

Managing Hope And Fear As A Strategy Of Strengthening Progressive Civil Society: An American Studies Perspective

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Abstract: Managing hope and fear in a cultural perspective can be one of the success keys for a nation or organization on any scale. A country that is unable to manage both will become a failed state, as does an organization or even a person. People who are seized with anxiety and unable to turn it into a source of strength will tend terminate their lives by suicide. The leaders of countries incorporated in a certain region are always faced with various threats, challenges and opportunities. This paper tries to describe a number of phenomena that occur in a number of regions which are considered to develop as hope and fear that is analyzed in the perspective of American Studies. The overall description of this paper leads to the conclusion that the ability of political leaders in an area to manage hope and fear will be able to determine the strength of civil society in the region.

Index Terms: Hope, Fear, American Studies, Culture, Civil Society

1 INTRODUCTION

The issue of how to develop a strategy to strengthen civil society has long been studied by many experts, especially from economic, legal and political aspects. This issue has developed since the introduction of the concept of civil society in the Era of Enlightenment in the eighteenth century which distinguishes it from the concept of the state as a reaction to rationalistic universalism. This reaction raises awareness about the importance of the nation being a safe and pleasant home both ethnographically and sociologically, which produces cultural groups by organizing the traditions, customs and ethos of their own groups. This idea of society has initiated the modern conception of civil society as a unique entity other than the state [1]. When referenced from the Greek era, this initial concept of civil society can be found in the term "koinoniapolitike" by Aristotle. The noun koinonia has been translated by Liddell and Scott [2] as "communion, association, partnership," while the adjective politike is a derivative of the policy.

A "policy" in general is a form of government of the Greek civil republic, or rather means a city as a political community. In Latin translations, politics becomes civilis, an adjective related to the citizens of a city or initially, a resident of a fortress; which gave birth to the word citizen (citizen). In Michael Walzer's definition [3], civil society is a voluntary area of human relations between individuals and states, where people take collective action for normative and substantive purposes, relatively independent of government and markets.

In the perspective of American Studies, the issue of strengthening civil society is directed at the awareness to bring about progressive societies as a future choice. One strategy to build this awareness is to develop a cultural

strategy, which is developing values that can strengthen the progressive society. Regional Studies examines the extent to which an area is strategic and calculated and considered capable of being one of the great powers. Given its strategic position, it is very natural if competition arises from various major countries to control the region. This can be a positive symptom for regional growth, but at the same time can be a threat to political and military stability. In this position, leaders or political elites in an area are often faced with a number of problems both at home and abroad.

This article intends to raise the issue of strengthening civil society from an American Studies perspective, namely how to manage expectations and fears as a strategy to strengthen progressive communities by learning from American experiences. The basic assumption in this paper is that if both of these cultural dimensions can be managed properly, the progressive community will be able to grow and develop stronger.

2 HOPE AND FEAR AS A CULTURAL DIMENSION

Hope as an expectation and a positive desire for something has played an important role in philosophy, theology, religious studies, anthropology and behavioral and other social sciences. The beginning of a scientific study of hope originated in the 1960s and 1970s. Since being introduced into academic research, hope has been conceptualized in many ways and peeled with a number of different theoretical backgrounds: some describe it as a one-dimensional phenomenon, a two-dimensional phenomenon, a construct involving three factors, or as a phenomenon based on four main rules, or five themes, or seven components. There are also those who see it with a thoughtful approach to thinking, positive emotional experience, character strength, or transcendental phenomena [4].

Snyder, Irving, & Anderson [5] define hope as "a positive motivational state based on the work of interactively a sense of success between the agency (energy

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directed at the destination) and the path or path (planning to fulfill the goal)." According to Snyder, *et al.* [6], hope theory can be divided into four categories: (1) valuable purposes (goals) from uncertain things as anchors of hope theory because it provides direction and end points for hopeful thinking, (2) pathway thoughts refers to the route taken to achieve the desired goal and the individual's

perception ability to produce this route, (3) the mind of the agency (agency thoughts) refers to the motivation to take the route to the destination, and (4) barriers that hinders the achievement of our goals and if there is a barrier we can give up or we can use our path of thinking to create a new route. The illustration of the hope theory can be seen in Figure 1.

