English Didactic

A STUDY OF THE PUBLIC SPHERE (JURGEN HABERMAS) STATE HEGEMONY AND MEDIA CONSTRUCTION IN PUNKER ARRESTS IN ACEH

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Article Info

Abstract

This study aims to explore how Aceh Punk community members construct their identity in relation to their historical identity development within the public sphere. The paper also traces back the development of Punk community in Aceh throughout Indonesia's most important timeline. The article concludes with a brief comment and reflection on the arrest of Punkers in Aceh in 1965. The phenomenon also contests the freedom of expression of a certain subculture community against religious and traditional values adopted in the local community.

INTRODUCTION

The public sphere was first discussed by Jurgen Habermas, a philosopher from the third generation of the Frankfurt school. He argues that the public sphere is a space or arena where there is freedom from intervention and individuals or groups in it are free from external influences such as the state and government. Previously in England, people gathered for informal discussions in coffee houses and there they discussed issues of art and literary traditions, and often these discussions extended to economic and political debates.

Public space is a medium for expressing ideas, information, and views. As in the UK, people meet, chat, and discuss a new book or the latest artwork. From this, a debate will arise from their meeting so that a so-called civil society will also be formed, which means a society that shares ideas, goals without coercion, which is contrasted with the concept of a coercive state.

Public space here is also not a concrete physical building such as field, tent, shop, and so on but a space where the communication process can take place and run. Space that are not physical are mass media and the internet. Media is where people talk about a problem that occurs in their environment. A mass media must realize the function of the public sphere itself in order to achieve the values of freedom and neutrality in opinion.

Considering public spaces as the platform to express Punk community's aspiration and its connection to historical events, this paper explores the discursive space of Acehnese Punk community in relation to the historical construct of Punk movement and ways of identity expression.

DISCURSIVE SPACE IN ACEH PUNKER ARRESTS
The History and Construction of Indonesian Youth

During the colonial era, the youth were at the forefront of the invaders. They took to the field to fight and promote independence in Indonesia. When the colonization was over, president Soekarno who served as president of Indonesia at the time, the youth demanded injustice that still colored Indonesia after colonization. Among them, they demanded TRITURA (The people's three demands) or the three demands of the people which contained changing the cabinet, lowering the price of basic necessities and disbanding the Indonesian Communist Party. As a result, their demands were met. Moving on to the Soeharto era, the New Order regime was promoted. In this new order, the streets were considered a public space that could start a revolution.

At that time there were many demonstrations on the street and in the 1960s, the youth founded an association called NKK where the public space in the form of the street had to be sterilized and no one could start a revolution on the street. With the entry of communists into Indonesia, many organizations were eventually disbanded and many communist henchmen were killed. After the communists were purged from Indonesia, it turned out that there were still remnants of people who had communist ideology. Then many spies were paid to eradicate the communists to their roots. The youth at that time were depoliticized from the government. There were no youths who took to the streets and acted revolutionary.

The 1998 reform movement broke out because there were a lot of physical violence such as violence against ethnic Chinese and also against women, human rights violations and also

caused a monetary crisis. During this time, the street became a scary place. The number of brawls increased from 2009 to 2011 and most of the fights that led to death occurred in Jakarta and Medan. This happened because of moral degradation and the loss of the youth became a threat. During the ascension of president SBY, problems related to youth were not resolved. The youth were used as a tool to cover up the crimes and misdeeds of the government and as if youth actions were considered useless to make the leaders of the country aware.

The government's cruelty and disregard for Indonesian society is more evident in the case of the arrest of 65 punkers in Aceh because the fashion style demonstrated by Punk was inappropriate and contrary to Islamic norms and values in the area that has the nickname *Serambi Mekah*.

DISCUSSION
Arresting Punk in Aceh and its Public Sphere

The arrest of Acehnese punks by the police and the state caused many local and global reactions. Some Punk communities in the US and UK also said that this was a violation of freedom of expression and a violation of human rights in Indonesia. In a social media, in its Twitter account, Rancid, one of the Punk bands from America said it was ready to help if the state acted and violated Punker freedom in Indonesia.

The arrest made by the police also invited reactions among fellow Punkers from all over Indonesia. The whole Punker held a demonstration to the police and the state why they did not arrest people who were proven to have committed corruption crimes, why this freedom of expression had to collide with the norms and values made by a region.

The history of Punk's entry into Indonesia is a result of advances in technology and information. The impact of Punk and globalization in Indonesia is quite unique. The country where the majority of the population is Muslim and the Punk fashion style which is quite on the contrary to Islamic regulation of how and what is considered modest and according to Islamic values raises many questions. The beginning of the first Punk generation in Jakarta came about because of a different and new fashion style.

It is a far cry from when Punk was first born amongst the working class youth in the UK. Punk was born a counterculture and protest to mainstream culture and also from the economic downturn that occurred in the UK. This culture was born and became popular because of a form of resistance to the existing dominant culture. Punk ideology represents a form of protest against social and class inequality and also the failure of the government to solve prolonged economic and social problems. Therefore, Punk's ideology is closely related to anarchism. However, this definition of anarchism has been misinterpreted by some punks and the public, which was also first coined by Pierre-Joseph Proudhon. But the term anarchism here is an ideology of liberation from capitalism that seeks to seize individual freedom.

