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Original Article

Strategic Culture and Indonesian Maritime Security

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Abstract

Strategic culture plays a significant role in shaping current practices of maritime security in Indonesia. Rooted in the history and experiences of the military and the state itself, Indonesian maritime strategic culture shapes the perceived roles and responsibilities of the Indonesian primary and most capable maritime security agency, the Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Laut. Albeit institutional, doctrinal reform and weapons modernisation, the navy appears to be reluctant to relinquish its long-standing law enforcement and internal security roles resulting in overlap of roles and responsibilities among the various maritime security agencies in Indonesia. This article argues that the historically shaped strategic culture, particularly the blurred distinction between 'defence' or sovereignty protection and 'security' or law enforcement, has not allowed the Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Laut to focus on the increasingly demanding traditional military roles. An understanding of Indonesian strategic history and culture as well as its civil-military relations is thus essential to comprehend this problem.

Key words: strategic culture, Indonesian navy, coast guard, Bakamla, maritime security

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1. Introduction

In 2014, President Joko Widodo declared his vision to transform Indonesia into a global maritime power. Underlying this vision is a renewed realisation of Indonesian geostrategic importance and the changing strategic environment. While non-traditional, trans-national maritime security threats such as piracy, armed robbery and illegal smuggling and trafficking continues to threaten the good order at the Indonesian maritime jurisdictions, more traditional, conventional military threats are re-emerging as major powers like China, United States, Australia and India continue to stretch their areas of strategic interests.

As it stood in contrast with the previous overly optimistic foreign policy doctrine, many were cautious about the Global Maritime Fulcrum (GMF) when it was first launched. It was considered as a sign of Indonesia starting to abandon its low-profile foreign and security policy; Indonesia was thought to be more outward-looking and even assertive in pursuing its strategic interests. Indeed, the GMF foreign policy doctrine, among others, seeks to build the country's maritime defence capabilities to enable it to play an active role in both the Indian and the Pacific Oceans, two seas that squeeze Indonesia. The decades-old vision of having a 'green water' navy seemed to be finally in sight.

Two years into Jokowi's presidency, however, that high-hope is fading away. Indonesian

Navy (*Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Laut* (TNI-AL)), albeit institutional reforms and the introduction of new technologies, has so far failed to focus itself on the traditional naval defence role. Instead, it appears to be reluctant to relinquish its historically long-standing maritime law enforcement and internal security roles to the maritime civilian authorities. The result is overlapping roles and responsibilities and, hence, inefficiency and ineffectiveness of the Indonesian maritime security.

By the looks of it, this is not much more than just a problem of institutional arrangement or regulation change; a closer examination of the case would reveal that the problem goes well beyond it. The reluctance of the TNI-AL to give up its maritime law enforcement and security in the internal and archipelagic waters, we argue, can only be understood if we take a closer look at how the current perceived roles and responsibilities of the TNI, particularly the TNI-AL, is shaped by the interpretation of the geographical nature of the country as well as historical experience. This article seeks to explain this phenomenon by looking at how the Indonesian maritime strategic culture has prevented the TNI-AL to solely focus on naval defence role and relinquish the maritime law enforcement and security in the internal and archipelagic waters.

The significance of this article is twofold. First, we believe that an understanding of the Indonesian geopolitics and maritime strategic history and how it shapes its maritime strategic culture is necessary to have an accurate depiction of the challenges the TNI-AL is facing and subsequently policy prescription to overcome those challenges. Second, although studies on Indonesian strategic history and culture cannot be said as entirely absent, most of existing literatures understandably take the Army (*TNI Angkatan Darat* (TNI-AD)) as the reference point (Anwar 1996, 1999; Sulaiman, 2016). Largely overlooked in the literature is, however, a study on the Indonesian strategic culture in the maritime domain. This article thus discusses the implication of the Indonesian strategic culture on the perceived roles and responsibilities of the TNI-AL.

2. Strategic Culture

The study on strategic culture is centred around the debate on whether ‘the ahistorical, non-cultural realist framework’ is sufficient to analyse states’ strategic choice (Johnston, 1995b, p. 35). Strategic culturalists argue that states with different strategic cultures would act differently even though constrained by the same international systemic pressures. The works on strategic culture thus argue that a range of ideational factors shapes the strategic choice of states. In his attempt to reconstruct a new conceptual definition of ‘strategic culture’ based on the previous generations, Johnston (1995b) defines strategic culture as

an integrated “system of symbols (e.g. argumentation structures, languages, analogies, metaphors) which acts to establish pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of factuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious” (p. 46).

In a sense, strategic culture is derived from the dual nature of war; war always has two aims. First, the political aim for which the war is declared and conducted and, second, the operational aim to defeat the enemy on the battlefield. Both aims are obviously interlinked, meaning the defeat of the enemy on the battlefield should be translated into strategic and political victory. These purposes of war always involve the so-called ‘strategic planners,’ both civilians and military (Klein, 1991).

