Nation Building in Southeast Asia: A Comparative Study

Yeni Wijayanti[a], Yat Rospia Brata[b], Hieronymus Purwanta[c], [a,b]Department of History Education, Galuh University, cDepartment of History Education, Sebelas Maret University, Email: [c*]hpurwanta@staff.uns.ac.id

This article aims to compare the efforts among Southeast Asian countries in nation-building. Each country has its uniqueness in developing its national identity. Countries in Southeast Asia conducted several methods, such as cultural, linguistic, and educational approaches. This study uses the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). Data collection was carried out by a documentary study. Data analysis is implemented by interrelating the three-dimensional analysis process, namely analysing the text verbally and visually, analysing the process of the text production, and analysing the historical and social conditions that influence it. The findings show that countries in Southeast Asia carried out nation-building under different approaches, namely, cultural, linguistic, and educational approaches.

Key words: *Nation-building, Southeast Asia, comparison, culture, language, education.*

Introduction

Nation-building is the process of developing citizenship, so there are many similarities, such as shared interests, goals, and preferences. The similarities become a power that can reduce dispute and develop civic life toward national integration (Alesina, & Bryony Reich, 2015; Blackburn, 2010). Historically, there was a similarity of fate that occurred during the emergence of nationalism in the early 20th century (Susanto, 2016). Various ethnicities had the same fate as colonised countries, which led them to fight colonialism and build independent and sovereign nation-states (Renan, 1882). When a new state is built, nation-building becomes a significant program for multiethnic countries (Khamsi & Morris, 2012).

There are differences in nation-building programs among Southeast Asian countries. For example, Singapore, Burma, and the Philippine created a collective memory by making the Japanese Occupation a force for nation-building (Blackburn, 2010). Singapore is considered a

prosperous nation relating to nation-building. They reconstructed their national identity through the Japanese Occupation as a memory for establishing national identity (Chee, 2018; Khamsi & Morris, 2012). In contrast, Singapore's position is narrated negatively in Malaysian textbooks because of its separation from the Malaysian Federation (Yoong, Rajandran, & Suppiramanian, 2017).

In the Philippines in the 1980s, national identity was not well-established among Filipinos who were Christian and Muslim as citizens. Conflicts among groups frequently happened. Moreover, the Philippines' national language could not unify people nor lead them to the establishment of national identity (Kaufman, 2013). The degradation of nationalism can be overcome. In the 2003s, around 75% of Filipinos felt proud of their country, and they preferred to be Filipinos compared to other nations. Historically, the Western ruling power treated ethnic groups in Asian nations unfairly. Western colonisers chose certain ethnic groups to be their supports in the government and used them to exploit other ethnic groups. From this viewpoint, ethnic and religious diversity is an obstacle in nation-building (Hsueh, 2016). Nationalism plays a role in unifying the diversity and develop nation-building.

The comparison of nation-building among countries is a fascinating study, especially to analyse the constraints they faced. The ethnicity, religion, social, economic, or cultural composition of each nation in Southeast Asia is different. So each country has different policies in nation-building. However, it all comes down to the social contract because a nation is a territory of the political community, and the nation also builds its citizens through a variety of processes and institutions (Tambunan, 2009).

The study aims to discover the general characteristics of nation-building in Southeast Asian nations as an allied society. Further, this research is directed to explore the uniqueness of each nation in facing internal and external pressures that threaten national integration.

Kevin Blackburn (2010) analysed the policies of different countries in Southeast Asia in their nation-building efforts. There are two patterns adopted by countries in Southeast Asia in commemorating the Japanese Occupation. The arrival of Japan in Southeast Asia as an "older brother" is often considered as a helping hand to break away from white colonisers. Singapore took lessons from the Japanese Occupation on how to train the military of young people so that the country can always be prepared to face external and internal threats. The Philippines included a history lesson to teach its generation to always work tenaciously like determined heroes fighting for Philippine independence. The Japanese Occupation became a historical event that could unite the nation through the construction of collective memory.

Chienwu Hsueh (2015) explains the relationship between the peace of the Southeast Asian region and the efforts of ASEAN countries, which tend to prioritise their power's legitimacy.

According to Hsueh, ASEAN countries place priority on economic growth. The economy is the foundation of national development in Southeast Asia because if the economy is weak, the country's situation is unstable, and this can threaten peace in the Southeast Asian region.

