

CHINA'S NATIONAL INTEREST AS THE MAIN CONDUCTOR OF UIGHUR ISSUES

Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi

Agustus 2020, 9 (Edisi Khusus:

Implementasi Inovasi di Era

Disrupsi): 283-293

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Abstract

This scientific paper examines the main factors causing the Uighur issue. The problems contained in the Uighur issue are complex problems that make the existence of a scientific work examining this issue urgent. Because, this problem has become one of the popular issues, especially in the study of International Relations in the contemporary period. So that encourages the writer to study this problem and provide a spectrum of Uighur issues through this scientific paper. This scientific paper is made by the writer using qualitative methods that refer to credible sources as a reference related to the main factors that are conductors of Uighur issues. In this scientific paper, the author has found that China's national interest in the form of territories in places used as homes by ethnic Uighurs are the main variable on the conductors of Uighur issues.

Keywords: *China; Issue; National Interest; Uighur.*

Abstrak

Karya tulis ilmiah ini mengkaji tentang faktor-faktor utama yang menyebabkan isu Uighur. Masalah yang terkandung dalam isu Uighur merupakan permasalahan kompleks yang menjadikan eksistensi karya tulis ilmiah yang mengkaji isu ini berurgensi tinggi. Karena isu ini telah menjadi salah satu masalah yang populer, terutama dalam studi Hubungan Internasional di masa kontemporer. Sehingga hal ini mendorong penulis untuk mengkaji masalah ini dan memberikan spektrum isu Uighur melalui karya tulis ilmiah ini. Karya tulis ini dibuat oleh penulis menggunakan metode kualitatif yang merujuk pada sumber-sumber yang bersifat credible sebagai referensi terkait dengan faktor utama yang menjadi konduktor isu Uighur. Dalam karya tulis ilmiah ini, penulis telah menemukan bahwa kepentingan nasional China dalam bentuk teritori di tempat-tempat yang digunakan sebagai tempat tinggal oleh etnis Uighur adalah variabel utama pada konduktor masalah Uighur.

Kata kunci: *China; Issue; National Interest; Uighur.*

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Artikel yang diterbitkan Jurnal Analisa Sosiologi pada edisi khusus Implementasi Inovasi di Era Disrupsi ini telah memenuhi syarat-syarat karya ilmiah, diproses sama seperti pada penerbitan non edisi khusus (terbitan normal), dipresentasikan di Konferensi Internasional ICLEISR "Implementing Innovation in The Disruptive Era" yang diselenggarakan oleh Pallawa Research Institute dan GMB-Indonesia pada tanggal 17 Mei 2020.

INTRODUCTION

The issue of human rights violations is a very extraordinary crime (Siswadi, 2015). Because this includes the survival and rights possessed by humans. The right that makes everyone have the freedom to live, choose, work, study, have a family and other positive life activities, is not even owned by him. Therefore, the existence of human rights is very important for the welfare of the lives of every person in the world. However, the development of issues concerning human rights violence also shows a large number. One example of a case of human rights violations is a case of human rights violations against Uighur Muslims in China which will be discussed in this paper.

The human right violence experienced by Uighur Muslims is motivated by the Chinese government's national interests. Xinjiang which is a region inhabited by Uighur Muslims which is an area that has rich natural resources. But on the other hand, Uighurs are a race that has a very different background from other Chinese societies. The cultural differences of the Uighurs are very clear, because they use local and Turkish languages, in addition they also write in Arabic script. This is because the ethnic Uighur is an ethnic originating from one of the Proto-Turkish ethnicities. So they have the same culture, history, religion with other ethnic Turks. That closeness creates a strong sense of primordialism (S, 2013).

The differences possessed by the Uighur race made them wish to separate themselves from Chinese communism (Saragih, 2015). This is what makes China strive to maintain the Uighur region which has a wealth of natural resources that are many. Because if the Uighurs were to become independent, China would naturally lose the territory and abundant natural resources contained in the Xinjiang region inhabited by the Uighur race. This is certainly a huge loss for the Chinese government if it occurs.

The work of (Basuki, 2019) is literature that provides a fairly clear picture of the state of the Chinese government. So that readers like to feel how the situation and conditions of the Chinese government. But in the literature, the explanation of the Uighur issue is not deep enough, especially in the context of the genealogy of Uighur issues. When reading this literature, the author begins to think about making a scientific work that

discusses the issue of Uighur with a deep analysis along with the genealogy of the issue.

In (Saragih, 2015), The author provides a fairly clear explanation of human rights violations committed by the Chinese government. The literature provides a broad spectrum in the context of juridical review perspectives. Here, it is explained that the actions of the Chinese government which brought up the Uighurs suffered greatly because they experienced acts that afflicted them, one of which was social-economic discrimination. The literature has a flow of discussion that is dominated by various things related to juridical and humanitarian law.

Literature (Karisma, 2017) has data that according to the author is quite valuable related to the research that the author is doing. Here the authors find that there are many indicators that trigger the heat of the Uighur issue. In addition, the author also gets information that one of the main things that makes the Chinese government maintain the region inhabited by ethnic Uighurs - Xinjiang - has a very valuable natural wealth for the Chinese government. Therefore, the Chinese government will never give up the Xinjiang region separated from China by ethnic Uighurs who want independence.

