

## ISLAM, PAPUANNES AND INDONESIANESS WITHIN PAPUAN MUSLIMS IN FAKFAK

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### ABSTRACT

*This study shows that the long historical process associated with Islam in West Papua has an impact on defining a unique identity, and significantly interrelating Islam, Papuanness, and Indonesianness. The data in this study were collected for three months in Fakfak of West Papua, through methods of observation, interview, and documentation. Some key informants were data sources consisting of religious leaders, community leaders, and government employees. Two important findings are found in this work. First, the presence of Islam in Papua has significantly contributed to the formation of the identity of the Fakfak community in Papua through an intense and strong acculturation process between Islam and local Papuan culture. This process has formed new inclusive and tolerant values that are reflected in the local wisdom of *satu tungku tiga batu* (one stove with three stones). Second, Islam and Papuanness in Fakfak appear to have certain implications on the formation of Indonesian (national) identity. Theoretically, this research shows that identity is not something fixed and natural, but a constantly changing process, concerning the socio-political dynamics that affect it. That is why Papuan Muslims strive to continue to define themselves amid the construction of Papuan identity which is often defined as Christian and Melanesian.*

**Keywords;** Papuanness; Indonesianess; Acculturation; Papuan Muslim; Fakfak

### INTRODUCTION

The phenomenon of the development of Islam in the coastal region of West Papua is comprised of three main areas: Raja Ampat, Kaimana, and Fakfak

have several characteristics distinct from other places in Papua. Since the fifteenth century, the Islamic preachers who set foot in this region have spread Islam to the southern part of Fakfak. They generally came to Papua on trade expeditions and then settled down and spread Islam (Putuhena, 2006). Only a small number of people were on board in expeditions to control the territory carried out regularly by the sultanate rulers in North Maluku; Ternate and Tidore. Interestingly, Islam in Fakfak and its surrounding areas do not necessarily diminish cultural practices but regulate and direct them to conform to Islamic values.

Even when other missionary religions, namely Christianity and Catholicism, arrived here, Muslims who were on the coast of West Papua were able to adapt and acculturate with the two major religions, especially in building a moderate and tolerant religious spirit. The interaction between the three Abrahamic religions then gave birth to a family's religious system, where one family divides its members to adhere to different religions (Onim, 2006). Such a process of religious accommodation, according to conventional Islamic views, is considered something that endangers the Islamic faith. However, sociologically, it shows the flexibility of Islam when faced with the reality of religious differences in society. This occurred evolutionarily during the arrival of Islam in Indonesia, which formed the custom and culture of the community interrelated with Islam (Mudjib, 2013; Tuhri, 2020).

Similarly, when the integration of Papua with Indonesia occurred, some kings and tribal chiefs in the Fakfak region and its surroundings took the initiative to assist in this political integration (Ernas, 2014). The Muslims in Fakfak saw the integration of Papua with Indonesia as the right choice, especially in a religious context. Today, Islam in the Fakfak region is the majority religion which contributes to the dynamics of local politics. The Muslims in Fakfak have become more open to immigrants, and there have hardly been any violent political conflicts. They, as described by Abel Suwae (2013) are struggling to affirm their identity as Muslims amidst the strengthening of their Christian Papuan identity (Habel, 2012).

Based on these evolutionary developments, the study will focus on two important things. First, how does the presence of Islam shape the identity of the Fakfak people as Muslims? Do Islamism and Papuanness in Fakfak have a certain impact on the formation of Indonesian identity? By dissecting these two things, this paper will offer three things. First, the face of Islam which is marked by the presence of Muslims who are the majority in Fakfak. According to the statistical data in the Fakfak area, Muslims are the majority in this region who make up 63.2% of the population. Second, the Papuan elements formed

from the influence of Islam and Papuan culture, create distinctive and unique models of tolerance and moderation across narrow religious views, as can be seen from the emergence of a “family religion” culture that allows one family to follow a different religion (Iribaram, 2011). This is an important indicator of the moderate religious model. Third, the Islamic traits on the West Coast of Papua foster an Indonesian spirit (nationalism) which is marked by the ideological political affiliation of the Muslim community in this region which consistently supports integration with Indonesia. The long socio-political and cultural relationship with Muslims is recognized as one of the indicators of the strengthening of their sense of attachment to Indonesia. Although this is seen as another marker of Papuan identity, which is often identified as Melanesian and Christian (Chauvel, 2005).

It is the shades of Papua’s unique Islamic identity that will be raised as the main theme in this paper, mainly because of two considerations. First, Islam in Papua has presented a unique mosaic in Indonesia, related to how the formation of three important elements, namely Islam, Indonesianness, and Papuanness that shape the Islamic character in the region. Second, to date, there are not many researchers in Indonesia who make the process of encountering Islam, Indonesianness, and Papuanness a topic of research and academic discourse. So far, Papua has only been highlighted from the perspective of the conflicts that have constantly been taking place in several areas in Papua. There are not many researchers who see Islam in Papua as a cultural potential to build peace.