Johnston (1995a, 1995b) further argues that strategic culture comprises of (i) a central paradigm concerning the nature of conflict, the nature of the adversary, and the efficacy of force and (ii) a ranked set of strategic preferences derived from the central paradigm. The first component focuses on the view certain strategic culture holds regarding external environment, whether it is hostile or friendly. The second component focuses more on how certain strategic culture regards force as a means to settle disputes and achieve national

interests, whether it is the first option or last resort.

As far as Indonesian strategic culture is concerned, we can discern its two intertwined most important elements: (i) the perception about the nature of state's geography and (ii) historical experience. As noted by Jones (1990),

the assumption is that thanks to unique historical and geographical circumstances, particular nations have had to face defence problems that are "uniquely defined." These in turn have produced a unique military "culture" or "pathology" which, when investigated, can provide valuable insights into a nation's self-image and policy motives (p. 35).

Jones (1990) further notes that 'The elements that interact to constitute any national culture, be it strategic or otherwise, of necessity include the nature and geography of the state, the ethnic culture of its founding people, and the latter's subsequent history' (p. 37).

To be more precise, the authors posit a view that historical experience plays a significant role in shaping Indonesia's strategic culture and, hence, explaining the contemporary behaviour of TNI-AL. The objective reality of Indonesian geography is inherently challenging. It poses as much economic potentials as strategic vulnerability. The analysis that follows shows that past wars' experience, which apparently confirms the strategic vulnerability of Indonesian geography, has enabled the redefinition of the Indonesian Navy in a way that justifies its focus on internal security and law enforcement instead of conventional interstate naval competition.¹

1. The authors acknowledge the wide range of ideational factors that shape the strategic choice of the states, including historical experience, political culture, geography, ethno-cultural characteristics, socio, economic and political structure of the society, military culture (history, traditions and educations), military institutions, characteristics of civil-military relations, bureaucratic organisation, international relations and weaponry and military technology (Snyder 1977; Gray 1981; Lord 1985; Jones 1990). The authors realise, however, that it is not feasible to describe and analyse all of the factors in one piece. Not only due to the

How geography and (maritime) strategic history shapes Indonesian strategic culture concerning its geographical nature as a maritime nation and, hence, the perceived roles and responsibilities of the TNI-AL will be explored in the following sections. The perceived roles and responsibilities of the TNI-AL is an important subject to address, as an earlier work on strategic culture reminds us that an analytical framework of strategic culture should explain whom this strategic culture affects and how it 'influence the content and quality of strategy' (Klein 1991, p. 4).

2.1. *Geography*

Indonesia's vast territory makes it inherently challenging to maintain national integrity. With some 13,000 of islands, 99,000 km of coastline and 3.5 million km² of maritime jurisdictions, Indonesia is the world's biggest archipelagic state. Inhabiting these thousands of islands are more than 1,200 ethnic groups with around 400 indigenous languages. Prior to the Djuanda Declaration in 1957, Indonesia's territory was basically limited to the islands with most of the waters between the islands were internationally taken as international waters through which freedom of navigation were taken for granted.²

Not only it is big and full of natural resources, Indonesia is also geographically

limit of space, the attempt to discuss all of the factors relevant in the making of a state's strategic culture could potentially spoil the main focus of analysis. The authors deliberately choose to limit the analysis on the historical experience and geography factors as the so-called 'object of observation' (Lord 1985; Tannenwald 2005, 2007, p. 69).

2. The Declaration rules that the country's territorial sea of 12 nautical miles is drawn from straight baselines connecting the outermost points of the outermost islands, while the waters enclosed by the straight baselines are internal waters subject to Indonesia's sovereignty while allowing the innocent passage of foreign vessels (Wisnumurti 2014). The principles contained in the Djuanda Declaration, thanks to the determination of the Indonesian diplomats, gained international recognition after the signing of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea in 1982, expanding Indonesia's territory by about 2.5-fold.

located at the centre of global maritime interests. Its straits have been serving as some of the world's busiest since the times of Chinese and Indian traders. They now serve as the most economic routes from the energy producing countries in the Middle East and Africa to the contemporary global economic powerhouses in Northeast Asia, making them the vital veins of global economy.

The maritime nature of the country has proven to be a potential source to promote national interests as much as the source of problems. Indonesians remember how the Dutch wasted no time after Indonesian declaration of independence to try to reconquer the nation by exploiting its defenceless waters. Numerous militia groups in the regions during 1950s also made use of the waters to launch the rebellions against the Republic. During the Irian campaign in early 1960s, Indonesian command of the sea was highly contested by the much stronger Dutch navy (Shekhar & Liow 2014; Kurniawan 2016).