Is a work that is very rich in theory, especially theories in international relations. This literature is used as the author of one of the proper capital theorists to explain the efforts of the Chinese government to defend Xinjiang inhabited by ethnic Uighurs (Hadiwinata, 2018). From this literature, the author chooses theories from thinkers of realism in international relations who say that the nature of inter-state politics is power, and one of the derivations of power is economic power. Therefore, China certainly will not let go of its territory just like that because China has a national interest in the Xinjiang region which is a region of high economic resources that can strengthen China's power.

METHODS

This scientific paper is written by the writer using qualitative methods and refers to credible literature sources. Based on the writings of Bogdan and Biknel (1982) there are several important points that have

been summarized by the author to be understood contained in qualitative methods (Musianto, 2002). These points are: First, the types of methodological approach areas are ethnographic, fieldwork, soft data, symbolic interactionism, naturalistic, descriptive, observations with role involvement, phenomenological, documentary data, case studies, descriptive historical studies, environmental studies, observation, document review, participant observer, and story. Second, the key conceptual types in qualitative approach are meaning, common sense, understanding, situation boundaries, facts of daily life, processes, social construction, and so on. Third, in a qualitative approach, the theoretical basis is symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology, phenomenology, culture, and so on. Fourth, the direction and focus of qualitative research approaches is to build theories from data or facts, develop synthesis of interactions and theories that are built from basic facts, develop understanding, and so on. Fifth, in a qualitative approach, data control is carried out through descriptions of objects and situations, personal documentation, field notes, photography, terms, official documentation, and so on.

The qualitative research method is a comprehensive method. So, the writer uses that research method in this scientific paper. In addition, this scientific paper collaborates this method with the use of theories from realism, which is a quite phenomenal theory that has been repeatedly used by international relations researchers. Therefore, the authors hope that this scientific paper can become a very useful literature that can lead to the welfare of information.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Actually the Uighur issue is an old issue that still exists today. If we look at some, the Uighur issue is certainly an issue classified as terrorism as like (Winarno, 2014) opinion which says that one of four types of terrorism is the separatism movement. This could be due to the many efforts made by Uighurs aimed at separating Xinjiang from the grasp of China. Therefore, this issue can be categorized as an issue of terrorism-separatism. But, the

existence of terrorism-separatism contained in the Uighur issue cannot be said to be good or bad just like that. Because, someone can issue propositions about ethics (good or bad of a thing) with thought, and every proposition of thoughts about the good or bad of a thing must be accompanied by an argument (Bruggink, 2015). And below the writer will explain implicitly about how acts of terrorism-separatism carried out by Uighurs can be said to be good / right.

Uighur actions will look right when we understand history more deeply. Actually the Chinese government had annexed the area that was used as a residence by the Uighur race in 1949 (Hidayat, 2013). Initially, Uighurs and other local Muslim groups have twice formed an independent state called the East Turkestan Republic. The first formation took place in 1931 to 1934 and the second formation took place in 1944 to 1949. The efforts of the ethnic Uighurs ended immediately because of the annexation carried out by the Chinese communist regime.

When the Chinese regime carried out an annexation, Xinjiang was immediately declared as one of China's autonomous regions despite the fact that the majority of the population there were ethnic Uighurs. In fact the Uighur power was ultimately controlled by the regional secretary general of the Chinese communist party and not by the local governor (Karisma, 2017). For this reason, the Uighurs carried out various separatist acts as a form of resistance from the international crime of annexation committed by the Chinese government (Council, 2019).

However, is annexation by the Chinese government only the only act that harms the Uighurs? The answer is no! This is because in order to defend Xinjiang the Chinese government issued several other actions which were very detrimental to the Uighurs (Cahyadi, 2019). These actions are; first, the transmigration program in which the Chinese government carried out 800,000 Han transmigration to Xinjiang in 1959-1960. And this migration program continued until 1970. Three Million ethnic Han have migrated to Xinjiang and even in the period of the 2010s there were recorded 8 Million ethnic Han migrated to Xinjiang (Saragih, 2015). Secondly, Han Ethics are systemically made more likely to have success than ethnic Uighurs. For example, high-ranking bureaucratic officials are chosen from ethnic Han.

This has even happened since the Republican era of 1911-1949. Mining and export of agricultural products in Xinjiang which are dominated and capitalized by Han ethnicity creates an exploitative feeling and colonial practices felt by the ethnic Uighurs. And because of the many ethnic Han, this directly threatens the existence of the local Uighur Language. The Chinese communist regime forces Uighurs to adopt Han culture and language if they want recognition. And how is the action taken by the Uighurs as an act of resistance to injustice committed by the Chinese government?

This seems clear that China is trying to obtain or maintain its national interests. In his book *The Twenty Years Crisis 1919-1939*, E.H Carr stated that the nature of international politics is power, one of the derivatives being Economic Power (Hadiwinata, 2018). Therefore, the Chinese government will certainly continue to try to defend the area. So what is the action taken by the Uighurs as an act of resistance against annexation and injustice committed by the Chinese government?