With the arrest of 65 Punkers in Aceh, it was very controversial. People feel a sense of unrest if they meet Punk community members. With all the ignorant makeup, mohawk hair, piercing, tattoos and boots become a creepy impression.

In this case, the state and police prohibited these Punkers from having a voice and expression. They were arrested and given counseling about religion and told them to return home, because a decent life is at home. Their mohawk hair is now shaved off. They are given a lot of

knowledge by the 'state' such as requiring them to go to state schools telling them to bring the term between home and school where they must become disciplined, polite, and religiously observant individuals. This incident shows that the hegemony and hierarchy of the government in allowing Indonesians to express themselves is now strong.

Foucault (1979) in Discipline and Punishment looks at how space is organized and uses the concept of the Panopticon as a metaphor and emphasis on individual freedom by the state in modern society. Surveillance does not only relate to the physical, but to isolation and continuous surveillance. The state can 'see' without being 'seen' by its citizens and creates fear and space of monitored expression.

In this case, Punkers, most of whom are young people, have now created a new statement of youth as the new enemy of the state. What the state is doing to the youth is creating a new Punk identity that must contribute to the state, be disciplined to the values and rules made by the state and try to stay out of trouble and do the best for the state.

Punkers in Aceh are part of the society owned by the state and all these activities have the right to be regulated by the state. Punkers do not have full power of ownership for free expression and training that has been mentioned before to remind them that they are still within the territory of Indonesia.

The world has strongly condemned the Aceh police's actions in shaving the heads of punk children for coaching as a violation of human rights. Aceh Governor Irwandi Yusuf also spoke up while defending the coaching action. "What's the shame? What is the world's business? I'm not saying it's okay to violate human rights. Everywhere it is not allowed to violate human rights. We should not follow values made by outsiders and become slaves," he said at the Presidential Office, Jl Medan Merdeka Utara, Central Jakarta, Tuesday (20/12/2011). He added, "Just think in Aceh there are 700 punks who do not want to go home to their parents, living in the outside. What do they want to be, maybe they are just youthful punks," he said. Various comments were made to visitors to this site. The Governor of Aceh did not care for the youth of Aceh and did not give them freedom of expression and violated human rights.

The mass media portrayed the arrest differently. Along with the dominance and hegemony of the media, the youth case seemed to cover up the government's failure to manage the country. This is then co-opted by the print and electronic media to reap more profits in order to follow the will of capital criminals from various forms of print and electronic media.

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In contrast to the news that occurs on local television in Indonesia, it is as if the state is the most righteous for arresting a youth group that is considered disturbing. In local television, the structure of power and surveillance, which is quoted from the term made by Foucault, is very thick and visible and very clearly represented on television. News coverage in the print media is not much different and there is still power domination in the media.

Entering a space without state intervention is like entering a free space because the concept of regulation is not complicated and simple and allows the public to enter a new thing on YouTube and several other websites. The concept of openness for anyone is very possible for anyone to have an opinion there and participate in what is being discussed.

In Facebook accounts, Twitter, YouTube and various blogs, many discuss the arrest of 65 Punkers in Aceh. On Twitter itself there is a movement using hashtag (#) #savePunkaceh and #godsavethePunk. In these social media we can access news for 24 hours and anyone can read or comment on the arrest issue. In the various comments I found, many agreed with the arrest and some disagreed, and most of the commenters did not understand the Punk idiology. These visitors and social media users are not just commenting on what is being debated, they are making online acquaintances and friends and some may have a motive for matchmaking. In situations like this, chatter or conversation between the public can take place and is quite warm and free from the supervision of public authority and Habermas defines it loosely, a situation that is civic and public. In this situation, the publicity of the authority is subtle.

The internet will allow individuals or groups to discuss problems together in order to reach an agreement and this discussion process occurs because it uses a ratio that negates status and tradition so that everyone can have a voice.

From the definition of the public sphere above, it is clear that the internet is now a tool for internet users to meet to discuss problems regardless of status and tradition and not only fellow Indonesians they can discuss, but with people from various parts of the world.

On the issue of the arrest of 65 Punkers in Aceh, this news reached other parts of the world. Many Punkers of the world also empathize with the arrest case, namely Rancid.

The clerics also spoke up on this issue. They think it is appropriate for Punkers to be arrested and returned home. Family and home, according to the clerics, are the most comfortable and peaceful places. Individuals will become fully human if they grow up and are educated from home. This deviant behavior is the result of the environment. Kyai in one of his statements said, "if we are friends with a perfumer, then we will catch the fragrance, if we are friends with a thief, then we will catch being a thief", so all of these things are formed by the environment. From the kyai's statement, it can also raise the question, is there a hegemony dominated by the authorities in Aceh so that all Acehnese must follow the existing rules?

