pantun and contain very significant social relation assimilation values. Verse by verse as a whole depicts the diversity of dignified thought patterns and behavior patterns (Chan et al., 2024).

These poems and forms of wise advice essentially display humanistic and religious traits. Technically, this gives birth to a philosophy of diversity and unity between Indigenous and immigrant communities with a fish called the philosophy of "Jou se Ngofa Ngare" which is practically formed in a local poem "Ino fomakatinyinga doka gosora se balawa om doro yo mamote fo magogoru se madudara" the instrument of the poems is an expression of spiritual messages from the verses of the Qur'an and al-Hadith as the main sources of Islam. These local poems, if implemented in contemporary life, will be able to unite a harmonious life, living in harmony and peace accompanied by integrity based on a bright and glorious future.

The Segulaha custom is the process of forming and implementing the customs of the Ternate Sultanate which since ancient times have always been obeyed and implemented by all the people of the Ternate Sultanate. The formation of customs is a mutual agreement to be used as a guideline in regulating social life in all fields to achieve human happiness. In the implementation of the customs of the Ternate sultanate, it is known as the world bobato and afterlife bobato systems as the regulator and director of customary law and religious customary law.

The main basis for implementing the Segulaha custom comes from the customs of one person, the customs of one kabasarang, the customs of one lukudi, the customs of one se cara, the customs of one se doniru, and the customs of one cingari. The Segulaha custom is carried out especially during the Joko Kaha (stamping the ground) ceremony, the crown prince inauguration ceremony, the coronation ceremony of the Sultan (jou khalifa jou kolano), and the death ceremony of the Sultan. The Segulaha custom is a form of integration between Islamic religious values and the cultural values of the Ternate Sultanate. Both are integrated into one value system that is upheld by all the people of the Ternate Sultanate in North Maluku. Until now, the Segulaha custom is still carried out by the people of the Ternate Sultanate from generation to generation, especially in cultural events.

C. METHOD

This research is qualitative. The Qualitative approach is used to explain the phenomenon in more depth. A qualitative approach is inductive, meaning that the research begins with preliminary research and data collection, and ends with concluding. This research focuses on the study of the political contribution of the Ternate Sultanate government in the implementation of regional government in North Maluku Province from 1999-2019. For this research to follow the problems and objectives to be achieved, the approach and methods used are adjusted to the topic of study. The historical approach is carried out to describe the symptoms that occurred in the past as a series of independent events, limited in space and time. Past data is used to provide information and explain current events or conditions as an unbroken series or interconnected with each other. Thus, the contribution of the Ternate Sultanate in the implementation of regional government is not in a historical vacuum, but in dialogue in a past community or the current context. A historical approach to the contribution of the Ternate Sultanate in the implementation of regional

government in North Maluku Province makes it possible for fresh descriptions to emerge about the dynamics and development of the government system and the unique and distinctive cultural values that live in the modern government system.

D. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Legal Position of the Sultanate of Ternate in the Constitution of Indonesia

Legal Status and Position of the Sultanate in Government According to Uka Tjandrasasmita, it is a little difficult to analyze and present the structure of Ternate city society, related to the scarcity of sources regarding the city's society and it seems too complex to understand the theory of social structure. Usually, the structure of society occurs from various institutional rules and their environment, this method is considered as a process of maintenance and relationships with each other and determines the unity and composition of a social structure. However, institutional rules always collide with political, power, military, and economic rules (Luna-Nemecio et al., 2020).

In Ternate, the King is the main key to law, both in terms of social, political, and trade, collecting cloves from the hands of the community as a tax, and only giving a little reward to the community, or in certain circumstances taking by force or confiscating the produce for him. So the spice trade did not bring benefits to ordinary people, only the king and his subordinates benefited greatly.

Jogugu (minister) and Fala Raha (this word means four houses and is considered here as the King's Advisor) were chosen to assist the king in running the Sultanate. Fala Raha is a representative of four noble clans which are important pillars of the Ternate Sultanate. It can be said that Fala Raha is a replacement for the four momole in the pre-Islamic period. In addition, there are several positions formed to assist the king such as Nyagimoi Bobato (Council 18), Sabua Raha (four supreme judges), Heku Cim (navy and army), Salahakan (Governor), and Sangaji.

