

## **A SULTAN OF TERNATE, MUDAFFAR SJAH, AND THE LOCAL POLITICS CONSOLIDATION DURING THE NEW ORDER ERA FROM 1966 TO 1998**

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### **Abstract**

This paper defines the political strategy of the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate, Mudaffar Sjah, in reorganizing his power base after the death of the 47<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate, Iskandar Djabir Syah, in 1975. This paper also discovers any kind of strategies used by Sultan Mudaffar Sjah in rebuilding his power base during the New Order power with three main forces, namely: military, bureaucracy, and GOLKAR (Indonesian Party of Functional Groups). This paper emphasizes two strategies of the elite of the Sultanate of Ternate to maintain their political existence in the local political sphere. The first is associated with government parties: During the era of the Soeharto government, the elite of the sultanate took political decisions to support the government party, the GOLKAR. The support of the Sultanate of Ternate to the GOLKAR Party was understood as an accommodating strategy, and to maintain it in authoritarian and centralist power. The accommodating approach was aimed at surviving the destruction as occurred in the Soekarno government, as well as being able to utilize the resources possessed by the force of the New Order. The second is the cultural arena: In building the power, the strategies used by the elite of the Sultanate of Ternate were not only through political parties, but also laid the power base in the fields of art, religious theology, and culture. The manifestation as the centre of palace retention kept maintaining the traditional palace ceremonies, such as *Kololi Kie* (a ritual of encircling the island) and *Fire Kie* (a ritual of climbing the mountain). These palace rites keep being carried out since those are the sources of cultural legitimacy that the palace still has the magical, sacred, and symbolic authority. Moreover, building a kinship network (kinship, politics) by presenting honorary titles to officials or former officials, both central and regional. At least, the cultural strategy as an entry point to make the palace a centre for caretaker, preservation, and development of the Ternate culture.

**Keywords:** Sultan Mudaffar Sjah, Sultanate of Ternate, New Order and Cultural Politics.

### **A. Mudaffar Sjah: The Third Son who became the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate**

Mudaffar Sjah was born in Ternate on April 13, 1938, and was the 3<sup>rd</sup> son of four siblings from Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah and Boki Mariyam Cili Gunung Sibela (the daughter of the Sultanate of Bacan).

Since the beginning of his life, he had experienced a heavy struggle with his family during the Japanese Occupation in Ternate. They had to be evacuated to Brisbane, Australia, to avoid attempts at exploiting and killing the Japanese Occupation Army. Such sacrifices and struggles made the children of Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah (the 47<sup>th</sup> Sultan)

appeared as warrior figures and heirs of the empire who had a political vision to become a great king. Mudaffar Sjah was one of them, later becoming the heir to the throne, and also becoming became a political maestro in North Maluku in the journey of his history. Unlike the children of the sultans in other regions who distinguished the status of aristocrats in their daily interactions, Mudaffar Sjah was raised by villagers (Dufa-dufa) and lived outside the palace. Although Mudaffar Sjah came from the aristocracy, however, he was educated by his parents to mingle with the common society (Djafar, 2005).

This is in line with the philosophy of the Sultanate of Ternate, namely *dadah madopo* (yellow rice and eggs). Thus, it is not surprising that Mudaffar Sjah grew normally like most children at that time since he was not raised in a palace environment where his father and mother lived. From the association which did not distinguish the status, he grew up as a free *kaicil* (prince), including in terms of deciding his soulmate. This occurred the *Kaicil* (prince) Mudaffar Sjah once married a Christian wife from Minahasa. Whenever they went to church, Mudaffar Sjah drove his wife to church for worship. Until the worship was over, then both of them went back home to the palace; and so on before his wife became a *mualaf* (a person who just moves to Islam from another religion), something which is contrary to the Sultanate values adhered by the people of Ternate (Hasan, 2000).

His formal education (primary, middle, and high school) was all in Ternate, in Christian schools; although at that time, there were already public schools or Islamic schools in Ternate. This is different from what was done by his grandfather (Sultan Usman Sjah) who was a very anti-Dutch so that his children were not allowed to enter

Dutch schools; by a reason that the Dutch were all infidels, therefore naturally the schools were infidel as well; thus, all of his children were sent to the Malay School. In 1967, he continued his higher education at Universitas Khairun Ternate and obtained his Bachelor of Laws degree in 1970, and then continued his higher education at Universitas Indonesia (UI), majoring in Philosophy, and obtaining his bachelor degree in 1984.

In this last education, he had a major role in introducing and re-establishing the ideology of the Sultanate of Ternate, namely *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* (the leader and the people) which had long been the philosophy of *Moloku Kie Raha* and in various seminars or writings. For Mudaffar Sjah, the philosophical *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* is not only limited to the relationship between leaders and the people. The ideology has undergone a process of materialization to form the symbol of the Sultanate of Ternate, *Goheba Dopolo Romdidi* (a two-headed, one-bodied, and one-hearted bird), even developing into religious thought (God and His Servants) which is contained in the form of two *shahada* sentences in Islamic teachings. This argument would certainly be polemic if *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* philosophy, which was only limited to cultural and political matters, was converted in terms of belief (religion). Therefore, this aspect needs a limitation for the philosophy of *Jou se Ngofa Ngare* (leader and people) to be only limited to the matter of political culture and is not related to the religious dimension at all, moreover, equating the sultan is the representative of God as the beliefs of some other traditional kingdoms in Indonesia (Syah, 2009).