This study is part of research conducted in Fakfak West Papua in 2019. The data were collected for three months with the methods of observation, interviews, and literature study from September to November 2019. Some key informants were successfully interviewed, consisting of religious leaders, community leaders, and government employees. During data collection, we read significant literature; books, journals, and documents on Islam, ethnicity, culture, and political identity in Papua. This included the literature data that had been collected and then analyzed with an interactive analysis, as proposed by Irwan Abdullah (2007) to understand how the interaction between Islam and culture in Papua has a certain impact on the national identity of Indonesia in Papua.

## **STUDIES ON ISLAM AND PAPUAN IDENTITY**

Few studies on Islam in Papua have been produced, although in recent years there have been several researchers who conducted research related to Islam in Papua. Such studies attempted to construct the position of Papuan Muslims in the increasingly dynamic political contestation in Papua. Cahyo Pamungkas’s

(2008) thesis on *Islamic Papua and Special Autonomy*, which described the efforts of minority Muslim Papuans to negotiate their religious identity amid the Christian Papuan community, showed that cultural identities, such as ethnicity and religion, do not only function as an objective marker but also a symbolic power. This identity is constructed, contested, and used as a political instrument. Cahyo's study is interesting, but he only examined the dynamics of contemporary contestation and did not discuss the historical experience and its influence on culture. Similar to Cahyo's study, Idrus Al-Hamid described how political Islam is getting stronger in Papua, which strengthens the role of Muslims, but also creates a cultural distance with the indigenous Papuans. Similar to Cahyo and Idrus, Musa Rumbaru in his study "Identity Construction of the Minority Papuan Muslim: A Study on the Papuan Muslim Council," also mentions the same thing.

While the study of J.F. Onim (2006) about the history of the encounter between Islam and Christianity in Papua, which took place in the Fakfak area, provided important information about how the two religions have interacted since the beginning of their arrival in Papua, giving Fakfak people experience to build social harmony. Meanwhile, the anthropological study conducted by Suparto Iribaram (2011), entitled *One Stove/Cauldron with Three Stones/Legs --Cooperation of Three Religions in Religious Life in Fakfak*, has significant relevance to this research. Iribaram argued that one of the factors that support religious harmony in Fakfak is the acculturation of religion and culture, which gives birth to the philosophy of *One Stove/Cauldron with Three Stones/Legs*. Likewise, Pandie's study (2018) which describes the philosophy of local wisdom from *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu* in Fakfak. Iribaram and Pandie's research is an entry point to examine how Islam influences the character of local culture and to create various institutions and local wisdom that are institutionalized and play a role in strengthening the integration of Islam, Indonesianness, and Papuanness in Fakfak Regency, West Papua.

If we look at the various studies and research mentioned above, there are at least two things that have not received adequate attention. First, the study of Islam in Papua still places Islam as an outside force that tries to conquer Papua with all its influence in a contestatory and even destructive way. Islam is considered the outsiders' religion, while Christianity is local. Second, Islam in Papua is considered a disintegrative force that interferes with the development of Papuan nationalism, so Muslims should be suspected of being "less Papuan." The dynamics of the society in Papua are not singular. In some Islamic societies, Papuanness and Indonesianness are two identities that tend to be interrelated, as we can see in Fakfak of West Papua.

## **FAKFAK AS AN ISLAMIC MAJORITY REGION IN WEST PAPUA**

Papua is a unique region, not only because of its location at the far eastern tip of Indonesia but also because of its exotic people. Alfred Russel Wallace (as quoted by Materay, 2011), a traveler from England described Papuans as people of “dark skin, brownish or black. Sometimes it is close to, but never the same as the dark skin tone of the Negroid race. Very different in color, exceeding the skin tone of the Malay, sometimes dark and slightly brownish. Their hair is very coarse and dry,” (Materay, 2011). As for Fakfak, it is an area located right on the neck of the “bird’s head” of Papua Island which is currently part of West Papua Province. This district is located extending from West to East on the southern coast of Papua with the following territorial boundaries: to the east are the Regencies of Mimika and Paniai; to the west are the Seram Sea, Berau Bay and Sorong Regency, and Central Maluku Regency; in the northern part are Manokwari and Paniai Regencies, and to the south stretches the Arafuru Sea and Southeast Maluku Regency.