The entire agricultural, industrial, and social system in Maluku Kie Raha is based on the understanding that land or land and land management, including the sea and fish in it, belong to the community. This means that every resident has the right to manage these systems, but part of the harvest is handed over to the rulers. The Ternate community is diverse in terms of their work. Because Ternate is famous for its crops such as spices and cloves, most people are farmers. Those who usually plant cloves, nutmeg, walnuts, and cinnamon live in the hills. While people who live near the coast usually plant coconuts or become fishermen. In addition, some of them are traders (Mihiranie et al., 2020).

2. Legal Position of the Sultanate of Ternate in the Republic of Indonesia

The proclamation of the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945, for the elite of the Sultanate of Ternate was the beginning of the collapse of the feudal system with the birth of the unitary state of the Republic of Indonesia, of course, becoming a threat to their political and economic supremacy. The role and position of the elite which had been enjoyed for centuries, were challenged by the

construction of a unitary state ideology that prioritized the basis of loyalty to the state (Cetrà & Swenden, 2021). However, the political relationship between the elite of the Sultanate of Ternate and the Dutch East Indies government can be said to be well-established.

When Soekarno and Hatta proclaimed the independence of the Republic of Indonesia on August 17, 1945. The Dutch government in The Hague and the Dutch East Indies government in exile under the leadership of Lieutenant General H.J. van Mook who was based in Brisbane (Australia) had plans to restore the colonial government on its colonial land in Indonesia by forming states (federalism). To realize this goal, on August 24, 1945, the Dutch Government based in Brisbane made an agreement with the British who at that time were tasked with disarming and repatriating Japanese troops in Indonesia. In the agreement, the Dutch were allowed to hold civil power in Indonesia.

On July 16-July 25, 1946 the Malino conference was held and officially opened by Governor General Dr. H.J van Mook on behalf of the Dutch East Indies Government. This conference was attended by 39 representatives from various regions such as; Bali, Lombok, Riau, South Sulawesi, Bangka Belitung, West Borneo, East Borneo, Minahasa, Sangir Talaud, Gorontalo, Central Sulawesi, New Guinea (Irian), Flores, Timor, Sumba, Sumbawa, South Borneo, South Maluku, and North Maluku was represented by Chasan Boesoirie (representing the Indonesian Party PI), Salim A. Fabanyo (representing the North Maluku History Party Pasmo), and Sultan Ternate Iskandar Djabir Syah (Resident of Ternate). The delegates who attended the conference were dominated by kings and Dutch officials who ruled in their respective regions.

The Malino Conference was the foundation for the formation of the State of East Indonesia (NIT). This can be seen from all regional representatives (envoys) agreeing to accept the federal system as conveyed by their representatives such as; Gorontalo, East Kalimantan, South Kalimantan, including North Maluku. Najamudin Daeng, the envoy from South Sulawesi stated that his region could accept all the conclusions of the conference. According to him, the starting point of a United States of Indonesia through an alliance with the Netherlands must be realized without the need for a specific period (Overweel, 2021).

At the Malino Conference, the discussions were still general and concerned with political, economic, social, and cultural issues in Indonesia in general. Meanwhile, in the Denpasar Conference, the discussions focused on one main problem, namely the formation of a state system in the East Indonesia region. It was at the Denpasar Conference that van Mook forced his idea of federalism. What was done without cooperation with the Republic of Indonesia as agreed in the Linggarjati agreement?

The Ternate Sultanate in the Indonesian Government system can be seen from various perspectives. In general, the government systems known in the world can at least be broadly divided into three types, namely (1) the presidential system. In this system, the government system is centered on the position of the president as head of

government as well as head of state. (2) parliamentary system of government (parliamentary system), in a parliamentary system, the positions of head of state and head of government can be distinguished and separated from each other while (3) mixed system (mixed system or hybrid system), in a mixed system, elements of both systems are equally adopted. Therefore, both in the presidential system and the parliamentary system a state government must be distinguished at least the distinction must be clear in the position of head of state and the position of head of government.