During his exile in Jakarta (1950 to 1975), Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah issued *idin kolano* (fatwa) which referred to the implementation of daily duties to four

indigenous stakeholders (*bobato madopolo*) from four main clans, namely: Ahmad Yusup Madjid from the Marsaoli Clan, Abdul Habib Djoko from the Djiko Clan, Samaka Ali from the Payahe Clan, and Saleh Badrudin from the Tabala Clan. With their respective positions, namely: Ahmad Yusup Madjid as the *jogugu* (prime minister), Abdul Habib Djoko as the Law of *Soa-Sio* (minister of home affairs), Samaka Ali as the Law of *Sangaji* (minister of the foreign affair), and Saleh Badrudin as the *Tullamo* (royal secretary); these indigenous stakeholders implemented the fatwa of *kolano* (sultan), reorganized a person's custom or by running the governmental wheel until the inauguration of a new sultan.

In 1969, the *Jo Gugu* (prime minister), Ahmad Yusup Madjid, died and had not yet completed his task of inaugurating the new sultan as instructed (*idin kolano*) by Sultan Djabir Sjah. In the structure of the Sultanate of Ternate, the *jogugu* was the second man after the sultan, and both were equally bound by their duties and responsibilities in an inseparable whole. Both are likened to a sword with a sheath as contained in the philosophy of Ternate, *rubu-rubu fo ma moi-moi doka saya rako moi* (in droves of us all like a series of flowers). At the same time, all hopes of *bala kusu se kano-kano* (society) were wishing for having a crown prince (*kaicil*) prepared by the *bobato madopolo* (council of ministers) as a replacement for sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah who was temporarily exiled to Jakarta (Rajilun, 1980).

Although the Sultanate of Ternate does not have the term for 'the crown prince', even according to the tradition of the Sultanate of Ternate, a prospective sultan is not always appointed a son of the governing sultan. Antonio Galvao states that the Sultanate of Ternate do not have the term for the crown prince; the one entitled to

replace the king is the son of four clans/*soa* (*sabua raha*) who is chosen based on the results of deliberations by the Royal Council. Valentijn further says that there is a tradition in Ternate that the one being crowned as the king is not the king's son, but the king's brother, or the son of a brother, or the son of a sister of a deceased king (FSA de Clercq, 1879). However, the entire council of ministers and the society wanted *kaicil* Mudaffar Sjah who would later become the sultan since his authority and charisma were acceptable to all people.

Mudafar Sjah was occupied with his activities such as running his business, managing the earth resource by cooperating with several companies. Besides that, he also worked as a student of the Faculty of Law at Universitas Khairun Ternate. At the same time, he was also appointed as the chairman of BAPARDA (Regional Tourism Board) to promote North Maluku regional tourism.

Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah passed away in Jakarta in 1975. *Bobato Nyagimo se-Tufkange* or the eighteen councils (legislative board) decided to appoint Mudaffar Sjah as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29, 1976, in the sultan coronation ceremony called *Jou Khalifah, Jou Kolano*.

The coronation ceremony of the sultan, *Jou Khalifah, Jou Kolano*, is the most important and biggest state ceremony, and witnessed by all members of the royal family, the Prime Minister (*Jojugu*), the Ministers, as well as all participants of 18 members of the House of Representatives, elders, heads of *Soas*, *ulama*, *kadhi*, imam, and preachers. The crown prince sits on the throne, then the Head of *Soa*, Kimalaha Marsaoli, as the chairman of the House of Representatives, accompanied by the chief of the traditional palace and the head of the palace, step forward to pay their respects.

Then two special officers, called *Sawohi* and *Sadaha*, carrying a crown (*stampa*), approaching the throne, and wear it on the crown prince's head. Since that moment, the crown prince has become the Sultan (*Jou Khalifah, Jou Kolano*), accompanied by prayers, by the mufti and five palace imam (Imam *Jiko*, Imam *Java*, Imam *Sangaji*, Imam *Moti*, Imam *Nation*). At the moment, the guests stand up (from their seats) to offer the oath of confinement to the new Sultan. Then the Prime Minister (*jojugu*) comes forward, stops a few steps before the Sultan, makes a prayer, and delivers a special report (*Suba*) in the coronation ceremony of the Sultan. The report is read in Ternate as follows:

*'Saililla suba Jou Kolano lamo-lamo toma kaus Kolano, toma hadrat nan calamoi maadu-adu. Saililla suba Jou Kolano lamo-laamo no khalifat magori-gori No Khalifat-ur-Rasyid, no tubaddilur-Rasul. No gugu tabdir parenta amar se nahi toma alam daerah Moloku istana baldan Ternate, no tego toma singgasana Kolano, ni jo joko no sijoko toma thinil molok, ni momina seni gogise mangganggungagu intan se yakut malili parmata jambrut, mabobela ratna mut jaohar manikam, ma cahaya isi woro toma alam daerah Moloku istana baldan Ternate, limau duko se gapi, gapi se seki, matubu la idadi ka cahaya akal ikhsan kolano. Saililla suba jou kolano lamo-lamo no khalifat magori-gori. Kum-kum ua moju ni sosyusyu kani ra'sul wajir fangare jojugu he abdulhabib Djiko to tede re suba paksaan mangale tosi waje-waje ni molok kier aha Ternate se Tidore, Baca se Jailolo, sema mie gudu-gudu Tobuku se Banggai, sama sare gudu-gudu Sula se Taliabo seni ronga seni bobato dunya se akhirat, soa sio se Sangaji, Heku se cim, seni bangsa bara bangsa seni ngofa-ngofa Kolano, seni ngofangare pehak ber pehak se agama rasulullah majojaga Jo kalem, se jo Imam se jo khatib bobula*

*raha, seni bala, seni rakyat, seni sahabat ya mukaram hoframintu walandawi, ma sitiadat sema kabasarangma adat sema troran, ma galib sema lukudi, mangale se macara, mangaro sema biasa, ngofangare ngom mi ma moi-moi mihadir saddia tatap lengkap mi tede semi saha, zaman mula akhirin itola ua moju toma safutu se wange isi dutu hari qiamat saililla suba jou kolano lamo-lamo no khalifat ma gori-gori. Kum-kum ua moju ni sosyusyu ngofagare Jojugu he abdulhabib djiko tolede rusuba paksaan (Soelastro, 1982)*

Every era must have a leader with different characteristics. The adagium is right when paired with different political roles between Iskandar Djabir Syah (the 47<sup>th</sup> Sultan) and Mudaffar Sjah (the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan). If Iskandar Djabir Sjah's political engagement at the beginning of independence was to take a political stand that opposed most Indonesian nationalists, involving himself as a member of the NIT (State of East Indonesia) senate, representing North Maluku at the Malino and Denpasar conference in 1946, initiated by Herbertus J. Van Mook to form the State of East Indonesia, so that in his progress he was appointed as the Minister of Home Affairs of NIT on December 27, 1949, in the J. E. Tatengkeng Cabinet. The implication of this policy was when RIS (United States of Indonesia) was dispersed on August 17, 1950. As a federalist figure, Iskandar Djabir Sjah was exiled by President Soekarno to Jakarta and placed as one of the Ministry of Home Affairs employees until he passed away in 1975 (Amal, 2003).

Having learnt from the political failure of Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah in the Old Order era, which was opposite to the political interests of the central government. Getting into the New Order era, the national political map underwent fundamental changes. As Soeharto's political vehicle,

GOLKAR tried to cooperate with traditional powers in Indonesia. In that era, since the inauguration of the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29 1976, the Sultanate of Ternate under the leadership of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah took the political decision to support the Soeharto government party (GOLKAR). The support of the Sultanate of Ternate to the politics of GOLKAR was understood as an accommodating strategy, and to maintain it in the authoritarian and centralized power of the New Order government with three main forces, namely: military, bureaucracy, and GOLKAR.

### **B. Sultanate Bureaucracy Regulation**

As explained previously, after RIS was dismissed in 1950, Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah was exiled to Jakarta by the Soekarno Government because he was accused of being a federalist figure and a supporter of RMS (Republic of South Maluku). Meanwhile, in Jakarta, he was positioned as a staff of the Ministry of Home Affairs until he passed away in June 1975. During his exile, the Sultanate of Ternate experienced emptiness in the government. All governmental activities and implementation in the Sultanate of Ternate were carried out by the *Bobato Madopo* Board (Council of Ministers), appointed by Sultan Iskandar Djabir Syah. Such emptiness had an impact on the power of the sultanate's elite to decline, due to the loss of political and bureaucratic control in the territory. Their capacity was only limited to complementing the structure of government, and only taking care of the palace household interests. It was all because the leading authority in the Sultanate of Ternate was in the hands of the sultan.

After the death of Sultan Iskandar Djabir Sjah in June 1975, in accordance with the tradition of the sultanate, every sultan

who had passed away, the sultan's candidate was proposed by the *Bobato Nyagimo se Tufkange* or the eighteen councils (legislative board) to the *Gam Raha* (highest council/People's Consultative Assembly). The two institutions decided to appoint Mudaffar Sjah as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29, 1986, in the coronation ceremony of the sultan called *Jou Khalifah, Jou Kolano*. Since being appointed as the 48<sup>th</sup> sultan of Ternate, Sultan Mudaffar Sjah has been reorganizing and filling the new administrators of the sultanate institutions, consisting of the central government (*bobato madopolo*) and regional government (*Sangaji* and *Salahan*) according to the customs of the sultanate.