Indonesians have also yet to be able to effectively optimise the abundant maritime natural resources. Waters between and surrounding Indonesia's islands have yet to be used as modality to secure territorial integrity and national economic development. In many cases, criminal groups, many of them are transnational, exploit the lack of defence to smuggle goods and people to and from Indonesia and involve in other transnational criminal activities. Indonesian maritime vulnerability is also proven as a case in the government's stance to reject the presence of external powers despite the lack of operational capabilities of the country's maritime security apparatus (Shekhar & Liow 2014; Kurniawan 2016).

In his work, Kurniawan (2016) identifies the struggle of Indonesian governments to tackle a range of problems in its maritime jurisdiction since the early days of the republic. The 1957 Djuanda Declaration, for instance, aims to enforce Indonesia's territorial integrity and sovereignty. The so-called Archipelagic Outlook (*Wawasan Nusantara*) was introduced in the Declaration to reinforce the archipelagic

identity of the country.³ The Archipelagic Outlook concept comprises a number of elements: the prevailing concern over national disintegration; the resulting emphasis on unity; the need for economic development, particularly in the less-developed provinces; economic nationalism; an emphasis on political stability; the sanctity of national borders; and, lastly, the importance Indonesia attaches to Law of the Sea as the means by which to ensure the Archipelagic Outlook (Anwar 1999; Sebastian, Supriyanto & Arsana 2014, p. 70). In its implementation, the Archipelagic Outlook emphasises territorial unity and respect towards diversity in pursuing Indonesian national interests.⁴

In 1958, Indonesia introduced its vision to the United Nations. Furthermore, during the New Order, Indonesian government under President Suharto was so determined to campaign the Archipelagic Outlook as the paradigm and way of life of the nation as part of its maritime identity. The *Reformasi* period after 1998 witnesses the shift from an inward-looking maritime outlook towards more outward-looking in terms of Indonesian more active participation in the regional politics. This shift was particularly evident during the tenure of President Yudhoyono

3. In 1957, Prime Minister Djuanda Kartawidjaja issued a declaration that became known as the Djuanda Declaration. It states that '...the Government declares that all waters, surrounding, between and connecting the islands constituting the Indonesian state, regardless of their extension or breath, are integral parts of the territory of the Indonesian state and therefore, parts of the internal or national waters which are under the exclusive sovereignty of the Indonesian state. Innocent passage of foreign ships in these internal waters is granted as long as it is not prejudicial to or violates the sovereignty and security of Indonesia. The delimitation of the territorial sea (the breath of which is 12-miles) is measured from baselines connecting the outermost points of the islands of Indonesia' (Siahaan & Suhendi 1989, pp. 173–174). The Djuanda Declaration underlined the so-called Archipelagic Outlook (*Wawasan Nusantara*) that later served as the basis for Indonesian diplomacy to gain international recognition of its status as an archipelagic state.

4. This is stipulated, among others, in the 2015 Presidential Regulation on General Policy on State Defence 2015–2019 (*Peraturan Presiden Republik Indonesia Nomor 97 Tahun 2015 Tentang Kebijakan Umum Pertahanan Negara 2015–2019*).

whose promotion of maritime connectivity between Indonesia and the rest of the Asia Pacific became one of the bases for the ASEAN Connectivity 2025 vision. President Jokowi solidified this vision when he declared the GMF (*Poros Maritim Dunia*) foreign policy doctrine in 2014 (Kurniawan 2016).

In short, the objective reality of Indonesian geography, which is maritime in nature, does not directly translate into a corresponding defence strategy. Instead, it has been perceived by the leaders and strategic planners in a dynamic way. This redefinition process is largely influenced by the past war history of the nation that will be discussed in the following section.

2.2. History

As far as its maritime identity is concerned, two features of Indonesian strategic history are relevant in shaping its strategic culture. First, that Indonesian archipelagic nature is a source of vulnerability is shaped by its strategic history. In the case of Indonesia, the experience during its emergence and early years have left deep imprint on its civilian and military leaders' strategic thinking. This sensitivity of its archipelagic vulnerability of their country has weighed high in the minds of its freedom fighters and subsequent generation of military and political leaders (Shekhar 2015, p. 180). Second, Indonesia is rarely, if ever, involved in conventional naval war against states.

As noted previously, the archipelagic nature of the country makes it inherently challenging for Indonesia to maintain territorial integrity and national cohesion; there is a perpetual threat of disintegration. Aware of the geographical vulnerability and fragile ethno-cultural makeup, Indonesian strategic thinking has been dominated by what Leonard and Lanti call as the 'continuing fear of dismemberment' (Sebastian & Lanti 2010, p. 160). An Indonesian senior maritime expert notes that during the colonial era, Indonesia (Dutch East Indies) consisted so many units each being separated from the others by the so-called 'high seas' (Djalal 1995, p. 298). It was also noted that prior to the Second World War, the lack of maritime jurisdiction had enabled

Japanese fishing boats to approach the coasts of the Indonesian islands in an effort to map the Indonesian coasts as part of the war preparation (Djalal 1995, p. 298).