In this study, the problem is formulated in two questions. First, what are the characteristics of nation-building countries in Southeast Asia? Secondly, how do Southeast Asian countries face obstacles in the process of national integration?

Methodology

There are five countries in Southeast Asia as the research subjects, namely Indonesia, Malaysia, Singapore, Thailand, and the Philippines. The object of research is their history textbooks. The five Southeast Asian countries have a different school textbook narrative. The data analysed is in the form of sentences, clauses, phrases, and words in the textbook. In this context, the language contained in the textbook is viewed as a tool for power.

This study used critical discourse analysis (CDA) because it is capable of analysing the power, history, and ideology contained in the text. Ideology refers to social forms and processes. Social processes are seen from a historical context by looking at the social relations among the parties concerned (Janks, 1995; Wodak, 2001).

The discourse analysis used is Fairclough's three-dimensional framework, namely text, discourse practice, and sociocultural practice. In the Fairclough model, the text is analysed linguistically by referring to vocabulary, sentences, and semantics (verbally and visually). In this framework attention to the cohesiveness and coherence and how the words or sentences were combined to construct understanding is the focus. Discourse practice is a dimension related to the process of producing and consuming text. Discourse practice analyses the process of producing text and the historical perspective of social conditions that influence the process. Analysis of social and language discourse is carried out, with macro analysis on social structure and microanalysis on social action. Language is a part of society, and linguistic phenomena are part of social phenomena (Henderson, 2005).

The first dimension of the text analysis is the process of description, followed by a process of analysis or interpretation, and lastly social analysis, which is also called an explanation (Janks, 1995). The nation-building programs created by the governments in Southeast Asia are analysed by describing and interpreting the policy process. Matters that influence processes such as the political situation at the time were of concern for the analysis. The focus is on the relationship between text and context that produces meaning. All actions, beliefs, attitudes, and social relations are taken into consideration to make interpretations. This interpretive analysis

does not produce absolute truth. This analysis is indeed open, and it can change according to the underlying point of view.

The last step is to analyse the macro social conditions at that time. At this stage, the ideology and culture behind the discourse are explored to find the relationship between power and textbooks. In a social context, power and dominance issues are analysed as social construction made by the authorities (Pitsoe & Letseka, 2013).

Ideology is perceived as a significant aspect to maintain the authorities' desired conditions (Wodak, 2001). In constructing a nation-building policy, countries in Southeast Asia are influenced by social, political, and ideological conditions. Therefore, various programs emerged among Southeast Asian countries, for example, dealing with ethnic reconciliation and the memory of Japanese Occupation in their own countries. Ethnic reconciliation, for example, is carried out in Malaysia, Thailand, and Singapore. Regarding the collective memory of the Japanese Occupation, some countries consider it a whip in nation-building and national identity. Some countries ignore it because they consider it irrelevant.

Result
Indonesia

The proclamation on August 17th, 1945, is the culmination of Indonesia's struggle against colonialism and standing as an independent nation. Indonesian nationalism is not dominated by religion and the majority ethnic group (Wood, 2008). The founding fathers of Indonesia were aware of the diversity of languages, cultures, religions, and ethnicities so that "*Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity)" is used as a national motto and legalised by Government Regulation number 66 of 1951 (Lestari, 2015). The motto encouraged Indonesian ethnicities to unite with their nationalism against colonialism even though the majority of Indonesia's population is Muslim and Javanese.

Indonesian nationalism is viewed as a power-driven by intellectuals who have national awareness, manifested in political parties (Supardan, 2011). Some young people who have been educated and have a national perspective are moving to rise from the situation. During the national movement, the characteristics of Indonesian nationalism were anti-colonialism and the spirit of developing a united state. Ethnic groups were united by the same experience under the occupation of other nations (Susanto, 2016). Nationalism, at an early stage, can indeed glue heterogeneous Indonesian society against colonialism. However, after the de-occupation, the instability in Indonesian integration began. Therefore, it is necessary to redefine nationalism in nation-building (Supardan, 2011). Some separatist movements and dissatisfaction with the government of the Republic of Indonesia broke out. The imbalance in the mastery of the economic sector and SARA conflict became obstacles.