In the structure of the Sultanate of Ternate, the sultan is the highest head of government. In carrying out his government, the sultan is assisted by the Council of Ministers or *Bobato Madopolo*. These are the core officials of the political structure in the central government, consisting of *Jogugu* (Prime Minister), *Kapita Lau* (Minister of Defense and Security), *Soa-sio* Law (Minister of Home Affairs), *Sangaji* Law (Minister of Foreign Affairs), *Tulilamo* (Minister of State Secretariat). Therefore, the first step he took was to inaugurate *Kaicil* Afendi as the *Jogugu*, and *Kaicil* Hamid as the *Kapita Lau*. (Shaleh A. Putuhena, 1982).

In the field of government, *Jogugu* and *Kapita Lau* play a strategic role. *Jogugu's* position is the first person under the king. *Jogugu's* relationship with the sultan is likened to a dagger and a sheath. This means that all the actions of the sultan and *Jogugu* must always be the same. In addition to *Jogugu*, *Kapita Lau* is a person close to the king. If he comes in, his seat is not far from the king. As a protector of the king, his position is at the same level. These positions have an important role. Therefore,

Sultan Mudaffar Sjah was looking for the right figures to occupy these positions.

In addition, to inaugurate the main positions in the central government, it is also inaugurating the regional officials consisting of *Sangaji* (Regent), *Kapita* (Head of Security), *Fanyira* (Head of Village), *Kimalaha* (Head of Customary), and *Salahakan* (Messenger of the Sultan), in the regions of North Halmahera, West Halmahera, and Ternate Island. Even some *Sangaji* scattered around North Maluku, which was once the territory of the Sultanate of Ternate, such as *Sangaji Kao*, *Tobelo*, *Galela*, and *Makian*, are revived by presenting them honorary titles. (Tabloid Parada, edition 1, 2002).

To utilize the palace as a centre for the preservation of Ternate culture, the central government confirmed the status of the Ternate Palace as a cultural legacy No. KC-IV/III-3/606/77 in 1977 through the Minister of Education and Culture of the Republic of Indonesia, Daoed Joesoef, which must be preserved as a cultural asset and tourism (memorial museum, Rajiloun, 1982).

Since then, there have been some policies implemented by the palace to socialize or expand knowledge to the public. First: make the palace a centre of knowledge about history, art, education, and so on, so that people are free to visit the *kadaton* (palace) that was not previously open to the public. Second: in order to preserve the culture of Ternate, cooperation is carried out by the Government Tourism Office and the Education Authority. Some of the activities being conducted are: (1) Establishing several traditional villages such as Dufa-dufa, Sangaji, and Tubo; (2) holding events such as dances, regional language contests, drama, regional literature, etc., through celebrations and ceremonies at the palace; (3) fostering regional culture and language

on the Local Content subject. Third: cooperating with universities in cultural development, in this case, making several universities, such as the University of Khairun Ternate and STAIN Ternate, as cultural partners. This step is expected to establish the palace relationship with the academic world (Kutoyo, 1978).

By making the palace a cultural centre, the palace since then has placed its power base on hegemony in the fields of art, religious theology, and culture. Arts, religious rituals, and cultural performances do not stand alone but are the medium to show the power. It is not strange if the palace, then arranges ceremonies, starting from births, marriages, birthdays, and funeral, which are often used to show grandeur to have political weight before the general public. This step made the palace a centre for the preservation and development of Ternate culture. (Abdulrahman, *et al.*, 2002).

Besides, to utilize the palace economically, the elite of the sultanate developed relationships with the government of the North Maluku Regency and the central government. Thus, the palace received regular assistance from the Regional Tourism Office and the Ministry of Tourism. The assistance is used for the management, maintenance, and financing of the palace household, as well as organizing the *legu gam* event (the Sultan's birthday anniversary), every year in April. In 1992, the Sultanate of Ternate received 2 billion IDR from the central government to renovate and restore some parts of the Ternate Palace.

When facing economic pressures, the elite gets income from controlling the lands in the form of *ngase* (tax). In terms of land ownership, the Sultanate of Ternate has three levels of land, namely: sultan's land (*ahakolano*), clan's land (*aha soa*), and

community land (*kaha cacu*). Each has a different position and function. For *Ahakolano* (Sultan's land) is only intended for the Sultan. In addition to permanent land ownership, there is also a temporary Sultan's land rights, namely: *Tolagumi* Rights, *Safa* Rights, *Ruba Bangga* Rights, and *Jurami* Rights. The land is the sultan's right granted to one of the *soa* or clan in the form of a plot of land for the benefit of the clan itself called *kaha soa*. These lands are prohibited from moving to other clans or other individuals. At the same time, *kaha cacu* is land given by the sultan to be managed individually with a profit-sharing system in the form of *ngase* (tax). Until now the sultan had a monopoly over some lands in his domain. These lands are spread in several areas on North Ternate Island and West Halmahera. In addition to this income, there is also another income of the Sultanate of Ternate, which generally comes from taxes (*ngase*) from the territories of authority. From various sources been interviewed, each year before the holy month of Ramadan, the territories, especially in northern Ternate and West Halmahera, are subject to pay tribute (*ngase*) in the form of earth resources such as rice, coconut oil, sago, firewood, wicker baskets, boats, and several unmarried women to work as the palace maids during Ramadan. The same obligation is also imposed on the people of Hiri and North Halmahera in the form of forest product taxes such as resin *ngase*; garden *ngase*, wood *ngase*, boat *ngase*, bamboo *ngase*, deer jerked meat *ngase*, and fish and pearl shells *ngase*. Thus, it can be said that the income of the sultanate in the form of taxes (*ngase*) until now still comes from the areas of his authority, sourced from the forest and marine products. (Hasim, 2003).