The indigenous people of Fakfak are native Papuans who come from two major tribes, namely the Baham and Onin. In addition, there are also small tribes such as the Ihandin who inhabit the Fatagar and Baruan areas, the Yarimo, the Sasim, the Sabakor, the Kembaran, the Tukua, and several other small tribes who live in the areas along the coast of Petuanan Arguni. Each tribe has a different language which is generally grouped into Baham and Iha languages. It is not known exactly when the indigenous people began to settle down in the Fakfak area, because there is no important historical or anthropological research on this matter. In addition to indigenous people, the Fakfak area is also inhabited by several immigrant ethnic groups. Generally, they come from Maluku, namely Seram and Kei which have geographical proximity to Fakfak. The people of Seram and Fakfak have had socio-cultural relations and economic contacts that have existed for a long time, many of their people have kinship relations due to inter-marriage (Widjoyo. 2009). Many Bugis and Makassar people from South Sulawesi also live in Fakfak, generally, they work as traders in local markets in Fakfak. Other ethnic groups from Sulawesi are Buton people from Southeast Sulawesi. Many of these people grow various kinds of crops that supply food, vegetables and some are fishermen. It is estimated that the Buton people from Southeast Sulawesi have settled in Fakfak since the Dutch colonial era. They came for economic, trade, and religious purposes. The central government’s efforts to promote transmigration since 1990 have contributed to the presence of a significant number of Javanese in the Fakfak area. Generally, they live in Bomberay District which borders Kaimana Regency.

Other ethnic groups found in Fakfak are Arabs and Chinese who mostly live in the city of Fakfak. The arrival of the Arabs is estimated to coincide with the entry of Islam in Fakfak, which was around the 16th and 17th centuries. In addition to being religious leaders and Imams of the mosque, the Arabs also run grocery stores and trade various products along the main Fakfak streets. The Chinese also run a grocery store in the center of the city, selling various basic goods and acting as collectors of nutmeg seeds for sale to buyers from Makassar and Surabaya. The fact that there are many Arabs and Chinese who have lived and traded in Fakfak since hundreds of years ago, is a testament to the glory of Fakfak's commerce in the past.

In a book entitled *A Study on the History of the Arrival of Islam in Fakfak*, published by the Fakfak Regency Government in 1996, it is stated that Islam has been present in Papua around the end of the 16th century. Several other writers such as J.F. Onim (2006) stated that Islam was only present in Papua around the 17th century. This conclusion was drawn based on an analysis of the report of Miguel Roxo Debrito (1581-1582), who stated that during his visit to the Raja Ampat islands. King Waegoe who ruled the islands at the time had not embraced Islam. Thus the presence of Islam in Papua is estimated around the end of the 16th century or the beginning of the 17th century. The path of the spread of Islam in Papua follows the path of the archipelago which started from Aceh at the tip of the island of Sumatra, Java, and Maluku, then entered and developed in Papua. Later, experts agreed that the presence of Islam in Papua was the final chapter of the spread of Islam because after that the process of spreading Islam had been cut off and stopped altogether. The encounter of Islam with Catholicism and Christianity which came later to Fakfak has opened a new chapter on the interaction of the three Abrahamic religions which is generally peaceful.

The development of Islam in Fakfak is very amazing. Fakfak is the only region in Papua where the population (the majority) is Muslim. Overall, Islam is the religion that is embraced by 53.80% of the community. This number increased significantly after the integration of Papua with Indonesia, where many migrants came to Fakfak. Some were officially sponsored by the government through the national transmigration program. The followers of Islam are comprised of the original Fakfak people (natives) who generally inhabit the coastal area of Fakfak, they are comprised of the Onin, Iha, and Baham tribes. The second group is the Fakfak people of Seram, Gorom, Banda, Arab, Buton, Bugis, Makassar, Javanese, Madurese, etc. Fakfak has become one of the beacons of Islamic da'wah in Papua. Many people refer to Fakfak as Papua's "Veranda of Mecca". This fact is undeniable because of the 71,069 population

of Fakfak in 2017, the majority were Muslims (53.80%), and most of them are indigenous Muslims who are quite religious and some have even become popular Islamic figures in Papua.

### ISLAM, CUSTOM AND FAMILY TRADITIONS IN FAKFAK

The presence of Islam in Fakfak, in addition to being the majority religion adopted by the Fakfak community, also gives important values that contribute to the formation of Islamic identity in Fakfak. The Fakfak people believe that as Muslims in Papua they have basic characteristics, which when analyzed in depth have different constructions from Papuan identity in general.

The presence of Islam in Fakfak strengthens cultural norms that further strengthen the brotherhood. Although currently Fakfak people embrace different religions, live in different districts or lords, and even have different social statuses, they are still bound and connected in a unitary custom, be it the Baham Mata Customary Unity, or the Onin who have inhabited the Onim Peninsula (Fakfak) since long ago. The moral values derived from these local values then gave birth to several norms and customary laws for the Fakfak community.

Customary norms in Fakfak can be distinguished in several areas of life which regulate family life and the public (people). In family life, for example, norms related to marriage law, *tombormage*, or respect for parents. Acculturation between Islam and local culture in Fakfak has also made an important contribution to the high respect for mothers and women. In public life, there is also a tradition of *bakubantu* or *masohi*, namely the tradition of helping each other in the Fakfak community. *Bakubantu* is applied in group life as well as in broad social practice, such as helping to build houses, helping neighboring regions when building traditional houses, or organizing traditional rituals.

