

The Hong Kong-China Government's Democratic Instability in terms of the Political Realism Perspective

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Abstract. The political stability and governance of a country are greatly influenced by public support and the commitment of public officials to accommodate the people's voice. The chaos that occurred in mainland China from June 2019 until the end of 2020 became a reflection that the political system of government of 'One Country, Two Systems' was a formidable challenge for the Chinese government after the surrender of Hong Kong by the British on July 1, 1997, where China used the communism system and on the other hand, Hong Kong uses a system of liberalism. Hong Kong's strong understanding of freedom makes this region very sensitive on several issues, one of which is legal issues due to the killing of Hong Kong citizens in the country of Taiwan. This article aims to explain the dualism of leadership used by the Hong Kong-China government, which led to anarchism, political instability of the government, and causing the investment climate in Hong Kong-China to decline sharply. The research method used is a qualitative method, with secondary data types taken from journals, book literature, and official websites used to search for theories and data that are valid. This research shows that political realism in the demonstration case in Hong Kong is proof that the state in this case the central government in Beijing still has the power to always interfere in Hong Kong's domestic affairs.

Keywords: *Democratic Instability, Political Realism, One Country Two Systems*

Abstrak. Stabilitas politik dan pemerintahan sebuah negara sangat dipengaruhi dukungan masyarakat dan komitmen pejabat publik untuk mengakomodir suara rakyat. Kekacauan yang terjadi di daratan China sejak bulan Juni 2019 hingga akhir tahun 2020 menjadi cerminan bahwa sistem politik pemerintahan 'Satu Negara, Dua Sistem' merupakan tantangan berat bagi pemerintah China pasca diteruskannya Hongkong oleh Inggris pada 1 Juli 1997, dimana China menggunakan sistem komunisme, dan di pihak lain Hongkong menggunakan sistem liberalisme. Kuatnya pemahaman Hongkong terhadap kebebasan menyebabkan wilayah ini sangat sensitif dalam beberapa isu, salah satunya isu hukum akibat adanya peristiwa pembunuhan yang dilakukan warga Hongkong di negara Taiwan. Artikel ini bertujuan untuk menjelaskan dualisme kepemimpinan yang digunakan pemerintah Hongkong-China, yang berujung pada peristiwa anarkisme, instabilitas politik pemerintahan, hingga menyebabkan iklim investasi di Hongkong-China merosot tajam. Metode penelitian yang digunakan metode kualitatif, dengan jenis data sekunder diambil dari jurnal, literatur buku, dan website resmi yang digunakan untuk mencari teori dan data yang valid. Penelitian ini menunjukkan bahwa realisme politik dalam kasus demonstrasi di Hongkong menjadi bukti bahwa negara dalam hal ini pemerintah pusat di Beijing tetap memiliki kekuasaan untuk selalu ikut campur tangan terhadap urusan dalam negeri Hongkong

Kata Kunci: *Instabilitas Demokrasi, Realisme Politik, Satu Negara Dua Sistem*

INTRODUCTION

The Hong Kong Demo event was referred to as an anti-extradition bill in response to those supporting the Fugitive Law Abuse and Joint Legal Aid Bill in Criminal Affairs 2019 by the Hong Kong government Carrie Lam. This bill will provide opportunities for law enforcement to detain, and extradite criminal fugitives from Hong Kong to areas controlled by China. The demands expected by the Hong Kong people were the revocation of the bill, the investigation of alleged police brutality and wrongdoing, and the release of the detained demonstrators.

Protests carried out by the Hong Kong people as a reflection do not have leadership independence/leadership from the Hong Kong government in the regulation of domestic government (kompas.com, 2019). The Chinese government considers this to be a crisis that occurred after Hong Kong was sent to China on July 1, 1997. The impact of this demonstration was an anarchism carried out by the police, suicide by Hong Kong citizens in response to frustration with the situation in their region.