Apart from relying on taxes (*ngase*) and the lands that are still owned by the

palace, the elite of the sultanate make changes in work orientation. If during the Soekarno period, they were only absorbed in the government bureaucracy, then during the Soeharto period, besides, some still chose to enter the state bureaucracy sector and become bureaucrats, some of them began to enter the non-bureaucratic sector or enter the business world and become traders. In addition, to reduce dependence on government subsidies, the strategy adopted by the Sultanate of Ternate to meet the economic needs of the palace is to also promote the Sultan's birthday (*legu gam*). Some palace buildings such as *pandopo*, *ngara lama*, are commercialized for meetings, seminars, and art performances.

Likewise, in education, the elite uses an education strategy as a way to survive. Their children are sent to schools outside North Maluku such as in Makassar, Surabaya, and Jakarta. They also do not hesitate to send their children overseas, such as Australia and Singapore. This strategy is done not to isolate themselves from the modern world, as well to provide access for their descendants to get a formal education. Thus, playing with *modern* criteria is a very accurate effort to stay survive.

During the New Order era, the Sultanate of Ternate was revived under the auspices of GOLKAR, politically and culturally. Since being inaugurated as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29 1976, Mudaffar Sjah appeared in political events during the five-year general election as a functionary of the GOLKAR party. The involvement of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah's family was also followed by his brothers such as Ismunandar Syah, Hidayat Syah, and Talabudin Yusuf, who was then heavily involved in the GOLKAR management of the North Maluku Regency. (Tryatmoko, 2005).

With the support of Golkar, this

strategy was used to be more effective in maximizing the interests of the palace, both economically, politically, and culturally. Through this party, they could also organize their political careers into bureaucrats, politicians, and entrepreneurs. By utilizing the GOLKAR network and their capacity as nobles, they easily became local journalists and academics at several universities in North Maluku.

Such a large political position pushed Sultan Mudaffar Sjah to build influence through other cultural arenas, for example, forming a royal security troop called the Young Generation of Sultan Babullah (GEMUSBA) in 1996, which was later referred to as the "Yellow Troops". Besides being intended as a security guard, the Yellow Troops were expected to be able to attract the sympathy of the people of Ternate. Besides that, the Sultanate of Ternate also formed several local media such as The Tabloid Parada, The Media Gamalama Media, and The Foramadiah, which were chaired by Hidayatullah M. Sjah (son of the Sultan of Ternate, Muchtar, *et al.*, 2003).

In addition to functioning as a means of information and education, the establishment of some of these media is as a funnel for the delivery of political aspirations related to several political agendas faced by the Sultanate of Ternate, such as the election of the Mayor of Ternate in 1997, and the election of the Governor of North Maluku 2001. These media are also used for vocalizing political interests in several district head elections in West Halmahera, North Halmahera, and the Sula Islands, where these regions still have a cultural and historical relationship with the Sultanate of Ternate.

During the reign of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah, the position of the palace as a political centre was very prominent. The sultan's

power did not come naturally but was achieved by revitalizing customary institutions and creatively utilizing the inheritance obtained from his predecessors. One of the political policies was to donate the palace's lands to local governments for the construction of public facilities such as Hospitals, Universities, Airports, and so on (Muchdar Abdullah, 2006).

There were some reasons why those lands were donated for the public interests. First, it was hoped that the palace would have access to government bureaucratic policies, and the palace would not be disadvantaged. Second, the palace built a new patron-client relationship. For the culture that is still patrimonialism like Ternate, a sultan who holds ceremonies at the palace, then the regent assists as in the era of Regent Mansur and Abdullah Assagaf. This implies a position as a patron is a guarantee to get loyalty and economic benefits from the clients. This can be seen in the local government, which then assists with the renovation of several palace buildings (Barron, *et al.*, 2012).

Although the political dimension is very prominent, the sultan has a role in maintaining the function of the palace as a cultural centre. All this can be done because the sultan is seen as a role model who controls the symbolic and actual world. This can be seen in the implementation of the ceremonies held by the Ternate Palace, which are increasingly intensified so that the function of the ceremony turns into a symbol to show its greatness and authority.

### **C. The Support of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah for the GOLKAR Party in the New Order 5-year General Election**

In the New Order era, the national political map underwent fundamental changes. GOLKAR, as a Soeharto's political



vehicle, tried to cooperate with traditional powers in Indonesia. It was in that context of changing the political constellation that the Sultanate of Ternate politically decided to support GOLKAR. Since being inaugurated as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29 1976, Mudaffar Sjah took political decisions to support the party of the Soeharto Government (GOLKAR). The support of the Sultanate of Ternate to GOLKAR is understood as an accommodating strategy, and to keep it in the authoritarian and centralized power of the New Order government.