Indonesia's identity is manifested in various media such as the national anthem Indonesia Raya, national flag, and Pancasila as a state ideology. The effort to develop the Indonesian nation was driven by several factors, including the Japanese Occupation, the Cold War, and the development of Asian countries in the 1970-1990s (Wood, 2008).

Indonesian language as a unifying language was declared in the Youth Pledge 1928. This language overcomes communication problems of all ethnicities who have local languages. Indonesian as an official language is used in the domains of administration, politics, religion, culture, science, and technology (Ziegenhain, 2018). The majority and minority groups jointly support the use of Indonesian as an official language. The determination of the national language leads to the formation of a strong national identity.

Malaysia

The Nation Building effort in Malaysia began during independence in 1957 (Saad, 2012). The British government had previously tried to unite all ethnicities in the Malayan Union, a confederation of Malay states which treated all ethnicities equally. However, the Malay ethnic rejected their formation because they deprived their privileges and adopted another ethnicity (Ziegenhain, 2018).

At the same time, during the British colonial period, Malaysia tried to mobilise national unity to break away from Britain. The hope for an independent country free from invaders from other nations is manifested in the "State of Malay Dream" with the slogan "Great Malay," which is an initiative of Malaysian and Indonesian nationalists. Resistance to Britain also resulted in a coalition of left-wing factions between the People's Power Center (PUTERA) and the Pan-Malayan Council of Joint Action (PMCJA) from March to July 1947 (Husin, 2011).
Malaysia consists of three major ethnic groups, namely Malay, Chinese, and Indian. More than 50 percent are Malay ethnicity, while Chinese and Indian are approximately 30 and 10 percent, respectively. Chinese and Indian came to the Malay Peninsula in the late 19th and early 20th centuries (Ziegenhain, 2018). Their language, culture, and religion are different from the Malay language. The differences sometimes complicate the nation-building program in Malaysia.

Ethnicity, in Malaysia, becomes a political identity. This is manifested in the formation of parties based on Malay, Chinese and Indian ethnics (Susanto, 2016). These parties include the Malay-based United Malay National Organisation (UMNO), the Malaysian Chinese Association (MCA) for Chinese ethnicity, and the Malaysian Indian Congress (MIC) for ethnic Indian (Husin, 2011; Ziegenhain, 2018).

The dominance of Malay and UMNO in politics was seen in the prime minister who was always elected. UMNO and Malay organisations urged the electoral draft commission to establish Islam as the state religion (Ziegenhain, 2018). Ethnic-based parties and group goals broaden the gap among them. Each of them is egocentrism.

The nation-building problem is also caused by the economic gap between Chinese and Malay ethnicity; and Malay's privileges in the work of the public sector, general economy, and education (Susanto, 2016). Chinese people have more control over economic resources, even though their access is restricted. Historical heritage is also the cause. Malay ethnics frequently uses the position of Chinese people for their interests. On the other hand, they are treated discriminatorily, such as in terms of their settlement. The tenacity of Chinese people in running a business makes them leaders in the economic sector.

On March 5th, 1965, a proposal came up to implement the "Malaysian Malaysia" policy by the Singaporean People's Action Party (PAP) led by Lee Kuan Yew (Saad, 2012). Malaysian Malaysia is an equality idea for all Malaysian citizens regardless of race. The idea is the antithesis of "Malay Malaysia." On May 9th, 1965, Lee Kuan Yew, Goh Keng Swee, Toh Chin Chye, S Rajaratnam, and Othman Wok formed the Malaysian Solidarity Convention or Malaysian Solidarity Council (MSC) (Omar, 2014). However, this movement met failure.
Furthermore, on May 13th, 1969, there were racial riots between Malays and Chinese as well as Indians. The causing factor shows that China was superior over the economic field and Malay dominates over politics (Saad, 2012; Tejani, 2015). After the 1969 riot, Malaysia launched the New Economic Policy (NEP), aiming to unite the nation with two programs: poverty alleviation regardless of race and community restructuring, with its economic function (Saad, 2012).
The government also introduced the "Foundation of National Culture" in 1970, which emphasised the assimilation of non-Malay culture into Malay culture. Three national cultural principles include (1) national culture must be based on custom, (2) suitable elements from other cultures can become national culture, and (3) Islam is an essential component of national culture (Ziegenhain, 2018).