The chronology of the demonstration case in Hong Kong begins with a murder case by Hong Kong citizen Chan Tong-Kai of his girlfriend Poon Hiu-Wing while on vacation in Taiwan (CNNIndonesia.com, 2019). Poon never returned to Hong Kong, the 20-year-old woman was found dead in a pink suitcase near

the Zhuwei bus terminal. While Chan managed to return to Hong Kong with innocence. After an investigation by the Hong Kong police, it was discovered that Chan was seen on CCTV footage carrying a pink suitcase out of the hotel where they were staying. After being interrogated the second time, only Chan admitted that he had killed his partner and put it in a pink suitcase.

Even though Chan has admitted his mistakes, Hong Kong police authority cannot proceed due to the incident in Taiwan which does not have an extradition treaty with Hong Kong. Basically, the case of a large demonstration in Hong Kong is a reflection of the rejection of Hong Kong residents by the executive government of Carrie Lam's proposal for an extradition bill that would eliminate Hong Kong's autonomy in running the government.

The murder case committed by Chan only generated a response after a year of arrest, in which in 2019 Carrie Lam issued a statement that the Hong Kong government proposed the creation of an Extradition Bill that allows sending criminals for legal proceedings in other countries, including Taiwan. But the proposal received a negative response, in which a part of the Hong Kong public rejected the legislation for fear that if it was passed then the possibility of the criminals were sent to mainland China for legal proceedings.

The rejection took place successively and sporadically to affect the economic condition of Hong Kong as one of the world's business centers. The chronology of the worst and biggest cases of demonstration and anarchism in Hong Kong actually lasted almost 1 year. In detail, in February the Hong Kong security bureau sent a draft proposal for an extradition bill containing permits criminals arrested in Hong Kong to be extradited to China.

After the draft proposal appeared, refusal and protest actions began, and in March hundreds of people took to the streets to reject the passage of the law, because it would affect Hong Kong's image as a safe area for doing business. In June, 3000 lawyers took to the streets to reject the passage of the bill, and in August fatal demonstrations took place in transportation centers and even paralyzed airport activities for days after the protests (Purbrick, 2019).

Various acts of refusal were carried out by the community to maintain the integrity and credibility of Hong Kong as a special region of China (Special Administrative Area) since it was given by Britain to China. Some of the autonomy granted by the Chinese government to Hong Kong, namely in the economic, legal, educational, socio-cultural fields adjusts to the real conditions of its people. And since the occurrence of large-scale demonstrations in Hong Kong the number of tourists dropped dramatically at the end of 2019 by 40 percent

(liputan6.com, 2020). The demonstration that took place in Hong Kong had caused the first recession since 2009, when the global financial crisis hit (CNBCIndonesia.com, 2019). Based on the above background, this research intends to explain the dualism of leadership that occurs in the Hong Kong-China government that can be analyzed in the perspective of the country's political realism.

The theory used to discuss the Hong Kong case is political realism, which emphasizes the central role of the 'state' that controls the wheels of government and people's lives. The realists always think negatively of the order of international relations, where for the realists every country always has the desire to conquer other countries with the power they have, and this will always trigger conflicts in the international world order (Fernandes, 2017). The state, in the eyes of realists, is considered the actor who most determines the patterns, behavior and political map of international relations. The main unit of analysis is focused on the behavior of the main actors, who are able to provide the most realistic picture in international politics in particular. The main concept is power.

Realists generally see that relations between dominant countries are motivated by political interests. Conflict is a natural thing that happens for realists, in seeing the phenomenon of relations between countries. The assumptions underlying the first realist

thought is the state as the main actor. Until now the realist perspective is still suitable to explain several phenomena related to the presence of the state as a dominant actor. The classic view of Morgenthau also confirms that international relations always talks about power, and every country will always struggle to get that power (Manan, 2015).

The international world is a forum that is able to show how the country has always been the main focus in responding to various international events. The application of foreign policy is actually a strong element of achieving interests, which in the formula of realism is one of its main components. No wonder Machiavelli's work 'The Prince' illustrates how a statesman becomes a regulator for his country in running politics between nations. There is no absolute form of peace. Where relatively still there will be an arms race in the anarchic world system. No country, organization, or international law can guarantee security for every nation state in the world.