North Maluku, from a social aspect, is an area that is included in the conflict map. In historical records in 1999, there was a social, political, and SARA conflict that occurred in North Maluku and other conflicts after that. In the latest study by the State Intelligence Agency, the Indonesian National Police, and the Ministry of Home Affairs, North Maluku is an area included in the conflict-prone map, both between communities and between communities and the government. This requires an appropriate formulation and following local wisdom values as a means of social control to prevent and resolve problems that arise in society.

The existence of customary institutions in the context of governance is important to study because governance by modern humans is needed to prevent the occurrence of "homo homini lupus bellum omnium contra omnes", namely preventing humans from becoming wolves to other humans and preventing the strong from controlling the weak. Humans then at a certain stage of societal development enter into a social contract to form a government institution that is tasked with regulating their lives so that they do not destroy each other (Ndinga-Kanga et al., 2020).

Thus it can be said that the existence of the government has the main task of creating "law and order". For this reason, the term "night guard" government emerged, namely a government that is as if it is only tasked with maintaining peace and order.

One form of political participation of the Ternate Sultanate in maintaining the existence of its power is by becoming part of the government system of the Republic of Indonesia, namely by becoming the Governor of the North Maluku province. Involvement in the nomination as Governor is also proof of acceptance of the concept of government. In other words, the Ternate Sultanate has positioned itself as part of the political system of the Republic of Indonesia. Ternate has used this political strategy of fusion or adaptation for the first time. Almost in every period of power, Ternate has also used the same political strategy.

The implementation of regional autonomy has made local political dynamics particularly intriguing. A significant outcome of this reform is the expansion of regions in Indonesia, including the creation of North Maluku as the 27th province, established by Law No. 46 of 1999. This law's enactment was also seen as an opportunity to fulfill aspirations previously hindered by the New Order regime's centralistic politics, specifically the desire for a local leader chosen by the people. During the Soeharto era, locals were never given the chance to lead their regions; governors and regents were always appointed by the central government, resulting in policies that did not resonate with the local community.

3. Contribution of the Sultanate of Ternate in the Field of Strengthening Democracy

Power can be acquired through various means, such as mobilizing ethnic and religious sentiments (Visoka, 2020). This approach, described by Clifford Geertz as politics based on streams of religion and ethnicity, has faced criticism for its failure to adequately explain the classification of ethnicity and religion within the priyayi category. However, Geertz's framework remains relevant in addressing whether political power patterns rooted in ethnicity and religion persist in Indonesia, particularly in the context of expansion politics.

The theory applied to understand the specific case of Ternate or the broader context of North Maluku is identity politics focused on the ethnicity and religion of the region's inhabitants. Ethnicity and religion serve as cohesive elements of identity that remain influential in various local political struggles, with many parties leveraging these factors for political gain. They play significant roles in contests for political positions closely tied to regional political figures.

Ethnicity and religion continue to shape political expansion efforts within Indonesia's decentralization framework (Damanik, 2020). These two elements have long been pivotal in the construction of identity politics, a phenomenon noted by Clifford Geertz dating back to the pre-1950s era, particularly in Java and African regions such as Morocco and Sudan. The solidarity formed through religious bonds and political affiliations has endured over an extended period.

4. Social and Legal Contributions of the Sultanate of Ternate

Maluku Kie Raha is a region of the Sultanate known as the largest producer of spices in the world such as cloves and nutmeg. As the largest spice-producing region, many European, Arab, and other traders began to arrive. The presence of these traders began to influence the lives of Indigenous people such as Ternate, Makian, Bacan, Moti, Tidore, and Jailolo both in economic, social, and cultural aspects.

In Indonesia, conflict and violence have occurred since the colonial era, revolution, Old Order and New Order. Conflict and violence have also occurred in Aceh, Sulawesi, Papua, and Maluku to North Maluku. Violence is rooted in the political traditions of the Sultanates and also in Indonesian society itself. The problem is in how the violence is practiced and for what purpose. The violence that occurred in North Maluku was part of the struggle of local political elites to seize power.

In the New Order regime, Maluku was one of the areas that received less attention so social and economic disparities occurred. After the New Order, Baharudin Jusuf Habibie, Abdurrahman Wahid, and Megawati Soekarno Putri, Maluku and North Maluku became the focus of the Indonesian government, including issues of local elite interests, ethnic and religious conflicts.