The Malay language is designated as the official language of the state based on article 152 of the Malaysian Constitution (Ziegenhain, 2018). Language plays a role in nation-building and the formation of national identity. The widespread use of language is vital in nation-building. Society can be bound in one state language so that there is harmony.

Singapore

Singapore joined Malaya, Sabah, and Sarawak in the Malaya Federation on September 16th, 1963. Externally, the Malayan Federation had problems with Indonesia and the Philippines,

while internally, it faced ethnic problems and rebellion. The Federal Government was also in conflict with Singapore. Several problems arose after Singapore's separation from Malaysia, including the island problem in Tebrau Strait, water supply, Singapore land reclamation, and land around the railway in Singapore (Yoong et al., 2017).

The British defeat by the Japanese on February 15th, 1942, marked the start of the Japanese Occupation of Singapore. During the Japanese Occupation, Singapore was renamed Syonan-to or "Light of the South." Japan tried to win the hearts of Singaporeans by promising a better life compared to the time under British imperialism (Chee, 2018).

Singaporean people consist of various ethnic groups, including Chinese, Malay, and Indian. Some of them have bound with Singapore as their homeland, but some do not. Until 1965 there was no collective identity that bound them (Khamsi & Morris, 2012). Singapore separated from Malaysia on August 9th, 1965, with Lee Kuan Yew as its prime minister. Racial problems is the reason why Singapore broke away and because there was an assumption that Malaya is just for Malay people (Susanto, 2016).

After independence, Singapore's political elite formulated its national identity by considering ethnic groups and geographical location. Singapore is close to Malaysia and Indonesia, where the majority of its population is Muslim. The majority of Chinese ethnic in Singapore is considered a threat to their region.

In facing the domestic and exogenous challenges, Singapore formulated a robust national identity using education as a tool. The role of education in Singapore is divided into three phases, the survival phase (1965-1979), the efficiency phase (1979-1997), and the ability phase (1997-present). In the first phase, historical reference was prioritised to be equated with the government because history is considered controversial and can potentially divide the nation (Khamsi & Morris, 2012).

The Japanese Occupation was reconstructed in Singapore's history by emphasising Japan's position as a partner in improving Singapore's economic status. Singapore's discourse is different from other countries in Asia, which made Japan an enemy in the history of their nation. Singapore frames the event of the Second World War as an essential lesson to build its nation. War is remembered as a lesson that Singapore had become a country whose status had improved compared to when it was part of the Malaya Federation (Chee, 2018).

The Philippines

The history of nationalism in the Philippine is the oldest in Southeast Asia, with the birth of the Philippines in 1880 led by Jose Rizal. Rizal's two novels, "Noli me Tangere" and "El

Filibusterisme," became a propaganda tool for his struggle (Susanto, 2016). Nation-building in Philippine is implemented in various ways such as assimilation, the collective memory of war, and language.

The process of nation-building fluctuated, along with the policy and action, was taken by the government. The Philippines has a very diverse language that has the potential to cause division. During the revolution of 1898-1902, Tagalog became the official language, and the Visaya people disagreed. Revolutionary leader Emilio Aguinaldo proposed the Spanish language as the solution because all ethnicities knew it. However, the problem is that Spanish was only controlled by the elite (Kaufman, 2013). The Tagalog language, as the instruction language, was a "coercion" of other ethnic groups who had their local languages.

The Philippine Islands consist of more than 7,100 islands, with Luzon Island as the most significant island. In terms of the language, Tagalog is the largest ethnolinguistic group of the total population of 24.4%, Binisaya / Bisaya language 11.4%, Cebuano 9.9%, Illucano 8.8%, Bicol 6.8%, Waray 4%, other languages 26.3%. In terms of religion, the majority of people are 80.6% Catholic, Protestant 8.2%, Islam 5.6%, other Christians 3.4%, and others 2.2% (CIA, 2020).

President Quezon determined Tagalog as the national language in 1937. When the World War broke out, efforts to introduce official language were postponed until 1946. After independence on July 4th, 1946, Tagalog was introduced through media so that by 1970 people had been familiar and able to speak Tagalog (Kaufman, 2013). Then in 1973 and 1987, the Philippine Constitution established that the Philippine national language was Filipino (Rubrico, 1996). Besides Tagalog, English was also used as the language of instruction.