In the public context, the acculturation of Islam and local culture forms networks of brotherhood and social relations among citizens, not only among Fakfak Muslims but also between Muslims and Christians and Catholics. Customary responsibility gives rise to several local pearls of wisdom, such as the requirement to have dialog to solve problems through the *dudu tikar* tradition. The description of *dudu tikar* shows that it is a best practice in Fakfak customary law, which serves as a medium to ensure social relations are always in a harmonious state, as instilled through the philosophical values of *idu-idu*, *mani nina*, and *yoyo*. If there is a problem, dispute, or conflict between the people, the King, Tribal Chief, or Village Elder must “open the mat” to talk, have a dialog, and deliberate. In contrast to some tribes in Papua who make

war a way to resolve conflicts and disputes. The Fakfak community considers such actions as harming brotherhood and kinship relations.

The results of the acculturation of Islam and custom in Fakfak also provide an important construction for religious life, which is institutionalized in the local wisdom of *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu* (one stove with three stones). In simple terms, the philosophy of *one stove with three stones* is a reflection of the brotherhood of the Fakfak community despite different religions, ethnicities, languages, and socioeconomic conditions. In the traditional construction of the Fakfak community, *one stove with three stones* is a term that describes a balance, like a stove supported by three stones when cooking food by ancient people. Without three legs of stone, the stove would not be stable and would cause food to spill. These three stone legs are likened to the three major religions in Fakfak, namely Islam, Catholicism, and Protestantism.

In the opinion of the indigenous people of Fakfak, if the three stone legs are stable then all problems can be handled properly so that the implementation of the philosophy of *one stove with three stones* spreads to the family life of the indigenous people in Fakfak. In that philosophy, some elements are agreed upon, namely as one family, one must remain in one heart even though they have different religions and beliefs. There is no definite record of when exactly the term of *Satu Tungku Tiga Batu* (one stove with three stones) was first used in the Fakfak community tradition. However, some researchers agreed that the term comes from the result of acculturation between religious values (Islam) and local culture that upholds the spirit of kinship (Onim, 2006). In the communal Melanesian tradition, family is considered as everything, they used to risk their lives through wars to protect the family's good name. The tribal war ritual that is still practiced by some tribes in Timika and Pegunungan Tengah is an example of the cultural response of the Papuan people when they feel that their family is under threat. War is waged as a request for responsibility to those who have killed or insulted the honor of the family of a tribe.

Likewise, with social practices in Fakfak, the family is the center of identity that must be maintained. So the differences in religion adhered to by family members are not in question because they prioritize family harmony. This is the basis of the formation of family religion in the tradition of the Fakfak community. The phenomenon of one family adhering to a different religion is a common thing for the people of Fakfak, as stated by Mr. Simon Hindom as follows:

“In my family, there are eight siblings, some are Christians, some are Muslims, and some are Catholics. My brother is a Hajj, my nephew is even a priest. In our tradition here, we are used to sharing religions, as long as they are

sincere and obedient. So, for example, because of marriage a woman has to convert to Islam. So, later one of her children is advised to follow Christianity or Catholicism. This is for the sake of togetherness,” (interview with Simon Hindom, 2019)

This is what makes Fakfak unique compared to Indonesia’s other regions. In this diversity, there are no conflicts of beliefs or disputes that lead to clashes between religious communities. The flexibility of Islam as the majority religion in Fakfak and its tolerance, allows the people of Fakfak to choose religion without coercion and respect each other’s choice. The philosophy of *one stove with three stones* unites the religious plurality in Fakfak so that there are no dominations that cause jealousy and lead to division.

The arrival of Catholicism to Fakfak coastal areas where the majority of the population have embraced Islam is one of the important historical episodes that can describe the roots of tolerance in the culture of the Fakfak community. The arrival of Pastor Cornelis Le Coq from Spain in Sekru village in 1984 on a mission to spread Catholicism in Papua was warmly welcomed by the local community. They apologized to the pastor that they had embraced the religion (Islam), but they were willing to help the pastor to spread Catholicism to their brothers who inhabited the mountainous region of Torea. This friendly attitude surprised Pastor Le Coq, because, in other areas where people embrace Islam, the priest often received acts of intimidation and even expulsion (Onim, 2006).

According to Pastor Isak Bame (interview), the friendly actions of the Muslim community at Sekru illustrate the perspective of the Fakfak community towards inter-religious tolerance. They consider brotherhood to be much more important, and differences between religions do not necessarily separate the ties of brotherhood between them. In this case, religion is placed as a complement to brotherhood and kinship which has become a tradition in the communal society of Fakfak. Many families in Fakfak have family members of different religions; some are Muslims, Christians, or Catholics.

Another form of tolerance is participation in the construction of places of worship, both mosques, and churches. For the people of Fakfak, the house of worship is not only a place to worship but also a cultural symbol of the local community. If a Muslim helps build a church, then he is not helping Christianity but more than that he is helping his brother who happens to be a Christian, and vice versa for Muslims. Therefore, every construction of a mosque or church always involves the two communities. In some cases they are involved as committee members, helping with various building materials and fund-raising for the construction of houses of worship (interview with Simon Tengerere).