Actions as a form of separatism carried out by Uighurs, one of which can be found at ETIM (East Turkestan Islamic Movement) (BASUKI, 2019). ETIM is a Uighur separatist group known for its frequent acts of terrorism since the 1990s. One of the acts of terror carried out by ETIM was when the Chinese president named Xi Jinping visited Xinjiang on April 30, 2014. During Xi Jinping's visit there were two ethnic Uighurs who committed suicide bombings that left 3 people dead and 79 injured in South Urumqi Train Station. And shortly after the action, there was another bombing by Uighurs at the Urumqi Morning Market that killed more than 39 people. But what about the actions of the Chinese government as an effort to defend its territory and face the Uighur "terror"?

As explained earlier, the holders of power in the Xinjiang region remained in the control of the Chinese communist government. Weng Lequan has been the secretary of the communist party in Xinjiang since 1995, who is of ethnic Han origin. The policies made during his reign were about how Xinjiang could be "conductive" from the resistance carried out by ethnic Uighurs. As a form of mission of his vision, Weng chose a

militaristic path and carried out various ways to realize his vision even though in a cruel way (Basuki, 2019). During his reign, if there were acts of separatism, those who were involved in the action would immediately be sent to prison. Even among the suspects related to the separatism case there were those who were immediately shot dead. The results of the policy made by Weng also provided good news for China. However, this only takes a short walk. Because the policy is designed to make the relationship between ethnic Uighurs and Han ethnic strained. This tension becomes worse when the regional budget is more focused on the development of the security sector and even worse there is an incident that occurred at the end of June, this incident is the persecution carried out by ethnic Han against ethnic Uighur employees in a toy factory located in Guangdong province killed 2 ethnic Uighurs and 61 others injured. This is because there are rumors of rape by young Uighurs against ethnic gangs from the Han ethnic group. This certainly made the Uighurs angry until the Uighurs' anger continued to mount until the Urumqi riots on July 5, 2009 occurred. This riot killed 197 people and injured 1,700 people.

Weng Lequan was finally removed from his post on April 24, 2010 and he was replaced by Zhang Chunxian who is also an ethnic Han. (BBC, 2012). the policy he made to overcome the Uighur terror problem was very different from the policy made by the previous government. The policy he made uses a welfare approach such as the expansion of the employment of Uighur communities. He also called on Xinjiang officials to learn Uighur languages and go to villages to chat and live together with ethnic Uighurs. In fact, he made Idul Fitri and Idul adha a holiday for all ethnic groups there by him (BASUKI, 2019). But as explained above, acts of terror still occur. It even threatened Xi Jinping's life.

Zhang Chunxian's position was eventually replaced by Chen Quanguo who was from the ethnic Han group again (Mai, 2019). It was during his period of leadership that a central policy on reeducation and vocational education, known as concentration camps, was implemented. So those who are suspected of having radical religious beliefs will be put into the camp and they will be taught the nationalism and basic skills needed in the world of work. This is because the terror made the Chinese government

think that the understanding of radical religion is the seed of the thought and separatist movement. This concentration camp policy is still ongoing.

In addition, this scientific paper will make a trace of the storyline of the dynamics of the Uighur problem which is discussed with the genealogy of the Uighur issue to its theoretical analysis. However, this research does not discuss or discuss the famous contemporary Uighur problem of Concentration Camp created by the Chinese government significantly. This further reduces the literature or references obtained in this regard. Based on some data obtained by the author, information as agreed at the Concentration Camp by the Chinese government was rejected by the Chinese government. So, this makes it difficult for writers to get valid data.

Although true news is often circulated from trusted sources such as CNN, one of which is CNN news related to reports that the Chinese government committed human rights violations, torture at its concentration camps, causing fears experienced by ethnic Uighurs until they were displaced (Westcott, 2019), still in the news it was also mentioned that the Chinese government denied the accusation that said that the Chinese government committed acts classified as human rights violations in its concentration camp. Although this allows the writer to hypothesize that the refutation of the allegations made by the Chinese government to defend or make its national interests achieved, but also it still worries the author regarding the validity of this scientific work.

CONCLUSION

This study aims to determine the conductor of a very complex Uighur issue. The Uighur issue actually originated from the efforts of the Chinese government to maintain its territory, namely Xinjiang. Though history has proven that the population of the Xinjiang region originally came from the Uighur ethnic group which has a very different background from the background of the Chinese population in general. Therefore, the feeling of primordialism grew in the Uighurs to make them want to separate themselves from the Chinese government's grasp. But as a form of efforts to preserve its territory, the policies carried out by the Chinese government are policies that are classified as human rights violations. That is the essence of the dynamics

of the Uighur issue whose complexity cannot be denied. Because of this, the authors hope that this scientific work can provide a spectrum of issues related to Uighur and in the future there will be studies that can reveal more comprehensively about the efforts that the Chinese government is doing to achieve its national interests.

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