Under the new constitutional convention in 1973, President Marcos, who spoke Illucano language, tried to establish a new national language. The determination of the new national language also failed because of a tug of war in each ethnic group. The 1992 Commission re-established Tagalog as the official language despite rejection. Until finally, in 2007, three regional courts decided to establish Tagalog as the official language for the promotion of the national language. When Tagalog continued to be introduced and spread throughout the Philippines, English was still used as a language for multiethnic communication in the Philippines (Kaufman, 2013). Thus, the position of Tagalog as the language of instruction sometimes becomes a second language when English becomes the language of communication between various ethnic groups.

Regarding national identity, the following poll survey shows that in 2003, 84% of Filipinos were proud of their national history, and more than 80% were very proud to be Filipinos. In the 1980s polls, Filipino Muslims placed Filipino identities after clan, ethnic affiliation, and

religion. As many as 48% of young people will defend the Philippines against external threats. In the 1970s, some polls showed Waray-Hilonggo ethnic rivalry and negative stereotypes against Muslims. However, regarding national pride, 75% of Filipinos chose to be Filipinos if they were born again, 20% wanted to be reborn as Americans, and others (Kaufman, 2013).

Thailand

Thailand became the only country in Asia that was not colonised by Europeans in the 19ᵗʰ century. Thailand became a buffer zone among British rule in India and France in Indochina (Hsueh, 2016). The history journey is one of the differentiators in the nationalism and nation-building movement with other Southeast Asian countries.

The nationalism movement in Thailand aims to maintain independence from Western threats. Nationalism in Thailand is manifested in modernisation and diplomacy. Thailand changed the name 'Siam' to 'Thailand' because Siam was considered a slave country, while Thailand was defined as the land of free people. Diplomacy is implemented by Thailand so that Western nations do not attack Thailand. Countries with diplomatic relations with Thailand include Britain, America, Prussia, the Netherlands, and Denmark (Susanto, 2016).

The Pibulsongkram nation-building program in the period of 1938-1944 was a cultural revolution in Thailand. Pure Thais are Thai-cultured people. Culture makes Thailand good in the eyes of international society. The first phase of the Cultural Revolution began in 1938 when Phibul came to power until 1942. The government emphasised the collective memory of the greatness of Siam, the new Siam, which was more extensive and more civilised (Numnonda, 2011).

The government carried out national integration efforts by assimilating Islamic Malay culture (Patani) into the Thai education system. Patani youths are required to study in Thai as the language of instruction. Thailand has a centralistic government. The national identity of the Siamese kingdom is applied by the motto of the trinity (lak thai), namely one Thai nationality, one Buddhist religion, and the obedience to the king's authority (Yuniarto, n.d.).

Rattha Niyom or Cultures Mandates has led to national greatness. In this period, there was 12 Cultures Mandates: (1) name of the country, people, and nationality; (2) protect state security; (3) Thai names; (4) paying respect to the flag, national anthem, and royal anthem; (5) using Thai products; (6) the tone and lyrics of the national anthem, (7) inviting Thais to build the nation; (8) royal anthem; (9) Thai language and the obligations of good citizens; (10) Thai clothing; (11) Thai livelihood; and (12) care of children, elderly and disabled (Numnonda, 2011). Some examples of the practice of cultural mandates include male and female clothing, name, eating manner, and regulating other things. The people must change the habit of using

Thai clothes to replace them with formal clothes such as men wearing a hat, shirt, trousers, socks, and shoes. Furthermore, a hat, blouse, skirt, and shoes are for women.

Discussion

The process of nation-building is an effort to develop a spirit of patriotism and solidarity to create a country with people of the same identity. The nation-building process can be considered as a mechanical model that can be constructed based on authority, need, and designer plan to achieve unity. At this stage, nation-building involves citizens' loyalty to their country (Husin, 2011). The government has the authority to make nation-building policies that apply to all its people for the realisation of national unity. Therefore, governments in Southeast Asia have their successes and failures.

The formation of the national identities of countries in Southeast Asia begins with the process of ethnic reconciliation. This unifying process comes from a sense of togetherness. This sense of togetherness is followed by the willingness to grow the spirit of nationalism. Nationalism is one element of nation-building, which in the citizens' process to have a national perspective and behaviour under culture and ideology (Susanto, 2016).