Even before being inaugurated as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate in 1976, Mudaffar Sjah had been a functionary of the GOLKAR Party at the beginning of the Soeharto government. Therefore, he was able to be a member of the DPRD (Regional People’s Representative Council) Level II Region in the first 5-year election in 1971. With this support, it became important to give political legitimacy to the government in carrying out the policies he made. In this case, through the election, the people were given the freedom and opportunity to choose the policies offered by political parties by their political preferences, including choosing people who were deemed worthy of carrying out these policies. (*Tabloid Parada*, edition 3, 2002)

The surveillance strategy used by the elite of the Sultanate of Ternate by

supporting GOLKAR allowed the establishment of a mutualistic relationship. Presence of several members of the aristocrats, who occupied the structures in the palace and had influence in the community, were empowered to support their political party programs, including building access to take strategic positions in the government.

Since the Sultanate of Ternate joined the GOLKAR Party at the beginning of the Soeharto government, since that time GOLKAR had always dominated the votes gained from the 5-year Elections in the New Order era. If in the previous Election (1955), the Sultanate of Ternate relied on the dominance of religious parties such as the MASYUMI (Council of Indonesian Muslim Associations) Party (45%) and PARKINDO or Indonesian Christian Party (22%), since the 1971 Election the Sultanate had to shift towards a single majority of GOLKAR. With the support of the bureaucratic and military networks, GOLKAR won the most votes in the 1971 Election by obtaining 243,492 votes (63%), surpassing the votes of other parties further such as PARKINDO with 98,379 votes (13%), PARMUSI (diffusion from MASYUMI) with 75,893 votes (10%), and PNI (Indonesian National Party) who only managed to get 21,614 votes (7%) (Tri Ratnawati, 2006). As illustrated in the following table:

**Table 1**  
**The Results of the North Maluku Regency General Election in 1971**

No.	Party	Vote	Valid Vote	Invalid Vote	Total Voter
1	Catholic Party	16,367			
2	PSII (Indonesian Islamic Union Party)	15,415			
3	NU (Indonesian traditionalist Sunni Islam movement)	33,653			
4	PARMUSI (Muslim Party of Indonesia)	75,893	510,645	24,987	535,632
5	GOLKAR (Functional Groups Party)	243,492			

6	PARKINDO (Indonesian Christian Party)	98,379			
7	MURBA ('national communist' political party)	2,004			
8	PNI (Indonesian National Party)	21,614			
9	PERTI (Islamic Education Movement)	2,321			
10	IPKI (League of Indonesian Independence Supporters)	1,507			

Source: Directorate of Social and Political Affairs of the Maluku Governor Office of KDH Level I Region of 1971

The Sultanate of Ternate's support to GOLKAR in the period of 1971 to 1997 was transformed into a tremendous force. The victory of GOLKAR in North Maluku in the elections in the Soeharto era was fully supported by the Sultanate of Ternate whose mass bases were almost scattered in most of the North Maluku Regency. With the motto *Jou kasa ngom kage* (where there is a sultan, there is where we are), the sultan utilized the areas in his territory such as Ternate Island, Hiri Island and Halmahera, West and North; utilizing the *Sangaji* (sultan's representative) and *Fanyira* (village head) in their territorial power, they carried out political socialization through informal channels or the bottom line such as informal meetings between traditional leaders and young people (cadres) in villages, and sometimes, was done by door-to-door.

The strong public support for the GOLKAR Party was at least proven from the data of the election results in the New

Order era which showed the tendency of rising the GOLKAR votes in the areas which were the territory of the Sultanate of Ternate. In its development, GOLKAR continued to increase the percentage of its votes, from 63% in the 1971 Election to 78% in the 1977 election. Likewise, subsequent elections rose sharply, starting from the 1982 Election (81%), 1987 Election (89%), Elections 1992 (90%) to the 1997 Elections (95%). The absolute GOLKAR victory in Ternate in the 1997 Election became the main headline, graced on various local newspapers in Ternate, for example, the Ternate Post newspaper in its main news, "The GOLKAR victory is the victory of the Sultanate of Ternate ". Thus, the GOLKAR Party appeared as a single party or single majority in the General Election in North Maluku (Sri Yanuarti, 1996). This is illustrated in the following table.

**Table 2**  
**Voting of the Election Contesting Parties, 1977 to 1997 North Maluku Regency**

No.	Year	Voting of Political Parties			Valid Votes	Invalid Votes	Total Voters
		PPP (United Development Party)	GOLKAR (Functional Groups Party)	PDI (Indonesian Democracy Party)			
1	1977	166,090	436,983	56,039	609,112	33,931	643,043
2	1982	136,766	533,040	41,202	711,067	38,772	749,839

3	1987	109,366	670,850	43,658	822,974	47,070	870,914
4	1992	87,582	759,839	39,628	910,980	41,980	989,982
5	1997	66,751	897,170	28,832	103,661	42,872	114,521

*Source:* Directorate of Social and Political Affairs of the Maluku Governor Office of KDH Level I Region of 1971