The realists say that interests do not wait to be discovered, but construction is needed to build the achievement of those interests through social interaction of countries. Conflict and war will not be avoided in international relations, it does not mean that they will always arise but the phenomenon will continue to exist with different types. Phenomena in the form of conflict and war take different forms, for example ethnic

conflict, economic conflict, political conflict, war against political interests. Realist thinking does not only apply when the conditions of war, but in a state of conflict or in cooperation realism state action applies.

The state has a central role to accommodate the interests of the public and government officials, so that it is formulated for the achievement of national interests through the foreign policy adopted. Peace in the context of realism only applies in a state of balance of power. The nature of cooperative relations can be multilateral, but power remains the dominant variable causing relations between countries or areas.

The realist perspective once again focuses on the issue of national security as the most fundamental issue in relations between countries or areas. The unit of analysis, namely the state, is still relevant to answer various issues related to phenomena involving the state in the international system. So it is not surprising that relations between countries or areas both economic in nature cannot escape from the intervention of the main actors in a realist perspective.

The strength of the realist paradigm lies in the assumptions of the actors that most determine international relations as relations between sovereign states. Interests as the main background that causes a relationship or interaction, whether of a peaceful nature, conflict or war. The pattern of relations tends to change according to the international system

that is formed based on each era, but the actors who play a role in the political arena between nations will always be the same, namely the state. The basic assumption of realists in seeing an anarchist world. The state is almost always analogous to an individual human being who will never be satisfied to always pursue 'power' to achieve personal or group interests.

The desire to rule according to Hans Morgenthau is universal, regardless of whether male or female, as long as there is a way to gain (profits) benefits then all means will be used in order to pursue the ultimate goal of power in the political context, especially international politics. Relations between countries are based on the interests of each of the actors involved, the element of interest is the strongest component in political science.

So that in understanding international politics inhabited by sovereign states can use the concept of "power politics", an arena of competition, conflict, and war between countries where the same basic problems are in defense of national interests and in ensuring the survival of the recurring state alone continues to deal with. In the sense that the fundamental problems that triggered the conflict will likely remain the same and have the potential to reoccur by involving different state actors.

RESEARCH METHODS

The research method used is a qualitative method that describes the dualism of leadership that occurs in the Hong Kong government of China through narration sourced from the activity of extracting documents, using secondary data types, namely data presented in verbal form and not in numbers (Muhadjir, 1996) and obtained from relevant literature such as journals, books, reports, official websites related to research topics. The purpose of this research is to comprehensively explain the role of the main actor 'state' in influencing the socio-political condition of the community by using the perspective of political realism.

DISCUSSION

Historically Hong Kong was originally a British territory that had a political and government system that was far different from the Chinese government. Hong Kong uses the political system of liberal democracy, while China uses the political system of communism, added according to (Wang, 2007) China is the most undemocratic country in the world. The liberal democratic political system strongly adheres to the principle of freedom, both society and the government bureaucracy. For example, Hong Kong is a region known as one of the world's business centers, where this region opens up great opportunities for any kind of cooperation including the economy, as long as the Hong

Kong region benefits from such cooperation. Since it was created, the system is still maintained by Hong Kong.

This causes the condition of society to be accustomed to freedom (freedom), respect for human rights (HAM), transparency, and freedom from fear (freedom from fear). On the one hand China has historically been a state of communism, with incidentally some authoritarian leaders, deeply intervening in the political life of the security of the people and surrounding areas, and does not recognize the principle of democracy when talking about the political issues of government.