Nation-building using the cultural approach is visible in Indonesia and Thailand. *The national motto of Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* in Indonesia binds Indonesian people who have a diversity of culture, language, religion, tribe, and ethnicity. The awareness of Indonesian nationality did not arise because the ethno-culture of the Indonesian state would consciously protect all ethnicities, tribes, and races without discriminating against one another. Cultural diversity is used as a national strength.

During the national movement and the beginning of Indonesia's independence, the bond of solidarity against colonialism and building a nation was quite strong. The signs of the national identity formation emerged when the Youth Pledge was echoed. The acceptance of the nation, the motherland, and the Indonesian language by ethnic representatives throughout the archipelago at that time became the power of nation-building. Indonesian, as a national language, is considered to be a similarity that can bring about social solidarity.

Indonesia's identity is manifested in various media such as the national anthem Indonesia Raya, bendera Merah Putih, and Burung Garuda. Every school, agency, or institution sings Indonesia Raya over and over when there are activities. Furthermore, the flag and Garuda bird are displayed in offices. Furthermore, on the Garuda bird ribbon, it says Unity in Diversity.

In Thailand, the Cultural Revolution was carried out by Pibulsongkram to make Thailand recognised as a great country. The program is a process towards the formation of national

identity. What Pibulsongkram did does not correspond to what Samudavanija (2002) stated that national identity is not required in Thailand. The creation of national identity is only to control the people from rebelling.

Pibulsongkram applied Rattha Noya or Cultures Mandates from 1938 to 1946. Pibul expects a 'new Thailand' that has a good reputation in the world. Politically, Thailand's increasing prestige over international society means that the name Pibul in the world is also being boosted. To realise the dream of Pibul, the government imposed "coercion" on its citizens to change their lifestyle like "Westerners." The Cultural Revolution implemented during the Pibulsogram caused a reaction because people had to change their habits.

Linguistic or language approaches in nation-building are carried out in Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. Indonesian as a unifying language has been agreed since 1928 when the Youth Pledge was declared. There was no apparent opposition to the Indonesian language as national language out of the majority of local language user groups. The Indonesian language is an introductory language among many local languages in Indonesia.

In Malaysia, the Malay language is used as the national language. However, the determination of Malay as the official language of Malaysia is not entirely successful because, in practice, the Malay language can only be applied in the education system, but in other sectors, people use English. Chinese and Indians use their language, and English becomes an inter-ethnic language.

Kaufman (2017) explained that language is one of the main obstacles in the Philippines' nation-building. Even though in 1937, Tagalog was declared a national language, with only 24.4% of active users (CIA, 2020). Each ethnic group uses their ethnic language as their mother tongue. Meanwhile, relations between ethnic groups use English. President Marcos, when in power, once promoted his ethnic language, Illucano, to become the national language in place of Tagalog, but failed. From this perspective, besides the diversity of languages, nation-building in the Philippines has to face competition among ethnic language users that wanted their ethnic language to be the national language.

Likewise, in Thailand, making Thai a language of introduction turned out to be an obstacle because the Patanis had a different culture and were psychologically closer to Malay ethnic. Patani was forced to use the Thai language as the language of introduction. Thai government programs that are not in harmony with the Patani cause conflict.

Countries that tolerate plurality in nation-building are Singapore and Indonesia. Michael Hill and Lian Kwan Fee explained nation-building in Singapore through the building of new institutions, by creating a centralised feature in political and social life in Singapore. A multicultural and multiracial education system is aimed at building a national identity. The concept of multiracial has a vital meaning to filter racial discrimination in Singapore life. The

concept of Multiracialism was brought up by Benjamin (1976), Chan and Evers (1978), and Clammer (1982) (Hill & Fee, 2003). Singapore government protects the position of ethnic minorities in its multiracial policy. This is based on a bitter historical experience when Singapore joined the Malaya Federation. In general, Chinese ethnic receive restrictions on political and economic life.

Indonesia accommodated all ethnic groups during the national movement to independence. When nationalists gathered for the Youth Congress in 1928, all ethnic groups agreed on one homeland, one nation, and one language, namely Indonesia. Also, the Establishment of Unity in Diversity as the Republic of Indonesia's motto strengthens what the Indonesian founding fathers used to do. By recognising Bhinneka Tunggal Ika as a motto for diversity but one, the national integration of the Indonesian people was accomplished.