Recently, the reproduction identity of “Sat Tungku Tiga Batu” has also been used for law enforcement and politics in Fakfak. For example, the local government interprets “Satu Tungku Tiga Batu” as harmony between the government, society, and local leaders. Some people consider the government’s efforts to adapt these traditions to politics it is a good thing, but it must be done carefully to create political hegemony that will close the critical attitude of society.

### **FAKFAK MUSLIMS IN THE PAPUA-INDONESIA INTEGRATION PROCESS**

The identification of Fakfak’s Muslim identity amid the rivalry between Papuan and Indonesian identities is not easy to explain, especially amid claims of Papuan identity which tend to be constructed as Christian and Melanesian. This section seeks to explain the dynamics of the development of Islam, Papuanness, and Indonesianness that are interrelated with the Fakfak-Fakfak community during various political challenges in Papua. The transfer of sovereignty over the Dutch East Indies from the Government of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Indonesia on 27 December 1949 raised the question of the political status of Papua which was still occupied by the Dutch. The Dutch made various political maneuvers to exploit the spirit of “Papuan nationalism” to form a Papuan State that was independent of Indonesia. Sukarno’s government took tough political steps by declaring the People’s Three Commands (Trikorla): 1) Stop the formation of the Dutch puppet state of Papua, 2) Raise the Red and White Flag in West Papua, the homeland of Indonesia, 3) Prepare for general mobilization to defend the independence and the unity of the homeland and the nation (Cholil, 1979).

The Dutch-Indonesian conflict related to the Papua issue officially ended with the signing of the 1962 New York Agreement, in which the Dutch handed over Papua to the United Nations through a commission called UNTEA (United Nation Temporary Executive Authority) and then UNTEA handed over Papua to Indonesia. As part of the New York Agreement, Indonesia is required to carry out a referendum to determine whether the Papuan people are willing to integrate with Indonesia or establish their own state. In a historical referendum in 1969, 1024 Papuans from various groups officially chose to join Indonesia (Drooglever, 2020).

The Fakfak community has a long history regarding Indonesia’s claims on Papua during the period of integration and taking over of West Papua. Fakfak’s strategic position as the gateway to Papua served as the main posts for military operations and the entrance to Papua. During the period of the Trikorla, the

mobilization of volunteers and the infiltration of Indonesian military troops were carried out through the areas of Fakfak, Kaimana, Raja Ampat, and Sorong. To avoid radar monitoring of the Dutch troops, infiltration into Fakfak was often carried out secretly using traditional local fishing boats. People in the East Seram region (where a monument of the seizure of West Papua was erected) have many stories about the heroic actions of fishermen in infiltrating Indonesian military soldiers into West Papua.

This process put very real pressure on the Netherlands on several fronts and in various international diplomatic forums which forced the Netherlands to recognize Indonesia's presence in Papua. Through UN resolution No. 2504 of 1969, the UN officially recognized the results of the Referendum (PEPERA) in 1968. During the referendum, the representatives of the Papuan people, totaling 1024 people, finally decided to join the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. The role of the Fakfak people in the process was very clear when the Fakfak Community Deliberations gave support to the choice of integration with Indonesia. Of the 75 participants in the Pepera deliberation from Fakfak in 1968, consisting of traditional leaders, religious leaders, youth leaders, and women's leaders, 74 participants gave their approval to integration with Indonesia. There was only one participant on behalf of Eduard Hegemur who refused to support Indonesia. The absolute support of the Fakfak community in the process of West Papua's return to Indonesia has made the Fakfak area often called the "Veranda of the Republic of Indonesia" in Papua. Several monuments built in Fakfak indicate these historical claims.

The people of Fakfak also continued to show solid support for the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia after the 1969 Referendum. They rejected various upheavals marked by political resistance and armed rebellion by the Free Papua Movement (OPM) movement. The Fakfak people helped consolidate nationalist forces under the leadership of charismatic figures such as King Mahamud Rumagesan (Sukanto, 2004). Rumagesan who is the King of Pikipik Wertuar also carried out propaganda to strengthen the integration decision. He was often involved by President Sukarno in the Indonesian government's diplomatic activities abroad. For his services, the government of West Papua is currently making efforts to make Mahmud Rumagesan a National Hero. Fakfak is one of the most important areas in West Papua which continues to be considered the most pro-Indonesia community in Papua. The very large Muslim population in this region is considered as one of the important variables explaining the high level of Indonesian nationalism in Fakfak. In recent years, these claims have been challenged by new pro-independence Papuan movements such as the West Papua National Committee in the Fakfak area.