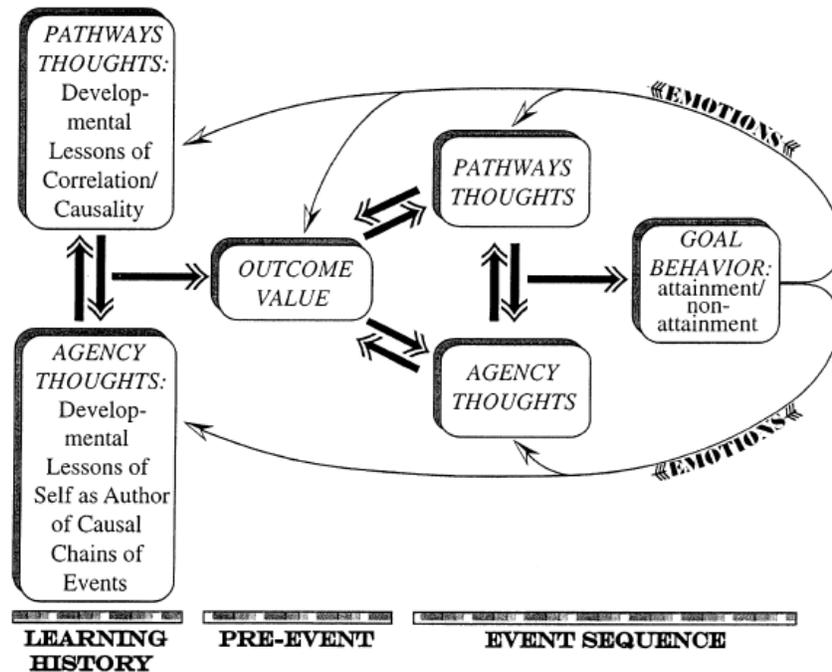


Figure 1. Hope Theory [6]

In brief, hope is defined by Snyder as a thought pattern that is learned, a set of thought and beliefs as well as the perceived ability to produce paths to achieve desired goals and to motivate oneself to use the pathway. Goals are abstract mental targets that guide human behavior. Pathways think of effective abilities that are felt to produce multiple routes to the desired destination, or involve thinking about one's effective ability to pursue different ways of getting goals. Agencies think about the perceived ability to start and maintain movement along the path, and involve thinking related to one's determination to succeed in achieving goals.

According to Rand [7], there are several important characteristics in this conceptualization. First, hope is directed towards the goal. Hopeful thinking focuses on an imaginative target that has several values for goal-setters. Second, hope is future oriented, focus on goals that have not been achieved yet. Third, hope is a general belief relevant in a variety of goals and situations. Fourth, hope theory emphasizes thought processes rather than emotions. Emotions are involved in goal learning, but they function primarily as feedback. Positive emotions show progress; negative emotions indicate failure. Fifth, hope is the focus of self. That is, it focuses on what individuals can do to make achieving goals more likely. Although external

factors are considered, expectations focus on what can be controlled from within.

Meanwhile, the idea of fear and the political issues it generated also gets more attention in contemporary political and social theory. Recent emerging literature tends to focus on the idea of social fear that reflects conditions of uncertainty (and risk) in socio-political conditions in the 21st century [8]. In the work of theorists such as Brown [9], fear manifests itself in social conditions similar to depressed anxiety. This, according to him, is proven in the decreasing certainty and direction coupled with an increase in the speed of change but without significant results. Much of this literature that deeply highlights the effects of globalization, securitization, and the oppressive and unfair war on terror [10]. Even academic research especially in the American Studies perspective is sometimes also involved in contributing to the wider community and political discourse around 'global fear' [11].

In the critical explanation and process commonly cited in the new geopolitics of the literature on fear, it globally can be divided into two senses. First, emotions are positioned as something that is produced and circulated on a global scale, so it does not seem to move from local reality, not rooted in the history or biography of existing places and social relations that occur in the field; and

second, the study of fear tends to be discussed as if it applies to everyone all the time. Global fear is a 'meta-narrative' thing that tends to make fear connected to everyone, but at the same time experts analyze it remotely, lack foundation, only see it as an embodiment of emotion. Other global fear issues (or at least deteriorating), in addition to a number of things considered to be related to terrorism, also include immigration and threats that are considered to cause nation-states; possible deadly diseases that can spread rapidly throughout the world; global financial crisis; and environmental destruction and which could potentially be a natural disaster [11].