The conflict that began in 1999 surprised many parties both at the local, national, and international levels. The conflict broke out between ethnic groups and then developed into a conflict between Islam and Christianity (Takdir et al., 2021). Initially, this archipelago was a safe area that was tied to a cultural custom system

such as Pela Gandong in Ambon and the custom of one in North Maluku Maluku Kie Raha which were four traditional countries including Bacan, Jailolo, Tidore, and Ternate, no longer functioned as a force at that time.

The ambiguity of the role of Islam in the Indonesian nation and the patrimonial relations that supported the New Order have emphasized the divisions between Christians and Muslims. The regime's policies and the manipulative use of religion for political support have had negative consequences, especially because Dutch colonial policies have created divisions between religious communities (Ilyasin & Ridho, 2021).

Then the violence was also caused by Australia's exploitation of local gold mines, the results of which were highly contested by Christians and Muslims allied with the two sultans (Bertrand, 2018) The conflict in North Maluku from 1999-2000 was part of a power struggle between local elites, biased from the conflict between Islam and Christianity in Ambon, the formation of the new Makian Malifut sub-district based on PP. No. 42/1999, which led to ethnic and religious conflicts. Conclusion The Ambon, Maluku conflict has occurred since January 19, 1999, coinciding with Muslims celebrating Eid al-Fitr 1419 Hijriah.

In North Maluku, conflict and violence also occurred. The power struggle at the local level between the Sultan of Ternate supported by the customary council and the opposing faction of the Sultan of Ternate (Sultan Tidore, Bahar Andili, Syamsir Andili, Thaib Armayn, and support from the people of North Maluku) has caused divisions in society, both ethnically and religiously (Islam and Christian). The formation of the new Makian Malifut sub-district based on PP. Volume 12 No. 2 March 2017 43 No.42/1999 was rejected by the Kao people because it was considered to violate customs. Conflict began between the Kao people and the Makian people as immigrant tribes from Makian Island due to the threat of the volcano (Mount Kie Besi, Makian). The incident then spread to Tidore, Ternate, Jailolo, and Bacan.

Understanding what Schumpeter described when associated with the practice of democracy in North Maluku, certainly provides an interesting space for debate. Of course, North Maluku is a province that has 4 (four) Islamic Sultanates that have their influence and history. Until now, the four Sultanates still exist with their respective Sultans. So it can be imagined that Schumpeter's critical thinking related to the practice of classical democracy occurred in North Maluku. However, all of that was successfully suppressed by the Sultan who was a representation of traditional, cultural, and religious leaders, although, often dragged into local and national political contests.

Reading the Elite Conflict and Control of Economic Resources of North Maluku as a new autonomous region and as a region with a long historical track record, of course, gives birth to various perspectives on its socio-political dynamics. When viewed from the perspective of North Maluku after it was expanded into an autonomous region, various problems have emerged. For example, horizontal conflicts and conflicts between political groups/groups in political contests in the 2004

and 2009 Pilkada, as well as conflicts between Bureaucratic Elites and 4 Sultanates related to the Capital of North Maluku Province which is located in Sofifi.

If viewed from a historical perspective, initially this region was sovereign and tended to be in conflict with each other and the four Sultanates in Moloku Kie Raha (four mountains), namely, Ternate, Tidore, Bacan, and Jailolo which had abundant natural resources so that foreign nations including Portugal, Spain, England and the Netherlands flocked to North Maluku by monopolizing trade in this region for centuries.

If traced from history, North Maluku is a fairly strong province with dimensions of internal conflict (between the Sultanates). Historically, North Maluku is an area full of high-tension local political dynamics. Conditions like this have occurred since the time of the Ternate Sultanate under Sutan Babullah and the Tidore Sultanate under Sultan Nuku. Competition and conflict between the sultanate families occurred so fiercely that North Maluku was divided into Ternate and Tidore even though they were united in the Four Mountains or Four Brother Sultanates (Moloku Kie Raha).

Of the four existing sultanate institutions, it can be said that only the Ternate sultanate can emerge as a force to introduce North Maluku culture at the national level. Currently, the role of the North Maluku Sultanate is more individual, in the sense that the figure of the sultan appears and transforms into a new elite of North Maluku. It seems that the sultans are aware that the institution they lead is no longer as superior as before, so they emerge with the strength of the mass base they have to compete for political positions in North Maluku.