## **INDONESIAN NATIONALISM AND THE RESISTANCE TO SEPARATISM**

As one of the regencies in West Papua Province, Fakfak cannot avoid various problems that occur in big cities such as Jayapura and Manokwari that affect many other areas in Papua. Sensitive political issues such as separatism and Papua's special autonomy have also divided the Fakfak people into conflicting interest groups. There are youth groups that are increasingly militant in fighting for Papuan political rights in Fakfak such as the West Papuan Youth National Committee (KNPPB). This group is part of the Papuan Presidium Council (PDP) network and its panels, as well as the West Papua National Authority (WPNA), the West Papua National Coalition for Liberation (WPNCL), the West Papua National Committee (KNPB). At the same time, opposing groups such as the Barisan Merah Putih and civilian militias sponsored by the local security forces emerged.

Separatism has become a dangerous political trap because, in addition to being a tool to silence political aspirations against the government, it also triggers mutual suspicion among civil society groups. For example in Fakfak, some groups use a separatist stigma; Pro-M, Anti-Indonesia, etc., to corner political opponents. It occurs in political moments such as local elections or the contestation of political power in the government and during the elections of governors, regents, members of the legislature, or promotion to positions in the local bureaucracy to the civil servant recruitment. This issue is often used as a black campaign among local politicians.

Inevitably, in the Fakfak area, some groups openly support the idea of an independent Papua. Moreover, the repressive security forces contributed to the growth of these groups in Fakfak, for example, the treatment experienced by many young activists under the West Papua National Committee for Youth (KNPPB) representing Fakfak led by Arnoldus Kocu. This group is a representative of the KNPPB based in Manokwari and Jayapura and often conducts demonstrations to voice the aspirations of Papuan independence. The main aspiration of this group is a referendum to determine the popular opinion, whether to join the Republic of Indonesia or to stand alone as an independent nation. KNPPB fights for its aspirations by peaceful means; demonstrations and mass mobilization at certain moments. However, their peaceful actions are often met with repressive measures by the security forces. For example, when two KNPPB activists, Paulus Horik and Klismon Woi, were mysteriously killed in November 2012 and KNPPB Fakfak accused the Indonesian security forces of being the perpetrators. Likewise, the arrest and torture of Arnold Kocu and eight KNPPB activists in August 2013 also

contributed to the popularity of this group as evidence of the existence of pro-M groups in the Fakfak area (Karoba News, 2013). Over time, several components of the Fakfak community have secretly begun to give sympathy and support to this youth group.

The presence of Islam as the majority religion which has formed religious and social identity in Fakfak also influences the way the Fakfak community responds to separatism in Fakfak. The long historical experience related to the acculturation of Islam and local culture in Fakfak has strengthened the people of Fakfak to choose peace as a way of life as conceptualized in the local motto of *one stove with three stones*. This can be seen from the way they view the presence of some people's organizations that support Papuan independence (Pro-M) and radical religious movements. Although it is acknowledged that the KNPB movements promoting the mission of separatism are quite worrying to the immigrant community, they are still allowed to carry out their activities. For the majority of the people of Fakfak, KNPB's actions do not have to be taken seriously as long as their activities do not disrupt peace in the community and they always use peaceful means, which is permissible in democracy. According to the Chairman of the Fakfak Customary Court, as long as KNPB's actions do not cause violence or incite hostility between groups in society, they should not be faced with violence by the state (Interview with Jubair Hubrow, 2019). The same opinion was expressed by the Head of the Fakfak Islamic High School who considered that the ideas of independence and the referendum voiced by youth groups coordinated by KNPB Fakfak were normal in a democratic country. It is precisely through the discourse of separatism that they try to build critical negotiations with the state regarding various state policies towards Papua (Interview with Wihel, 2019).

There are also community groups that do not agree with the presence of separatist groups in Fakfak, such as the Red and White group led by Haji Ismail Bauw. Except for the violent incident that occurred in 2000, this group's rejection of the issue of separatism is more often manifested by peaceful actions, statements of attitude, or social movements that attract public attention, such as the one-kilometer-long flag march, coinciding with the day of the integration of Papua with Indonesia, which was carried out on May 1, 2013. This action was carried out again in August 2019, when Papua and West Papua were hit by violent riots due to demonstrations against racial discrimination against Papuan students in Surabaya.

## **SPECIAL AUTONOMY AND DILEMMA OF PAPUAN MUSLIM IDENTITY**

Since the integration of Papua with Indonesia, the Papuan people have continued to feel that they live under pressure from the central government, which at that time used a security approach in maintaining Papuan integration. So when the reform gave freedom, the Papuan people demanded independence and self-determination. The government then built diplomacy by imposing a Special Autonomy in Papua. After going through serious studies and debates, the Government enacted Law No. 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for Papua. The implementation of Special Autonomy for Papua Province has more or less become a conciliation for the Papuan people. There is hope that there will be changes and improvements in the fate and condition of the Papuan people. Since then Papua has received a fairly large balancing fund and continued to increase every year. Simultaneously, the construction of infrastructure, roads, bridges, office buildings, and several other strategic projects began. Special Autonomy is also interpreted as encouraging the creation of new districts in all corners of Papua.