The threat against national unity due to the archipelagic nature of the country did materialise after Indonesian independence. During the first one and a half decade after the Independence in 1945, Indonesian military was busy to defend the fragile territorial integrity of the country against returning Dutch colonialism and series of separatist movement, some were evidently supported by foreign powers. As Djalal notes 'Indonesia's experience also showed that whenever there was a domestic dissension the dissenter group was likely to receive clandestine support from outside, either by air-dropping or from foreign submarines and ships along the coast' (Djalal 1995, p. 299). As far as the foreign threats are concerned, it is conceived that the country is in constant vulnerability to 'practices of divide and rule carried out by stronger, foreign powers bent on exploiting and/or subjugating Indonesia for their interests' (Sebastian & Lanti 2010, p. 160).⁵

As mentioned previously, Indonesia is rarely, if ever, involved in conventional wars against states. The existing literature on Indonesian past external wars' experience is dominated by those that look into limited armed conflicts such as the Revolutionary War (1945–1949), Indonesia–Malaysia skirmishes in the borders during *Konfrontasi* (1963–1965), Irian campaign (1963–1966) and Timor Portuguese annexation (1974–1976) (Kurniawan 2005b; Widjajanto 2005b). In total of 249 military operations conducted by the Indonesian military between 1945 and 2009, only 30 per cent were aimed at dealing with external threats while the remaining 67 per cent were conducted to fight internal adversaries (Widjajanto 2013).

5. This belief is still noticeable even today. For example, the current leadership of Indonesian military has been propagating the notion of 'proxy wars', that is seen as ranging from students' demonstration to lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender, as one of the most imminent threats the country is facing.

The perception that Indonesian archipelagic nature is a source of vulnerability and past wars' experience that appear to confirm the perception leads Indonesian strategic planners to base Indonesian defence strategy on its land-based power with territorial command as its main component. The domination of the army was maintained for a quite long of a period (Kurniawan 2005a). The defence strategy, therefore, leaves a limited space to accommodate the Navy and Air Force to build, for instance, the so-called 'layered defence zone'. Widjajanto 2005a posits that Indonesian strategic planners divide the country's defence into three zones: buffer zone, main defence zone and zone of resistance. The land-dominated strategic thinking tends to compromise the Navy and the Air Force, which are supposed to play vital roles in the buffer and main defence zones (Widjajanto 2005a).

Indonesia considers its geographical reality, which has been solidified in the Law of the Sea, to be divided into four strategic compartments (sea lanes of communication). This means, should it occur, threats to Indonesian territorial integrity are believed to be exploiting these compartments. As far as policy recommendation is concerned, therefore, Indonesian defence strategy should be able to bring together all three services with their respective characteristics without any single one dominating the others. An integrated armed force, therefore, should be the aim. In operational terms, this would mean a strong Army that is integrated in a maritime strategy supported by a modernised Air Force. This recommendation assumes that an archipelagic country will always need a formidable Army integrated in maritime defence strategy. Moreover, an archipelagic country, especially those with continental neighbours, should have a strong and modern Air Force in order to maintain air superiority for the maritime and land forces to freely operate (Kurniawan 2005a).

The domination of the Army, with its strategic perception and experience, in the Indonesian strategic culture has also contributed to the ignorance of Indonesian objective

geographical reality in formulating defence policy. It was only after the *Reformasi* that Indonesian strategic planners started to have a normative realisation to incorporate geography into defence strategy. The 2002 Defence Law states that state defence is built by observing the geographical condition of Indonesia as an archipelagic country. In a similar vein, the 2004 TNI Law states that the building up and deployment of the TNI are carried out consistently with Indonesia's geographical condition and defence strategy. In short, it took more than half century for Indonesia's, borrowing Klein (1991), strategic planner to finally incorporate the country's given geographical nature and identity as the world's largest archipelagic state in defence-related policy.

3. The Dominance of the Army and Unfinished Reform

The historically shaped Indonesian strategic culture has persistent influence on the strategic choice of the country. The recent 2015 Defence White Paper, just like the 2003 edition, for instance, continues to downplay the prospect of conventional war as a threat against national interests (Kementerian Pertahanan Republik Indonesia 2015). The defence planners still consider issues like terrorism and radicalism, separatism and armed rebellion as the biggest threats to national security (Kementerian Pertahanan Republik Indonesia 2015). In addition to the National Resilience (*Ketahanan Nasional*) that emphasises on the self-reliance to survive, the Archipelagic Outlook also forms the basic doctrine (*Doktrin Dasar*) of the TNI (Widjajanto 2010). Moreover, as the threat against the national unity is seen to coming most probably from inside rather than outside of the country, and partly because of the lack of forceful conventional defence capabilities, the TNI's doctrine has for a long time emphasised the concept of Total People Defence System (*Sistem Pertahanan Rakyat Semesta/Sishanrata*). Built upon the concept of Total People Warfare (*Perang Rakyat Semesta/Perata*) formulated by the TNI-AD leaders in 1966, the concept of the Sishanrata was adopted as the TNI doctrine in 1988