In the YouTube media itself, many people have made and repeated this news. There are those who record from the news on one of the private TV stations, there are some comments from Punker, and there are also those who record a form of solidarity action by taking to the streets at the Hotel Indonesia Roundabout.

Controversial statements are also present in the Muslim Punk band. This Muslim Punk band has also been debated as a counter-culture that comes with combining elements of Punk and Islam in the band. In a statement a member of the band said that Punk should not have done that, the gigs held in Aceh were actually not all Acehnese Punk kids, but from various regions in Indonesia, and many ended up insulting the Muslim Punk on YouTube for the comments he made on the Aceh Punk arrest issue. Some of the insulters said that Punk is Punk and Punk cannot be united with religion. Punk is about togetherness and life and religion cannot be included in Punk. There were also some commenters who agreed with Punk Muslim's statements such as, humans are born and live in order. We have to follow the rules to be successful in this world. Islam also has rules. Islam is a religion of peace but because there are those who want to destroy Islam,

Punk is talking about this issue. Coupled with the concert held by Punk in Aceh did not get permission from the police was also a problem and also some people in Aceh also felt an unrest with the presence and events held by Punker in Aceh.

Apparently, the news reached the Punk rock band from the United States, Rancid. How did they respond? The band, which was formed in 1991, was concerned about the incident. Through their Twitter account, Rancid expressed sympathy. "We hate what's going on with our Punk brothers and sisters in Indonesia. Rancid's got your back!" the 'Ruby Soho' singer wrote.

An action was also carried out by 50 Punk children in front of the Trunojoyo Police headquarters. They wore Punk attributes, shabby clothes and small guitars or so-called ukuleles. The crowd also unfurled a banner measuring 1 meter x 50 centimeters that read "Save Aceh Punk." "Immediately release Punk friends in Aceh who have been arrested by the police," said one orator in a loud voice. The protest was only held for about an hour and was guarded by 30 police officers from Kebayoran Baru Police Station. The peaceful action also did not disrupt the flow of traffic from Blok M towards Jalan Tendean.

The previous solidarity action was also held by Russian punks at the Indonesian Embassy in Moscow. These punks painted the walls of the Embassy. They hoped that their action would reach their colleagues in Indonesia. The community also hopes that the spirit of Indonesian punks will be kindled after hearing that in a faraway country, there are people who show solidarity with them. According to UI criminologist Adrianus Meliala, the action was taken as a form of protest. Unfortunately, the protests are not delivered in elegant and intellectual ways. This community is not used to protesting through mass media. So maybe the reaction to crossing the walls of the Indonesian Embassy is indeed one of their forms of protest, because they cannot speak in the newspapers, because they are not intellectuals. They are not close to the capital world, so they cannot protest through the media.

The action of crossing out the walls of the Indonesian Embassy carried out by this community is a form of protest against the arrest of Punk children in Aceh by the local government. According to Adrianus, it is only natural for the international community to respond to this issue. "The current era is a global era, it can no longer be said that this is only an Indonesian affair. This is a global issue. This is not something that can be limited to national and international. We can't just take our domestic approach. We must also be able to think about the international reaction," explained the former National Police advisor. Not only in Russia, but from various other parts of the world, solidarity actions demanding justice for Aceh Punkers were held, for example in the United States San Francisco: A number of young American punks held a demonstration in front of the Consulate General of the Republic of Indonesia San Francisco, Tuesday (12/20) afternoon. The protesters demanded the release of a number of Punk children detained at the Seulawah State Police School (SPN) in Aceh Besar Regency. In their speeches, the protesters expressed their concern over the detention of a number of punk children in Aceh who were considered disturbing order. The protesters claimed to know the news from the internet media.

Previously reported, a group of Punk children in Moscow, Russia, took action in solidarity with the arrest of 65 Punk children in Banda Aceh. They came to the Indonesian Embassy office in Moscow and scribbled 'Punk is not crime' and 'Religion = Fascism' on one side of the wall in cyrillic alphabet.

As mentioned earlier, on the internet there is no interference from the power to gather and organize the crowd and freely express their thoughts and desires. Representations of dominant power can become less of a threat to the dominant system of power control and people can be free to give their ideas.

CONCLUSION

In the case of the arrest of 65 Punkers in Aceh, it triggered a rational debate that allowed each individual, group to talk without any interference from the police, government or state. However, public spaces such as the internet also present a public sphere that is so broad and arises from various parties. The dominant power representation has no control over this issue and does not have to worry about the state apparatus over every comment in the internet media. With news from the internet spreading throughout the country, a lot of news also came in regarding this arrest case. Much of the news that reached countries such as Russia and America raised human rights issues. From the kyai's statement, many argued about Islam itself and Aceh, from the police statement also agreed with the kyai and the last was the opinion of the Punk children themselves and solutions such as Straight Edge. Maybe this time straight edge can be a solution to the problem of the arrest of 65 Punker aceh. Solutions that can offer not only Punker but for all individuals to be able to act and have a positive lifestyle in order to be accepted by the wider community and especially the Indonesian community which is an Islamic country.

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