However, the implementation of Special Autonomy has brought many serious implications for socio-political developments in Papua, not only in big cities like Jayapura and Manokwari, but also in areas like Fakfak. The real impact is the prominence of the practice of identity politics which refers to the symptoms of ethnocentrism. According to Levaan (2012), Special Autonomy has been interpreted as the freedom to determine a region's own destiny based on ethnic sentiments. This has prompted all political elites in Papua to recently stipulate that the Governor and Deputy Governor, as well as the Regent and Deputy Regent in Papua, must come from Papuan natives. This stipulation creates problems for multi-ethnic areas such as Fakfak. Since two centuries ago, the people of Fakfak have been interracially married to those of various ethnic groups who came and settled in Fakfak. This has an impact on the construction of Fakfak's ethnic identity, most of whom have mixed identities. They have a distinctive identity that is different from that of most Melanesians in Papua, not only in terms of physical and biological forms but also in complex socio-cultural aspects. The identity of Fakfak is unique and different from the dominant Papuan identity construction.

However, as a result of the Special Autonomy provisions that favor the Melanesian race in Papua, the specific identity of Fakfak has also been challenged. Many Fakfak communities question their Papuan identity. They are not considered to be indigenous enough to identify themselves as Papuans because of several biological differences and cultural characteristics, including

religion and therefore their political rights as Papuans are not accommodated. Papuan Muslims are often stigmatized with various narratives that place them as being less Papuan, siding with the Indonesian military, pro-Indonesia, etc. Therefore, many get attacked and denigrated.

Moreover, Special Autonomy is interpreted as a specific right for Papuans, so Papuan Muslims are not part of it. Other issues have begun to emerge in the context of local bureaucratic segregation in Fakfak lately, where identity as a Papuan becomes a political construction that divides Papuans into different social strata. The interpretation of *putera daerah* (local people) informally gave birth to the terms Papua B1, B2, B3, and B4. A term that distinguishes the “level” of Papuanness of the people in Fakfak based on lineage. Papua B1 are those born in Fakfak to a Papuan father and Papuan mother who are reflected by a certain family name. Papua B2 are those born in Fakfak to a Papuan father but whose mother is of immigrant ethnicity, Papua B3 are those born in Papua to a Papuan mother and an immigrant father. Whereas Papua B4 or the lowest level, are those born and raised in Papua for the last few years but whose father and mother are of immigrant ethnicity. Such segregation began to occur during the process of recruitment of civil servants and promotion of regional officials. Whereas previously politics of accommodation in Fakfak only prioritized the representation of religions in politics. This is a challenge that must be faced by the multicultural people in Fakfak that have been able to maintain the harmonization of their social and political life.

Meanwhile, the implementation of Special Autonomy was also followed by the expansion of new autonomous regions in Papua, which so far have reached 40 autonomous regions for the Provinces of Papua and West Papua. At the same time, the local people of Papua have emerged as leaders, from regents, House speakers, to heads of offices and departments. The process of vertical mobility of the new Papuan elites is not accompanied by political maturity in democracy. So in practice, mass mobilization carried out by local elites often occurs by exploiting ethnic and religious sentiments. This triggers tensions between tribes in Papua, as well as between Papuans and migrants.

The Fakfak community, which has a moderate political stand and harmonious social conditions, has also been dragged into the increasingly vicious dynamics of identity politics. There are political groupings based on ethnic, and religious identities. Even regional segregation appears; between people living in mountainous areas and those in coastal areas, or between mainland people and islanders. This ethnocentric phenomenon gained momentum when regional head elections were implemented from indirect to direct elections. With this change, the role of local elites has become more prominent and

their bargaining position in local politics has increased. However, at the same time, issues of communalism such as ethnic and religious sentiments are also getting stronger.

The Papuan ethnocentrism that has developed in Fakfak so far can still be brought under control with local norms which are the spirit of *one stove with three stones*. Although there is friction, it can be normalized by employing the local social system. As seen in the political contestation in the 2011 Fakfak Local Elections, where competing candidates often took advantage of religious and ethnic issues for their electoral incentives. This can be seen from the configuration of the supporters of the candidates which centered on two potential candidates, namely the Mohammad Uswanas/Donatus Nimbitkendik pair, who were supported by the natives of Fakfak Baham Mata and the majority are Christians and Catholics. Meanwhile, the Said Hindom/Ali Baham Temongmere pair was mostly supported by the majority of Muslim immigrant groups.

Such a process also occurs in other places and is a common phenomenon in politics. However, in the Papuan political context, such euphoria can have far-reaching implications beyond the political process as the political contestation has triggered “anti-immigrant” sentiments and provoked widespread religious sentiment among the people of Fakfak. The local political dynamics not only strengthens the negative seeds of ethnocentrism but furthermore it also leads to a political model of representation, where local political elites only use cultural and religious symbols for their pragmatic interests. Furthermore, when they are elected or control certain political positions, the people are forgotten.