Ethnic discrimination occurs in Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand. The problem of nation-building in Malaysia is derived from ethnic differences of Malay, Chinese and Indian. Malaysia gives Malay ethnicity privileges, while Chinese and Indian ethnicities do not get the same portion in their position as citizens. Malays have a fear of the upcoming dominance of Chinese and Indian ethnicities. Malays are the majority of Malaysian society. However, Chinese ethnicity is dominant in the economic sector.

Malaysia tries to respect other ethnic groups with the concept of Malaysia 1 in 2008 for national integration. Concept Malaysia 1 was put forward by the Sixth Prime Minister of Malaysia, Mohd Najib Tun Abdul Razak. Differences in society are minimised by one concept, which is expected to unite all of them. Its population constrains Malaysia's national identity. Even though the government tried to make policies that lead to nation-building, ethnocentrism's ego was still crucial. The egocentrism happened because people still stick to the words "A Malay will continue to be Malay, a Chinese will continue to be Chinese, and an Indian will continue to be Indian." (Husin, 2011; Saad, 2012).

Efforts to embrace all ethnic groups, particularly Chinese ethnicity in Malaysia, were also realised by making the film "Malaysia Paloh." The film depicts a compromise between Chinese and Malay ethnicities, but the film cannot be categorised in the box offices. The director's attempt to bring about reconciliation failed.

Conclusion

The process of nation-building in Southeast Asia varies according to political, social, and cultural conditions. Nationalism, as the root of a nation-state that will guide nations in nation-building, also has a different story among Southeast Asian countries. Previously, Thailand was established not through a struggle to break away from colonialism because it became a buffer

state. So Thai nationalism is more oriented towards ethnic and cultural reconciliation. This is different from Indonesia and the Philippines, which struggled long ago to escape from colonialism, Malaysia and Singapore, which were originally one in the Federation, is certainly different from their neighbouring country, Indonesia. British power in the Malay Peninsula made the region a political mouthpiece, making the countries in the Malay Peninsula more mature before independence.

Nation-building through the cultural approach is carried out by Indonesia and Thailand. Indonesia, with the motto *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* (Unity in Diversity), can embrace all ethnicities and existing tribes. Thailand, with Rattha Niyom in its journey, was less successful in creating national integration. Some rejection and resistance emerged.

Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, and Thailand apply linguistic or language approaches. Indonesia, with its Indonesian language, Malaysia, with its Malay language, the Philippines with its Filipino language, and Thailand with its Thai language. After Indonesian independence, with Indonesian as the introductory language, became a unifying nation. Determination of Indonesian as the official language of the country does not develop opposition from the ethnic groups in Indonesia, although most are Javanese. The Indonesian language is the national identity of the Indonesian nation, in addition to the national anthem Indonesia Raya, Garuda, and the Red and White flag. In Malaysia, Malay becomes the national language, but English becomes the second language as an introductory language. Chinese and Indian ethnics respectively use their language, except to communicate in English. Likewise, in the Philippines, Filipino is decided as the national language, but English is still used in communication. The linguistic approach in Malaysia and Philippine has been less successful in creating national integrity.

Countries that are tolerable to the plurality in nation-building seem to be Singapore and Indonesia. Singapore started its nation-state after being separated from the Federation of Malaya. Nation-building efforts are carried out by trying to accommodate existing ethnicities. Multiracial becomes the concept of national development. Chinese as the majority and Malay and Eurasian ethnics as the minority receive the same rights. Economic development is carried out regardless of race. Nation-building in Indonesia is derived from the Youth Pledge in 1928, which emphasises unity based on the homeland, nation, and Indonesian language. Nationalists formulated the Pledge as a kind of ethnic reconciliation in opposing colonialism by referring to one motherland, namely the Indonesian country.

Ethnic discrimination occurs in Malaysia, the the Philippines, and Thailand. In Malaysia, Chinese and Indian ethnicities are discriminated in their lives, while in the Philippines, discrimination occurs to the Moro ethnic; and in Thailand, discrimination occurs to Patani ethnic. The position of the minority becomes increasingly squeezed when the majority prioritises the group.

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