3 THE WORLD HOPE INDEX

According to Waslekar [12], the World Hope Index compiled by the Gallup World Poll is "an effort to change the discourse from despair to hope, from happiness about past achievements to hopes of future results, from expectations as individual sentiments become expectations as social products, from static data to an emphasis on change and from survey methods that are generally used to measure expectations for the use of macro data to determine policy priorities in providing hope". This statement is quite interesting because it describes the nature of progressive values from one unfavorable situation to a better direction. This is a true hope, as explained by Boulding [13], "[Hope] rests on an optimistic image of the future which is believed to have a positive probability." By stating that hope is considered to have positive probabilities, Boulding implies that it can be quantified.

According to Waslekar [12], if viewing hope as a social product, it is important to examine factors outside of human development - health, education, and income. Other drivers such as political stability, innovation and resources play a key role in giving hope. This index also illustrates how change in the long run, and short-term actions as influential factors while measuring the expectations and prosperity of a country. In measuring the Hope Index, there are three important parameters that are assessed: change, resources and stability. Unfortunately, Gallup World Poll only notices changes in income aspects, especially in GDP, as an essential factor in influencing prospects of hope and aspiration. For the aspect of resources, there are four things measured: innovation, investment in education, ease of obtaining water and electricity, and savings interest rates; while the stability parameter is seen from how much the migration rate and the level of political stability and conflict.

According to Gallup's International End of Year Survey and Institute of Medina records, nearly 40% of the world's population believes that 2018 will be better than the previous year, which sounds optimistic, although 52% of respondents in 2015 predicted better in 2016. Expectation indexes fell from 37 in 2016, to only 16 in 2017. As many as

23% of respondents expect 2018 to be a worse year, while 32% believe 2018 will be the same as 2017. In assessing expectations, Indonesia is one of the winning countries with a +66 expectation index, Asia Southeast is generally a region filled with expectations (+51). Among optimistic countries we can also find Nigeria (+64), Fiji (+57), Bangladesh and India (both with index 51). Across Europe, the share of optimism is equal to the pessimistic share, which means the index is exactly 0, while the EU index is +5. It is interesting that more hopeful citizens are found in poor countries, where the prospects for progress are greater.

By looking at the results of the Gallup International End of Year Survey and the Institute of Medina poll, it can be concluded that the global community still has confidence in a better future. This polling note has become quite useful for policy makers at both the global and national levels, especially in drawing up basic assumptions in both the financial economy, defence and expansion of investment cooperation.

4 HOPE AND FEAR AS CULTURE IN A REGION

In the perspective of regional political science, the development of hope and fear operates on two scales: first, the scale of society or citizens, and second, on the scale of leaders or political elites (leaders). The relationship between the two can occur in the form of influencing each other, can also be in the opposite position. In the form of mutual relations, the issues raised by political leaders or elites can determine the direction of public discourse that develops in society, whereas public anxiety or aspirations can be captured by political leaders or elites as an issue that is considered crucial. In situations where both are opposite, the public places distrust on statements produced at the elite level, and vice versa.

Things that can develop into expectations in the scale of society or the general public include: 1) decreasing inflation or prices of basic necessities, 2) ease of communication through smartphones, which are used for entertainment, educational and commercial purposes; 3) referring to political figures or conflicting leaders; 4) ease of obtaining water, electricity and fuel; 5) legal certainty. In the scale of leaders, among others: 1) regional cooperation; 2) ease of obtaining soft assistance or foreign investment; 3) ease of entering international trade areas, 4) public support. Fear in the scale of leaders or political elites usually includes: 1) anxiety about the effects of global warming; 2) terrorism; 3) regional competition; 4) food security; 5) availability of alternative energy; 6) abuse of psychotropic drugs (drugs); 7) availability of work due to the development of information technology (industry 4.0); 8) the spread of social conflicts rooted in SARA. For the scale of society, fears develop in: 1) natural disasters, 2) unstable economic and political situations, 3) spread of disease outbreaks; 4) crime; 5) rising prices for basic necessities.