Papuan Muslims are sociologically represented by the Papuan Muslim Council (MRP). This organization, as reported by Cahyo Pamungkas (2008), is a continuation of the Papuan Muslim Solidarity (SMP) organization which was formed by 47 Muslim leaders in Papua from various ethnic groups in November 21, 1999. It seems that SMP was established as a response to the political dynamics in post-reform Papua that further strengthened the Christian Papuan identity. Muslims from various ethnic groups in Papua want to show their existence through SMP, although in its later development, two groups were formed within SMP, namely Pro-M and Pro-Indonesia Muslims.

On 10-13 April 10-13 2007, at the Papua Hajj Dormitory, the Papuan Muslim Solidarity (SMP) was founded and later changed to the Papuan Muslim Council (MMP). MMP management builds relations and consolidates major Islamic organizations in Papua such as Nahdhatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, the Jayapura branch Islamic Student Association (HMI), the Jayawidjaya Muslim

Community Forum (FKMJ) which is engaged in the development of Muslim human resources in Jaya Wijaya. At the same time, it also strengthens the position of indigenous Papuan Muslims who felt being marginalized during the political upheaval in post-reform Papua. MMP built communication and networks with the Papuan People's Assembly (MRP), which is pro-independence. The Muslim leader in the MRP was Thoha Al-Hamid who served as Secretary-General of the MRP, while the chairman of the MRP was Teys Aluwae who died in the upheaval in Papua.

The MMP is filled with Papuan Muslim leaders such as Arobi A. Aituarow who is also the chairman of the MMP. As a native Papuan Muslim, Arobi has become a cultural bridge with ethnic groups in Papua (Pamungkas, 2008). The MRP also builds a network with the church community in Papua and often voices human rights violations that indigenous Papuans often face. The MMP's criticisms of the government (especially the Indonesian Military and Police) are often seen as taking MMP's side to the Pro-M faction controlled by Toha Al-Hamid. However, this fact benefits and strengthens the position of MMP, as an organization that is recognized as representing the identity of Papuan Muslims amid the political turmoil between the Republic of Indonesia and the Independence Movement. MMP's efforts to fight for the identity of Papuan Muslims have been welcomed by media activists. An editor of the Papua Women's Voice Tabloid (TSPP) as quoted by Cahyo Pamungkas (2008) admitted that the establishment of MMP shows that construction and division not only favor Christians but also Muslims. MMP tries to construct that Islam and Papua are two unified sub-cultures.

The existence of MMP shows that there is a serious effort to gain a strong bargaining position, especially in defining Islam and Papuanness. However, the problem is that there is a real reduction in the context of Indonesianness. Several groups we met in Fakfak considered that the MMP has good strategies, but it provokes a new segmentation between the pro-Indonesia Papuan Islamic group and Papuan Islam whose position is not yet clear. Most Papuan Muslims, especially in the Fakfak area, are supporters of Indonesia. Fakfak Muslims feel the need to emphasize this, because Islam, Papuanness, and Indonesianness for Muslims in Fakfak are three sub-cultures which is attractive identity. For Fakfak Muslims, being a Fakfak Muslim is similar to being Indonesian, as shown in the experience of the political integration of Papua with Indonesia.

## CONCLUSION

This study shows that the Papuan identity which has so far been constructed as being Christian, black, and having curly hair is not always correct. This

study shows that the long historical process related to Islam that has been experienced by the Fakfak people in West Papua has an impact on defining a specific identity amid the ongoing identity contestation in Papua. This means that the interrelation between culture, religion, and nationalism has so far formed a specific identity and character in the context of Papuanness, Islam, and Indonesianness. Based on such a narrative, two things can be concluded in this study.

First, Islam has made an important contribution to the formation of Fakfak Muslim identity in Papua. The process of acculturating Islam with local Papuan culture in Fakfak has formed new values such as an open and inclusive culture. Fakfak Muslims easily interact with other religious and cultural groups. Tolerance and harmony become the main culture in Fakfak, which is found in the local wisdom of *one stove with three stones*. The Fakfak Muslims' efforts to display identity as Papuans are shown by exploring the history of the encounter with Islam and local customs and culture from time to time. Second, the Islam and Papuanness in Fakfak seem to have implications on the formation of Indonesian identity. The Muslims in Fakfak feel that they are the main part of the Indonesian people in Papua, so it is often heard that Fakfak is both the Veranda of Mecca and the Veranda of the Republic of Indonesia. This can be seen in the historical event of the integration of Papua with Indonesia where all Fakfak delegates involved in the Referendum (Perpera) opted for integration with Indonesia. Even in the political turmoil that is happening in Papua today, where there are often separatist movements that voice Papuan nationalism and independence, Fakfak Muslims still stand strong as Indonesians. Even after the enactment of Law No. 21 of 2001 concerning Special Autonomy for Papua which put Muslims in Papua in a difficult position, Muslims in Fakfak responded by helping to encourage the existence of the Papuan Muslim Council which plays a role in affirming their identity as Muslims as well as Papuans and Indonesians.

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