The victory of GOLKAR in Ternate was not only being fully supported by the Sultanate of Ternate but was also supported by the bureaucracy. Some bureaucratic organizations were the extensions such as SOKSI (Indonesian Central Self-Employment Organization), MKGR (Mutual Cooperation Family Forum Party), KOSGORO (Mutual Assistance Multipurpose Organization), GAKARI (Indonesian People's Work Movement), MDI (Islamic Da'wah Council), GUPPI (Islamic Education Reform Business Movement), FKPPI (Communication Forum for the Children of the Retired of the Indonesian Armed Forces) and AMPI (Indonesian Youth Reform). Also, the strength of GOLKAR's position was due to the support by government policies on the party system, particularly on Law No. 3/1985 which stipulates the management of political organizations only up to Level II. Especially regarding the relationship between GOLKAR and the military, it cannot be separated indeed. On the one hand, not only because GOLKAR's organizational structure is aligned with military organizations, but GOLKAR's independence will bring new issues for the military because GOLKAR functions as an extension of its social and political functions. (Imawan, 1993).

In addition to getting support from the bureaucracy and the military, it was to unite together the civil servants and their families to support and elect GOLKAR. Through the Minister of Home Affairs regulation No. 12 of 1969 (PERMEN 12),

civil servants had no choice but to support and vote for GOLKAR. This PERMEN 12 was strengthened by Government Regulation No. 6 of 1970 which prohibited all civil servants (including ABRI or Indonesian Armed Forces) from engaging in political party activities. GOLKAR, supported by ABRI and a group of intellectuals, sought to gain trust in Indonesia's development efforts as envisioned by the New Order in 1966. The issue of the campaign was very influential to the victory of GOLKAR because at that time the community was hit by lethargy and displeasure with the behaviour of political parties in the past. This was further strengthened by the number of policies issued by the government for the GOLKAR victory effort. Related to the effort to win GOLKAR, ABRI's role cannot be ruled out because ABRI is one of the forces that support GOLKAR so that GOLKAR nationally won 547 seats which were a combination of GOLKAR and ABRI in the 1971 General Election. During this period the government issued a Development Trilogy program, namely: (1) equitable development and its results which pointed to the creation of social justice for all Indonesian people, (2) highly adequate economic growth, and (3) healthy and dynamic national stability (Dhakidae, 1981).

As a large GOLKAR family, the bureaucracy and the military (at that time, ABRI) had a moral responsibility to win GOLKAR. In return, the bureaucratic elite and the ABRI gained the advantage of controlling the structure and course of

government during the New Order, including in making political and economic policies. As a state official, the duty of the public servant should have been to serve all existing political forces, not to side with GOLKAR. In this period, the Sub-District Heads on Ternate Island had a very strategic position to manage the results of the OPP (General Election Participant Organization) votes. Therefore it could be understood whenever the General Election was about to be held, usually, the sub-district heads got facilities, such as cars, as the capital to succeed the GOLKAR victory program.

The choice of the political elite of the sultanate to support GOLKAR certainly benefits the political position, both in the local and national domains, in addition to occupying legislative, bureaucrats, and so on. Since joining GOLKAR in 1971, the management structure of GOLKAR from DPD (Regional Representative Board) I, II, and PAC (Branch Officers), and GOLKAR's organizational wings such as AMPI and KNPI (Indonesian National Youth Committee) had been dominated by the elite of the Sultanate. By occupying the management at GOLKAR, they could influence policies that intersect with the palace. One of the concessions granted by the Soeharto regime was Central Government Decree No. KC-IV / III-3/606/77 established the Ternate Palace as a cultural and tourism asset (memorial museum) that should have been maintained. Thus, the palace received routine assistance from the central government for operational costs of renovation funds (Salampessy and Husain, 2002).

With the support from the Sultanate of Ternate, the bureaucracy, and the military, GOLKAR easily won at the elections in the New Order era. GOLKAR's victory from 1971 to 1997 in Ternate had led Sultan Mudaffar Sjah to become a

member of the DPRD II from 1971 to 1982, a member of the DPRD I from 1982 to 1987, a member of the MPR-RI (People's Consultative Assembly of the Republic of Indonesia) from 1987 to 1992. Also, this party can deliver a number of sultanate officials to become the legislative members of DPRD II and I, bureaucrats, academics, journalists, and the business world; something that was never done by the elite of the sultanate during the Soekarno government. Thus, it can be concluded that the elite of the Sultanate experienced political empowerment in the New Order era.

Sultan Mudaffar Sjah was a key figure in the victory of GOLKAR at the 1997 General Election in North Maluku by obtaining 85% of the votes. The victory led GOLKAR to control the majority of seats, namely 17 seats out of 25 seats in the DPRD of North Maluku. As a cadre of the GOLKAR Party who had been commendable in raising and winning GOLKAR in North Maluku since the 1971 to 1997 Elections, Sultan Mudaffar Sjah was encouraged for self-nomination for the position of DPD II GOLKAR of North Maluku Regency. At the Regional Conference of the Maluku Regency GOLKAR Party in December 1998, the Sultan nominated himself. It turned out that in the conference, the participants chose another candidate, namely Kahar Limatahu (aristocrat of the Sultanate of Ternate). However, the GEMUSBA (Troops of Sultanate) who were militant and loyal to the sultan had surrounded the building and firmly called for the decision to be changed. With various pressures from the sultanate, finally, the deliberation set Sultan Mudaffar Syah as the chairman of the DPD GOLKAR of North Maluku from 1998 to 2003. This placed Sultan Mudaffar Sjah as the manager of GOLKAR in North Maluku (Abbas,

2012).