How the current situation in some regions that illustrates the hope and fear is presented below:

Malaysia. The current fear of the Mahathir government is that Malays and Bumiputera will lose competition from Chinese traders and entrepreneurs, so that several development projects involving Chinese investors are reviewed. Speaking at a question and answer session at the 2018 Future of Civil Society and National Congress in Kuala Lumpur, Mahathir said that traders and businessmen from China today are different from Chinese people who have been in Malaysia for generations, who were originally involved in small businesses and started as a laborer. "Today, our Chinese children have achieved success. Some have become millionaires, their business has grown while they also have skyscrapers. If we bring three million more people from China, what will happen to us? They are strong, capable, and knowledgeable in business, they come not as laborers but as successful entrepreneurs. Can we compete with them?" Said Mahathir (ASEAN Headline, September 2, 2018). On the other hand, the return of Dato Mahathir to power has given birth to a new hope among the Malay population and Bumi Putera with the expression "Malaysia May." Tashny Sukumaran (May 13, 2018) writes, "Malaysia is now the best form now - a united people, who have to rise to the occasion, who chose to be manufactured by the previous race and religious politics regime, who came together with one heart, in one voice as a force to check with to send a message to u just government that its time in Putrajaya was up and that the people had decided to steer the country back on its right course."

Thailand. Dr. Narut Wasinpiyamongkhon, a lecturer in the Faculty of Political Sciences at Ubon Ratchathani University, said that since the military coup in 2006, it seems that Thailand has again become a 'bureaucratic government', an academic model that describes a political system governed by state officials rather than elected government. "Thai people enchant ghosts all the time to scare people," Dr. Narut, referring to the culture of fear created by authoritarian leaders in the past by calling communism or Western-influenced students a threat to society. "When people are afraid, they remain silent," Dr. Niran. In a recent poll on participation in a constitutional referendum, 60 percent chose not to express their opinions, which indicated a climate of fear in the community, he said (The Isaan Record, August 1, 2016).

Myanmar. "For five decades, Burma experienced crucifixion on the cross injustice that brought five nails: dictatorship, war, displacement, poverty, and oppression. Today, the new crucifixion threatens the country, with five new nails: land grabbing, corruption, economic injustice, ethnic conflict and displacement and hatred and religious violence," said the Archbishop of Yangon (Myanmar), Charles Bo, June 16, 2014. Again, "... the Muslim community throughout Burma has experienced terrible violence, hit by hate speech reported by extreme Buddhist

nationalists. Thousands of Muslims have been displaced, their homes and shops have been looted and burned. Hundreds of people were killed. "The Archbishop's statement can be a picture of what fears are developing among Myanmar's people. It is clear that the most experienced fear here is the Muslim community in the Rohingya.

Singapore. From the perspective of citizens, fear arose when the Singaporean government silenced political enemies and the media using state courts. "In Singapore, they don't allow protests, they don't allow riots ... You will be arrested. Singaporeans generally behave well. We don't do these things because we know the consequences," they said. While from the government point of view, fear is more about regional competition that occurs between the United States and China. Singapore Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong warned that Southeast Asian countries might be forced to choose between the US and China, due to growing concern about the Cold War style conflict between the world's two largest economies. Lee's statement reflects concerns among small countries that the US-China trade war could disrupt the integration of the electrical energy supply chain throughout Asia. Former US Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson warned about the presence of the "Economic Iron Curtain" which broke the world, if the two countries could not reach an agreement (Jamrisco, 16 November 2018).

The Philippines. The political style of the Philippine President is known as Duterte's, which describes a cowboy style of leadership and is a bit annoying for certain groups, especially religious people. Curato [14] states that this Duterte style belongs to "penal populism"; a style referred to by Pratt [15] as a political style built on collective sentiments of fear and demand for punitive politics, where originally penal populism was used to describe the political rhetoric that penetrated into free speech in society about crime. The opposite of this political style is "penal elitism", where conversations only occur among experts and professionals to build a justice system for crime. The difference with Pratt, Curato does not only see fear and anxiety in Duterte's political style, but also there is an element of "the politics of hope" [14]. The fear clearly demonstrated by Duterte is the influence of narcotics drug abuse, which he resolved in ways of "cowboys." Although this policy reaped a lot of criticism, especially from foreign human rights activists and from leaders of European countries and the United States, Duterte's courage has aroused a new hope among citizens who crave social order.

Indonesia. The issues of hope and fear are also attracting in Indonesia, especially when it goes to presidential election this year. It is interesting to see that the opponent side as lead by Prabowo Subianto tends to use the 'politics of fear', while the incumbent Joko Widodo holds "the politics of hope". What should be noted here that both of them agree to build a good future for the

country. Some of fear issues that spread out by Prabowo are about the economic decline, the threaten to be a failed state, law injustice and lack of welfare. "It is easy to say that Indonesia will last for a thousand years, but can a country that cannot pay hospitals, that cannot guarantee food for its people, that doesn't have a strong military, last for a thousand years?" Prabowo said [16].

