

NATIONALISM & THE QUESTIONS OF POLITICAL IDENTITY: CASE STUDY OF SABAH-KALIMANTAN BORDER COMMUNITY

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ABSTRACT

In today's age of information, the issue of national identity and a nation's security seems to be at stake and frequently challenged in various manners. The process of globalization has generated massive degree of openness that straddles national boundaries and thus takes its toll on national identity and security. Contemporary scholars such as Robertson (1992), Giddens (1990) and Ohmae (1995) reiterate that the phenomenon of globalization has brought up some kind of community with diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. As the world is becoming integrated, nationalism is said to be on the decline. To dwell on this argument, this article seeks to analyse the feeling of nationalism among the community in border areas of Sabah (Malaysia) and Kalimantan Timur (Indonesia). Focusing on the Murut community in a village called Bantul in Nabawan, Sabah, the writer undertakes to assess the community's sense of values, norms and political self-identity with respect to nationalism in Malaysia. In doing so, this study was done by focusing and examining the historical socio-political stage of ethnic identity formation in Sabah through casual effect factors from its early stages until to date. This study concludes that ethnic identity at the border, if not carefully guarded would likely emerge as a political threat to the national stability.

Key words : nationalism, ethnic identity, globalization, border culture and social integration.