(Widjajanto 2010).⁶ The concept emphasises the role of citizens in the implementation of the national defence strategy. In recent years, the Indonesian strategic planners have even further emphasised this concept by introducing ‘state defence’ (*bela negara*) programme.⁷

At the operational and tactical levels, the collective belief is translated into several military strategies such as territorial warfare, guerrilla warfare, people’s war and layered defence (Nasution 1953; Widjajanto 2013).⁸ These are the kind of strategies that emphasise the role of the TNI-AD with TNI-AL, and Air Force (TNI *Angkatan Udara* (TNI-AU)) only play supporting roles. Thus, we witness the domination of the TNI-AD in much of the course of Indonesian strategic history. The TNI-AD’s socio-political role was expanded to maintain proximity to the people and hence ensure political and ideological dominance,

which would subdue potential internal threats to national integrity. As far as the role of the military is concerned, therefore, there is a blurred distinction between ‘defence’ or protection of sovereignty against external threats and ‘security’ against internal threats, which mostly covers law enforcement responsibilities.

Indeed, it has been a delicate debate to distinguish between defence and security since the initial phase of Indonesia security sector reform. In its 53rd anniversary, the TNI headquarter launched the ‘TNI’s New Paradigm’ document. Only in 2000, the then Indonesian People’s Consultative Assembly (*Majelis Permusyawaratan Rakyat*) followed up the TNI’s initiative by issuing two decrees, namely, Tap MPR No. VI and VII/2000. The earlier regulated the institutional separation between TNI and Polri, while the latter stipulated the task of TNI and Polri. These two decrees are the roots of all problem in designing the country security system and related policies. Based upon these two decrees, the Indonesian government passed two laws in 2002, namely Law No. 2/2002 on National Police and Law No. 3/2002 on State Defence. During the formation of such policies, Indonesian strategic planners, and security community in general, have accepted the earlier mentioned problematic understandings: the role of military is to defend the country against external threat, and the role of national police is to protect the country’s security against internal threat.

Such problematic conceptual design happened, by and large, at least because of three factors: (i) Indonesia’s military reform was born out of a political transition process characterised by political compromises; (ii) the military reform took place in very dynamic political changes with concerned civil society groups appeared to have limited ideas and experience to influence the process; (iii) the military reform was also complicated by the then national security issues such as communal conflicts, terrorism and separatism (Wibisono, Wardoyo & Kurniawan 2008, p. 8). In same vein, an Indonesian security expert who was highly involved in conceptual designing of the country’s security sector reform posits that

6. In 1982, the national police (*Kepolisian Negara Republik Indonesia*), together with the three military services formed the Indonesian armed forces (*Angkatan Bersenjata Republik Indonesia* (ABRI)); hence, the doctrine was called Catur Darma Eka Karma. An Armed Force Commander Decree (Keputusan Panglima Angkatan Bersenjata No: Kep/04/II/1988 tentang Doktrin Perjuangan TNI-ABRI ‘Catur Darma Eka Karma’) officiated the restructuring. Following the military reforms, which rules the separation of the police from the armed forces, a new doctrine was released called Tri Darma Eka Karma. While *catur* literally means four, *tri* means three. The new doctrine also omits the security (*keamanan/han*) part of the doctrine, as the internal security roles and responsibilities are given to the police.

7. As stated in the Presidential Decree No. 97/2015 on Kebijakan Umum Pertahanan Negara Tahun 2915–2919 and Defence Ministerial Decree No. 32/2016 on Pedoman Pembinaan Kesadaran Bela Negara.

8. The territorial warfare is conceptualised in the State Defence Council Decree (*Peraturan Dewan Hanneg*) No. 19/1946. The conceptualisation of the involvement of people as reserves in a ‘people’s war’ doctrine is stated in the State Defence Council Decree (*Peraturan Dewan Hanneg*) No. 85/1947, Law No. 29/1954 on The Republic of Indonesia State Defence; Law No. 20/1982 on General Principles of the Republic of Indonesia Defence and Security; and Government Regulation in Lieu of Law No. 1/1967. For more details account concerning regulations on Indonesia’s defence strategy, see, for instance, Kurniawan (2005a). The Defence and Security Ministerial Decree No: KEP/17/x/1991 rules the Indonesian Armed Forces Defence and Security Doctrine (*Doktrin Hankam ABR*) as part of the doctrine stratification.

the reform is a common 'experiment' between the military institution, parliament and civil society organisations. The word 'experiment' explains that at the beginning of security reform in Indonesia was instigated from a learning process not only on how ideally the implementation of national security should be positioned in a democratic political system but also that it should be accomplished through a democratic mechanism (Sukma 2007). This relatively contemporary event has also contributed to the inward-looking of Indonesian strategic culture.