By having Sultan Mudaffar Sjah as the head of GOLKAR of North Maluku Regency, was a momentum by the Sultanate of Ternate to revive for their privilege. In this case, the victory inspired Sultan Mudaffar Sjah for wishing a position as the Head of the DPRD. GOLKAR has belonged to Mudaffar when the election of the DPRD of North Maluku was held in May 1999. Sultan Mudaffar Syah was fully supported by all fractions and was elected as the Head of the DPRD of North Maluku Regency from 1999 to 2004.

The election of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah as the chairman of GOLKAR and the DPRD of North Maluku Regency was also the beginning of the rise of the Sultanate of Ternate. In this case, the sultan already had a foothold for self-nominate to be the Governor of North Maluku in 2002. The emergence of Sultan Mudaffar Sjah in the local political stage was interpreted by the emergence of neo-patrimonialism, marked by the rise of the Sultanate of Ternate Sultanate by using traditional power identity as the political vehicle.

The accommodative strategy is not only through party system politics or association with the government party (GOLKAR) but also engaging through efforts to build a network of relatives. This politics of kinship is taken for several reasons. First, changing the political forces, who are influential and potential to become enemies, to become friends or relatives. For example, the palace always appoints every military and police official in Maluku as relatives by awarding titles. Likewise, civil bureaucratic officials such as governours, regents and mayors. Second, through marriages to get the parties who are economically and politically profitable (Henley, *et al.*, 2010).

Other than that, the cultural strategy is also through the expansion of the alliance of palaces throughout the Archipelago. Such a strategy is a way for the Sultanate of Ternate to strengthen the bargaining position of the palace facing the State. One of the agendas owned by the alliance of the palace is the clarity of the former autonomous lands which were taken over by the state during the Soekarno government. Until now, the Sultanate of Ternate has no legal basis in the field of land.

Unlike the Yogyakarta Palace which has legal protection of privileges. Due to the lack of legal protection, some lands claimed by the Sultanate of Ternate was taken over by the State in the 1950s. The Sultanate of Ternate carried out an inventory of the customary lands around Malifut and Kao Districts (North Halmahera Regency) which were the gold mining areas, temporarily explored by PT. Nusa Halmahera Mineral (NHM).

The land was later claimed by the Sultanate of Ternate as the *Aha Kolano* (sultan's land). This is where the beginning of the conflict in North Maluku due to the struggle of economic and political interests between the Sultanate of Ternate and the non-sultanates.

## CONCLUSION

There are three defence strategies used by Sultan Mudaffar Sjah to rebuild his power base during the Soeharto era. First, the strategy to associate with the government party. Learn from the political failure of Sultan Iskandar Djabir Syah previously who did not support the Soekarno government parties. The reality shows that since being appointed as the 48<sup>th</sup> Sultan of Ternate on November 29, 1976, Mudaffar Syah made a political decision to support the Soeharto Government (GOLKAR) party.

The support of the Sultanate of Ternate in the politics of GOLKAR is understood as an accommodative strategy to keep it surviving in authoritarian and centralistic power and to be able to utilize the resources possessed by this great power. The success of this strategy has proven to be able to deliver some sultanate's elite to become the members of legislative, academics, bureaucrats, politicians, journalists, and entrepreneurs; something that was never experienced by the elite of the Sultanate during the Soekarno government.

Second, the cultural arena. The Elite of the Sultanate of Ternate revives court the ceremonies such as *Kololi Kie* (ritual of circling the island), *Fere Kie* (ritual of climbing the mountain), and *Legu Gam* (Sultan's birthday celebration). These palace rites always show grandeur since they are the sources of cultural legitimacy that the palace has magical, sacred, and symbolic authority. In the same period, the sultanate's elite also expanded their kinship network by presenting honorary titles to the officials or former officials, both central and regional. By the use of this kinship politics, all social and political elements formally become the parts of the relatives of the Sultanate of Ternate which, of course, has logical consequences, both economically, politically, and culturally. This step is carried out as a cultural politics by making the palace as a centre for management, preservation, and centre of cultural development of Ternate.

Third, in the economic arena. To survive economically, aside from relying on those lands that are still owned by the palace, the Elite of the Sultanate also make changes in job orientation. During the Soekarno period, they were only absorbed in the government bureaucracy. However, during the Soeharto period, not only some still chose to enter the state bureaucracy

sector and become bureaucrats, but some of them also began to enter the non-bureaucratic sector or even enter the business world and build relationships with external parties, especially the business elite of Chinese, Javanese and Makassar, as well as building relationships with the local government, therefore, the palace receives regular support from the government to cover the household costs and the building maintenance of the palace.

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