During Sultan Mudafar Sjah's reign, the palace served not only as a political hub but also as a cultural center. Various palace ceremonies were conducted, including Legu Gam (the Sultan's birthday), Kololi Kie (circling the mountain), Fere Kie (mountain climbing), Isra Miraj, and the Prophet's Birthday. These ceremonies were instrumental in establishing the palace as a center of worship, demonstrating the elite's skillful assertion of its role as the cultural nucleus of North Maluku. This claim led the government, particularly the Ministry of Tourism, to collaborate with the palace, acknowledging its significance in local culture.

Among these ceremonies, the Legu Gam holds significant political importance. Celebrated annually throughout April to mark Sultan Mudafar Syah's birthday on April 12, the month-long Legu Gam has historical roots dating back to the 16th century during the reign of Sultan Babullah, the 26th Sultan of Ternate. Initially exclusive to the palace's nobility and bobato akhirat (religious scholars of the Sultanate), the ceremony includes the recitation of kiye prayers by the bobato akhirat, expressing gratitude for God's blessings of abundant sustenance, safety, health, and national glory.

5. Cultural Contribution of the Sultanate of Ternate

In 2002, Sultan Mudafar Sjah issued an iddin kolano (sultan's decree) to enhance the Legu Gam ceremony by relocating it to the expansive Salero field, with a

focus on making it more grandiose and significant. This initiative aimed not only to preserve Ternate culture but also to enrich national cultural heritage and reinforce the community's value system. The Legu Gam celebration, renowned for its strong political undertones, showcases creative expressions through dance, symbolic language, and ceremonial attire. Each event involves a large number of dancers, such as the 4th Legu Gam in 2007, which featured 10,000 male dancers and earned recognition from MURI for the most male dancers in Indonesia.

Similarly, in 2010, the Legu Gam committee arranged a 10 km-long nasi bamboo (bamboo rice), setting a record and receiving another MURI award for the world's longest bamboo rice. Beyond measuring the Sultan's influence, the Legu Gam serves as a people's festival aimed at preserving cultural traditions, embodying the deep affection of the people of Ternate (bala kusu se kano-kano) for their Sultan. Moreover, the celebration strategically expands kinship networks; state guests and foreign ambassadors receive honorary titles during the event, integrating them into the family fold and garnering political advantages, particularly within traditional society. Politicians and bureaucrats attending also bolster the palace's political prestige during these festivities.

E. CONCLUSION

The most important finding in this study is the contribution of the Ternate Sultanate in the period 1999-2019 to the existence of the Republic of Indonesia, the political development of the North Maluku provincial government, and the sustainability of the Ternate city government. The political contribution of the Ternate Sultanate in the implementation of the regional government of the North Maluku province is manifested in the form of support from the Ternate Sultanate for the existence of the North Maluku province in the area that is traditionally the territory of the Ternate Sultanate and the area that is the territory of three other sultanates, namely the Tidore Sultanate, the Jailolo Sultanate, and the Bacan Sultanate. Fully supports the implementation of regional autonomy in the districts included in the traditional territory of the sultanate including Ternate City, West Halmahera Regency, North Halmahera Regency, Central Halmahera Regency, East Halmahera Regency, Morotai Islands Regency, Sula Islands Regency and Taliabu Regency. Contributions in the field of strengthening the unity and integrity of the people in the North Maluku province are shown in the handling and resolution of the 1999 riots the transition after the New Order to the Reform Order and the resolution of land disputes between communities in the period 1999-2019. The field of eliminating religious identity politics is carried out through a customary approach in areas with potential conflict. Through cultural activities, the Ternate Sultanate regularly carries out activities to eliminate identity politics. Maintaining democracy and political awareness by actively participating in political education and becoming candidates for regional heads, legislative members, and members of the Regional Leadership Council of the Republic of Indonesia. Culturally, opening up public participation and indigenous peoples to make general elections a success in presidential elections, gubernatorial elections, and mayoral

elections. This study limits its study area to the last twenty years, especially during the transition from the New Order Era to the Reform Order. The most important period in the distribution of power with regional autonomy. This study also limits the role of the Ternate Sultanate, one of the most dynamic Sultanates compared to the 3 other sultanates referred to as the rulers of Maluku Kieraha.

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