4. Implications on the *Tentara Nasional Indonesia Angkatan Laut*

Concerning the efficacy of force in overcoming the threats against national unity, the historically shaped strategic culture has indeed guided Indonesian subsequent leaders to not place the military as the first layer of defence (Anwar 1999). The inward-looking strategic culture and the domination of the TNI-AD mean that the TNI-AL has not had major role to play in the country's strategic history. TNI-AL was not designed to be the spearhead in the national military strategy, similarly focus on internal security threats and law enforcement and, hence, lack of experience in carrying out high-intensity military operations. Power projection capabilities beyond the national maritime jurisdictions, for instance, are not something that the TNI-AL has been familiar with. Indeed, as one scholar notes, the TNI-AL strategy is essentially defensive in a sense that it does not adhere to the Mahanian concept of command of the sea, nor does it attempt to project naval assets beyond Indonesian waters (Supriyanto 2011). The institutionalised land force dominance has also hindered the ambition to expand Indonesian naval power (Raymond 2017).

The TNI-AL's missions record does not help here. Widjajanto's (2010) study that was noted previously records only three major military operations carried out by the TNI-AL since 1945 until 2004: the operations against the Republic of South Maluku (*Republik Maluku Selatan*) separatist movement in 1950,

the operations against the Revolutionary Government of the Republic of Indonesia/Total People's Struggle (*Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/Perjuangan Rakyat Semesta*) separatist movement in 1958–1959 and the Operation Mandala as part of the campaign to retake Papua from the Dutch colonialism in 1962. In addition to that, the TNI-AL also took part in Operation Seroja, a military operation to invade and annex Timor Portuguese in December 1975.

In a general sense, the operations mentioned previously are not really demanding sort of naval operations. Half of them were conducted to fight internal separatist movements, which naturally lack the capability to resist the TNI-AL at sea. In the campaign to crush *Republik Maluku Selatan*, TNI-AL deployed only one corvette to counter small patrol fleet that were then under the command of the rebels. In countering *Pemerintah Revolusioner Republik Indonesia/Perjuangan Rakyat Semesta*, TNI-AL deployed a quite large fleet consisting of 17 warships and 19 transport ships in what was the first experience of the TNI-AL to operate in a large formation. The expected United States Seventh Fleet intervention, who was then already anchored in Singapore, however, did not happen, and the Indonesian naval task force successfully secured the sea control without any substantial resistance. Furthermore, during the Operation Seroja, Indonesian destroyer escort, which was providing fire support for the amphibious operations, was initially tailed by two Portuguese frigates. Yet no contact happened, and support missions were carried out without obstruction. Lastly, during the Irian campaign, apart from infiltration missions and small-scale clashes, the campaign stopped short of full invasion after the civilian authorities reached diplomatic agreement.⁹

9. The TNI-AL also leaves its footprint in maintaining good order at international sea. In 2011, in a highly celebrated rescue mission, a navy task force successfully took on Somali pirates that hijacked an 8,900-tonne bulk carrier *Sinar Kudus*. It is also regularly involved in maritime diplomacy including joint exercises, although most of them aim at increasing participating navies' capacity to carry out low-intensity operations such as rescue missions.

The result of this historical experience is the embedded belief that the roles of the military goes beyond the traditional role as the defender of the country against external threats to the maintenance of internal security. For decades, the most noticeable feature of this strategic thinking is the domination of the TNI-AD. TNI-AD is not only the first among equals among the services but it also involved itself deep in the socio-political structure of the country for decades.¹⁰ But it is not only the TNI-AD that is inward-looking and expands its role beyond defence. Mostly uncovered in the literature on Indonesian strategic history and civil–military relations, the blurred distinction between ‘defence’ and ‘internal security’ can also be found on the sea.

Like their counterparts on land, Indonesian sailors traditionally take internal security and law enforcement as its areas of responsibility, overshadowing its preparation to counter external threats. This means the TNI-AL has been spending most of its time with internal security and law enforcement roles particularly in the Indonesian internal waters. Most of the operations are carried out to counter the rampant illegal activities that are still plaguing Indonesian maritime security. A study records that the TNI-AL, during the period of 2008 until 2010, carried out 24.3 anti-illegal logging and smuggling and 27.3 anti-illegal fishing operations per year in average (Indonesia’s Naval Development and Maritime Cooperation 2012). Furthermore, anti-piracy operations are still one of the major concerns of the TNI-AL. While there is a significant decrease of piracy attacks in the Strait of Malacca due to the successful collaboration among the coastal states, a new hot spot emerges in the sea north of Borneo where a number of Indonesian citizens have been kidnapped recently.

