

Title: Theoretical Framework on Political Science

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Summary: This paper is a theoretical framework for a political situation where the Military and State struggles for control. This discusses the nature of praetorianism or the politicization of the Military. The paper also discusses the level of Professionalism in Huntington's framework such as officer's expertise, corporateness, and social responsibility of the Military structure.

Note: This is the **Theoretical Framework** of the writer's Bachelor thesis entitled "*Tertara Nasional Indonesia: A vehicle for Political Stability or Political Decay*"

The theories or concepts formulated by Samuel Huntington and Takashi Shiraishi would provide the framework for this study.

The military is the coercive arm of the state for defense and internal security. Without the military, the state can hardly survive. Politics dictates that the military, as the instrument of the state, should be subordinate to the government. However, the arm sometimes commands the head, and this has been the case in Indonesia.¹ According to Huntington, the military that becomes the master of state is commonly called praetorian, and different from that which remains under civilian control.

Praetorianism is characterized by the armed forces being politicized just as politics being militarized. "The officer corps is shot through with factionalism. Lawmakers and administrators fall into disarray. Politicians seek power not by rallying popular support but by cultivating party connections. The populace at length withdraws into a sudden apathy, an utter cynicism towards the political process."² The country turns into a praetorian state.

Takashi's point of reference is the concept of professionalism first formulated by Huntington. According to Huntington, modern military officers are supposed to be

¹ Takashi Shiraishi. *Military in Politics* in Scapilino Robert, Seisaburo Sato and Jusuf Wanandi, eds. Asian Political Institutionalization California: University of California, 1986. p.187.

² Samuel Huntington. *Changing Patterns of Military Politics* US: Free Press of Glencoe Inc., 1962. pp. 192-244.

professional managers of force and violence. Huntington's thesis in formulating the concept of professionalism is that maximization of military professionalism neutralizes the military politically and thus minimizes the propensity of the military to intervene directly in politics. For Takashi, the military becomes praetorian because it is not professional. He argued that the fallacy in Huntington's thesis lies in the formulation of the concept of military professionalism. Huntington assumes that (Expertise, Social responsibility and Corporateness) go together. Thus, the military that is irresponsible is by definition not professional even if the level of expertise achieved by the officers is sufficiently high. As a result, Huntington's proposition that maximization of military professionalism minimizes the propensity of the military to intervene directly in politics turns out to be the normative proposition that the military should remain politically neutral and not intervene in politics in order to maintain its professionalism.³

But Takashi is not saying that the concept of professionalism itself is useless. In fact, three dimensions of military professionalism provide a clue to understanding politics in the military and military politics.

The first dimension is the officers' expertise in the management of force and violence. The officer corps is not a simple collection of military professionals but a hierarchically organized professional bureaucracy. If the military bureaucracy is rationally organized, the recruitment, promotion, and placement of officers will be based in accordance to their military expertise. However, this is rarely achieved, the promotion and placement, especially of senior officers, are sensitive matters such that their political

³ Shiraishi, p. 158.

and personal loyalties are taken into account, sometimes at the expense of their military expertise.⁴

Since the recruitment, promotion, and placement are of prime importance to career officers, those who are professionally competent but sidelined by political, personal, and other irrational reasons may develop strong emotional sentiment against the military leadership. Takashi cited the Japanese Army in the 1920s when professionally competent non-Chosu officers like Tojo and Nagata hated the army leadership dominated by the Chosu who blocked junior officers of Non-Chosu origin from entering the army college, the gateway to army leadership.⁵ He further argued that in countries that are communally divided along religious, racial, ethnic, and other lines, the rational achievement criteria becomes problematic, because promotion and placement tend to be read in communal terms. Also, armies that are formed from guerilla forces into modern conventional armies, promotion, etc., tend to be read in political terms.

The second dimension is the military as a corporate body having its own corporate interests. Corporate interests refer to adequate budgetary support, autonomy in managing its own affairs, the preservation of its responsibilities in the face of encroachments from rival interest groups, and the continuity of its own institution.⁶ Thus, when its corporate interests are threatened by outsiders, for instance, by the interference of civilian politicians in the promotion of officers, the military tends to react and intervene in politics to defend further and expand its corporate interest.

The third dimension is the social responsibility of the officer corps. Like any other professionals, the military has its own client. Just as doctors have their patients, the

⁴ Ibid.

⁵ Shiraihi., pp. 158-160.

⁶ Eric Nordlinger. *Soldiers in Politics: Military Coups and Governments*. New Jersey: Prentice hall, 1972.

military's client is the nation it serves. However according to Huntington, the nation is essentially an image and there is no such thing as military national interest. This implies two things. First, officers themselves decide who their client is depending on the officers' ideology as formed by their experiences in training. Second, the choice of client depends upon the legitimacy of civilian political institution.⁷

The legitimacy of civilian political institutions leads to the external factors that condition the political roles of the military. These are the level of legitimacy that civilian political institutions enjoy and the level of mobilization of social forces in the political process. "If the level of civilian political institutions is high relative to the mobilization of social forces, the situation is civic in Huntington's terminology, and the political order is legitimate and stable. Here, the military is less likely to intervene directly in politics unless outsiders infringe on its corporate affairs. But if the level of legitimacy of civilian political institutions is low while the level of mobilization of social forces is high, the political order is essentially unstable, and the situation is praetorian".⁸ In this case the military is forced to decide for their client.

⁷ Huntington, p.212.

⁸ Shiraishi, p.163.