5 LEARNING FROM THE SPIRIT OF 'AMERICAN DREAM'

One of the principles of learning is to take advantage or the good side of something or event. In the context of strengthening civil society, how management of hopes and fears become a strength can be learned from the spirit called the 'American dream'. Is the American historian and writer Adams [17] who in Epic of America created and popularized this term "American dream". Both in the scale of citizens and leaders or political elites, the hopes and fears described in the previous section must be managed properly so as to give birth to optimism. "American dream" teaches very well about this. Historically and to this day, America represents a place where individuals not only dream about a better future, but where their dreams can truly come true. America is a place where hope, encouragement and willingness and strength to advance are nurtured by dreams and hard work and struggles that are rewarded for achieving their achievements. "Millions of internal immigrants and migrants have moved to America, and scattered in the country, to fulfill their American dream version. Through objective measures and with their own calculations, many of these immigrants have achieved success," said Hochschild [18] to show how this American dream really lives in the minds of many people in Uncle Sam's country .

Success is the most important keyword of this American dream. There are three ways to measure the success of this American dream, both normatively and behavior consequences: first, success is measured in absolute terms; second, success is measured relatively; and third, success is measured competitively [18]. In the first measurement, success means to achieve the American dream implies reaching some threshold of wellbeing, higher than where one began but not necessarily dazzling. In the second, success is to achieve the American dream consists in becoming better off than some comparison point, whether one's childhood, people in the old country, one's neighbors, a character from a book, another race or gender—anything or anyone that one measures oneself against. In the competitive success, someone achieve victory over someone else. One success implies other's failure [18].

Using the parameters of success from Hochschild [18] as mentioned above, a civil society can manage hope and fear in three forms: first, in an absolute way, second, in a relative mode, and third, in a competitive manner. In the first way, hope and fear are managed as a gateway to a

glorious future. In the second one, hope and fear are managed on a sectoral basis, where each sector has certain targets within a certain period of time. In the last one, hope and fear are directed as an encouragement to achieve superior performance compared to other civil society. These three methods require mindset shift throughout the belief system of a civil society. According to Bold [19], there are seven crucial mindset shifts to achieve success: (1) take time to define your vision and your passion, (2) become clear and very precise about what you want, (3) continually reinforce your motivation, (4) make a plan for achieving your dream and set a start date, (5) work on your beliefs, (6) embrace discipline, and (7) decide each day to take three small steps toward your dream life. If the seven Bold mindset shifts are related to Snyder's hope theory, then it can be read that points 1 and 2 as goals, point 3 as pathway thoughts, points 4 and 5 as agency thoughts and points 6 and 7 as solutions to solving barriers. After a change of mindset, then hope and fear can be processed as dimensions in strengthening civil society.

American dream teaches that because success is so essential to Americans' self-image, and since they expect as well as hope to accomplish, Americans are not courteous about failure. Others' non-success makes them think that the dream may be just that—a dream, to be separated from waking reality [18]. Hence, any political leaders should encourage people to transform their dream into reality as a success based on "hope and fear management". Fear may not be a legitimacy to failure, as failure itself is something that must be away from society. The leaders can use fear as a reason to do something better, or to arrange any attempts to avoid the failure. Many useful programs can be taken down from fear that brings people to develop hope. For example, in order to avoid the bad impact of terrorism, crime or drugs abuse, people can cooperate each other in keeping safe situation with the local police. The use of information technology to direct contact with the police is recommended. Therefore, cooperation or collaboration is another important key to strengthen the civil society. Though American dream is spread out in the basis of individual power and awareness, the networking maintenance is very urgent. Soo and Hartley's [20] called it as "community engagement" to describe a collaboration between a university and a local homeless shelter.

6 CONCLUSION

Although for some authors American dream has been not working for the bad reality in American today, still it can give spirit for any political leaders to strengthen civil society. It has been used as an effective engine to force American people to achieve success in their real life. This can be implemented in managing hope and fear in civil society by encouraging people to transform hope and fear as a gateway to reach goals. Hope theory as proposed by Snyder can be downgraded into some projects based upon

collaboration or community engagement.

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