It is important to note that in addition to the inward-looking strategic culture, the focus on law enforcement operations have also allowed the TNI-AL to raise its much-needed off-budget funding. In the past, because of the domination of the TNI-AD and the general low attention on the armed forces

modernisation, the TNI-AL should rely on itself for revenue for decades. It has to be noted that in the early 2000s, ‘off-budget sources reportedly provided around 70% of TNI’s total funding’ (Heazle & Butcher 2007; Mietzner & Misol 2013). The TNI-AL is not an exception to this rule. There is a great deal of evidence, for instance, that naval patrols demanded bribes from illegal vessels that they have detained (Heazle & Butcher 2007, p. 278). ‘Floating courts’, where naval patrols put the violators of the fishery laws straightaway on seas rather than passing them to prosecutors, are still found in some instances (Heazle & Butcher 2007, p. 278). Law enforcement focus, in other words, provides financial incentive for the TNI-AL it hard to relinquish.

This is obviously not to say that there is no attempt to make changes. Since early 2000s, following the political reform, Indonesian military has been trying to transform itself into a fully professional military, which focuses on the role of external defence rather than internal security. The socio-political role of the military has been abolished, at least normatively. The reform, however, appears to miss the TNI-AL. The Law No. 34/2004 rules that the missions of the TNI-AL and TNI-AU still include law and security enforcement in the national jurisdictions on the sea and in the air, respectively. The similar stipulation is not found for their TNI-AD counterparts, as the authority to enforce law and internal security have been fully transferred to the Police since the separation of the Police from the armed forces. Moreover, the current operational doctrine of the TNI-AL, *Eka Sasana Jaya*, emphasises the maritime security, in addition to naval defence and diplomacy, as core tasks of the TNI-AL. Given the geographical nature of Indonesia, this doctrine justifies the dominant presence of the TNI-AL in the internal and archipelagic waters of the country.

Furthermore, the Law No. 34/2004 also stipulates that counter-piracy and illegal smuggling as among the ‘operations other than war’ that the military are tasked to perform. While it is indeed a common practice for the navy to perform such missions as part of its constabulary role, just like its TNI-AD

10. The classic on this subject remains (Crouch 1978)

counterparts, however, the TNI-AL has been focusing more on these operations other than war missions rather than its traditional role of defence against external threats. The TNI-AL, thus, still retains its role as the dominant actor in the national maritime security policy, which focus is law enforcement in the internal waters and only later in the exclusive economic zones.

This is a position that the TNI-AL has been trying to rationalise. A senior naval officer once said,

Do not consider sovereignty merely about external borders as it also entails security threats in the (internal) waters. The difference is that the navy uses warships instead of civilian ships. When dealing with illegal practices, we cannot separate defence and civilian maritime (law enforcement) (Republika Online 2016).

It is striking to see that the perceived roles and responsibilities of the TNI-AL to cover the maritime law enforcement and internal security roles persist the recent development of weapons modernisation. Jokowi's administration has committed to continue to fund the plan to achieve the Minimum Essential Force (MEF) initiated by the previous administration under President Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono.¹¹ The goal is to achieve by 2024 'a force level that can guarantee the attainment of immediate strategic defence interests, with the procurement priority given to the improvement of minimum defence strength and/or the replacement of outdated main weapon systems/equipment'. It is planned that by 2024, Indonesia will be operating 274 ships with striking, patrolling and supporting capabilities. These naval assets are essential 'to protect the country's maritime assets, sea-lanes and territorial water from both non-traditional security threats and external incursions' and eventually 'to project Indonesia as maritime power' (Shekhar & Liow 2014). The MEF, should it be achieved on time, would enable Indonesia to operate a greenwater navy 'primarily oriented towards

operating within the EEZ while possessing a limited, secondary ability to conduct "out-of-area" operations' (Collin 2015, p. 435).¹² The government is thus prioritising the procurement of platforms such as frigates, corvettes, submarines and anti-submarine warfare capabilities. The MEF blueprint, however, retains the maritime security, in addition to naval defence, as the core tasks of the TNI-AL (Laksmana 2014, p. 188). Hence, it continues to provide an operational justification for the TNI-AL to maintain its dominant presence in the internal and archipelagic waters. Moreover, the expansion of the TNI-AL as outlined in the MEF to a certain degree has also been hindered by the aforementioned institutionalised Army dominance as the development of the TNI-AL cannot be performed at the expense of the TNI-AD (Raymond 2017, p. 171).

5. Implications on Indonesian Maritime Security

Indonesian maritime security governance has been a complex area with multiples agencies in charge in which the TNI-AL has been striving to dominate. As early as 1949, after the full recognition of its independence from the Dutch, the various agencies formed by the government to regulate maritime management—including the TNI-AL, the marine police, customs, the Department of Maritime Affairs and Fisheries and the Directorate of Sea Communication—found themselves overlapping in roles and responsibilities partly because of lack of financial and human resources (Laksmana 2014, p. 181). The advent of Suharto's New Order (*Orde Baru*) in 1968, which saw the expansion of the military's non-military roles as noted previously, however, allowed the TNI-AL to 'militarise' the maritime security governance (Laksmana 2014, pp. 181–182). Furthermore,

12. In terms of technological and operational achievements, the prospect of TNI-AL to achieve its MEF targets by 2024 is hindered by the risks of project overruns and persistent budget challenges. Collin correctly argues that there is a need to recalibrate the original plan of MEF in the face of strategic and budgetary constraints; see Collin (2015).

11. Legal bases for MEF, see inter alia, Presidential Decree No. 7/2008 on State Defence General Policy; Defence Ministerial Decree No 19/2012.

the aforementioned 1982 Law on National Defence and Security provided the TNI-AL with a legal basis to develop and expand its maritime law enforcement role under the banner of Maritime Security Operations (Laksmata 2014, p. 182).

Currently, there are no less than 12 stakeholders in Indonesia responsible for law enforcement and maritime safety and security. In addition to the TNI-AL, there are the Marine Police, the Transport Ministry's Sea and Coast Guard Unit (*Kesatuan Penjaga Laut dan Pantai*), Customs, the Fisheries Surveillance Unit, the Foreign Ministry, the Attorney General's Office, the Interior Ministry, the Defence Ministry, the Ministry of Human Rights and Legal Affairs, the National Intelligence Board and the General Headquarters of the Indonesian Armed Forces. In 2014, the government established Bakamla (*Badan Keamanan Laut/Indonesian Maritime Security Agency*)—previously known as Bakorkamla (*Badan Koordinasi Keamanan Laut/Indonesian Maritime Security Coordinating Agency*). The idea is to develop a single entity that leads the maritime law enforcement operations and synergise the activities of the various other maritime security stakeholders. As in many instances in the country, however, there is a huge gap between what written on paper and the reality.

Even as the Bakamla is trying to consolidate its foothold, there is no clear sign that the TNI-AL will give up the internal security and law enforcement responsibilities to the newly established institution. Instead, the TNI-AL is expanding its law enforcement capabilities. In early 2015, the TNI-AL Western Fleet, which oversees maritime security in the western part of the country including the Malacca, Singapore Straits and the South China Sea, established a Quick Reaction Team to provide a better response to illegal activities in the area. The operations carried out by the Quick Reaction Team have successfully arrested a number of vessels operating illegally in the Indonesian waters. Even the former TNI's chief of territorial staff, Lt. Gen. (retired) Agus Widjojo, shares such a concern. He argues that

There is still a misunderstanding that sea and maritime security is still in the hands of the TNI-AL. It needs to be emphasised that maritime security is a law enforcement function in the national maritime jurisdiction carried out by civilian law enforcement agencies (Utama (2015), author's translation).

Bakamla, meanwhile, is still struggling to develop the capabilities required to lead the country's maritime security. Bakamla, for instance, receives a low rating in an evaluation by the Ministry of Administrative and Bureaucratic Reform (Apriyani 2017). Bakamla's public further deteriorated when the country's corruption eradication agency launched an investigation for a suspected corruption case in Bakamla (*Former Bakamla deputy head gets 4.25 years in prison* (2017)). As of this writing, the Bakamla only operates six 48-m patrol boats while constructing one 110-m offshore patrol vessel. It is still waiting to receive the grant of 10 ex-TNI-AL ships. Given the vast areas of responsibilities, these are clearly insufficient numbers of capabilities for the Bakamla to effectively carry out its missions.

6. Conclusion

So what to expect? Understanding on the historically shaped strategic culture of the TNI-AL helps us to comprehend the reluctance of the TNI-AL to relinquish its internal security and law enforcement roles and hence the difficulties Indonesia is facing in restructuring its maritime security agencies. The blurred distinction between 'defence' or sovereignty protection against external threats and 'security' against internal threats has undermined the agenda to shift the TNI-AL's focus to its traditional military roles. This institutionalised culture seen, for instance, in the dominance of the Army explains why the increasingly demanding strategic environment has not yet been seen as a powerful imperative for naval expansion in Indonesia (Raymond 2017). And as noted by Longhurst, strategic culture 'arise gradually over time, through unique protracted historical process ... is persistent over time, tending to outlast the era of its

original conception' (Longhurst 2000). As part of the long-standing strategic culture that places the armed forces at the forefront of the country's defence and security, it is hard to expect the TNI-AL to fully relinquish its law enforcement and internal security roles anytime soon.

The Jokowi's GMF vision was initially seen as a sign of departure from the inward-looking Indonesian maritime defence strategy. As noted by Collin (2015), Jokowi's GMF vision has obviously given Indonesian Navy's long-term greenwater ambitions greater traction. The scholarship circle and public alike were thus justified to expect the time for the TNI-AL to focus on its conventional defence role would finally come. Two years into his presidency, however, has shown that it is not fully a case. Despite the introduction of new weapon technologies and the awareness about the increasingly volatile strategic environment that demands more outward-looking Indonesian defence posture, there has not been a clear sign of the TNI-AL willing to relinquish its dominant presence in the internal maritime security governance. When asked in a personal communication whether the outward-looking, power-projection-type of maritime strategy was ever considered by the leaders when formulating the GMF, a senior high-ranking TNI-AL officer answered 'No'.

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