Every change of leadership in China is always determined by the political party that becomes the patron, namely the Chinese Communist Party, the extreme is that only people who have worked in that party will have a strong chance to be elected leaders in China. Every political movement, security, economy of China is very much influenced by political parties. Hong Kong is economically rich, even called very capitalist without government interference (idntimes.com, 2019), while China was originally a poor region, and a country that is in a period of economic growth. Politically, economically different conditions cause Hong Kong to feel that its territory cannot be compared to China (merdeka.com, 2019). On July 1, 1997, the United Kingdom agreed to give Hong Kong territory to China on condition that Hong Kong would follow all regulations, policies and rules

of the Chinese government both economic, political, social, cultural, defense and security after 50 years from being handed over to China (Yip, 2015 : 21).

Automatically this causes the Hong Kong people to have special autonomy in managing the domestic life of their people. The emergence of a murder case and led to the proposed extradition bill becomes a concrete example of how the existence of the 'state' which always seeks to exert its influence on other countries/regions. Thomas Hobbes said that the world system is anarchic in which every country has a desire/lust to control and control the others. In the realist viewpoint, the international system is dominated by great powers.

Similar to what happened in China, there is a strong desire from the Beijing government to establish a strong influence in the Hong Kong region, given that the region has enormous economic potential, and if China is able to dominate and control Hong Kong then the Chinese government will get benefits (benefits) that has a profound impact on China's overall political economy. Protests made by the Hong Kong people against Chinese government intervention, especially in political life such as electoral reform (Cheng, 2011: 47), Hong Kong's chief executive election problems are influenced by the Beijing government (Ngok, 2008), and Hong Kong's regional legal issues. Hong Kong

people have always considered themselves to be different from Chinese people.

Hong Kong society for 20 years was given to China has been given special autonomy such as free media, the right to participate in elections and government processes, freedom of criticism of the government, an independent government agency, and the right to protest. When the extradition bill arose which caused controversy throughout Hong Kong, the people of the region assumed that if the bill was successfully passed it would automatically undermine the pure values of Hong Kong people. Even the impression of a 'anti-China' localization spirit implies that future rejection will be confrontational (Wangke, 2019: 9).

Regions that are already economically well established, a culture of respect for high human rights, civil liberties guaranteed by law, and an investment climate that makes Hong Kong one of the world's business centers. The intervention by the Chinese government is proof that the Beijing government is always looking for ways to establish its political influence in the former British colony. Viewed from the perspective of political realism, that an anarchist world system is clearly seen in the largest demonstration case in Hong Kong to reject the passage of an extradition bill for criminals to the mainland region of China.

Hong Kong people refuse, because they know politically the Chinese government is an

undemocratic country, influenced by political leaders from the Chinese Communist Party, and a country that often acts arbitrarily against prisoners of law. In the case of Hong Kong, the condition of the world that is filled with conflict is a natural thing, and no country in various parts of the world has the ability to anticipate or even prevent conflict between the two regions. The Chinese government wants to fully control Hong Kong, with economic motives and great political influence in the East Asian region.

China is an aggressor country and is always looking for ways to control territory outside of its country, and moreover the territory that becomes its authority. The 'state', in this case, China remains the main actor who controls and determines the policy direction of a nation. China is a communist country, a country that knows no democracy where the government is not elected by the people but chosen by high ranking officials of the Chinese Communist Party. Political parties greatly affect the future of China in carrying out the wheels of government including foreign policy. The Hong Kong case is proof that the Chinese government wants to impose values that clash with Hong Kong characteristics, especially in terms of democracy.

Hong Kong people are used to living freely, tolerance, transparency and opening up to any kind of cooperation as long as it provides benefits for their country. The values

of liberalism and communism between Hong Kong and China are very contradictory.

CONCLUSION

The demonstration case in Hong Kong is proof that the existence of the Chinese government is very strong in influencing the domestic conditions of Hong Kong. Anarchic world conditions are the cause of a region at any time want to intervene and even control other regions, including in terms of law and politics. Political realism also explains that a country's national interests are the top priority, for the achievement of the goals desired by the country's leaders and society. The state is present as the main actor, and will always look for opportunities to establish political influence both on the territory within and outside the territory. Hong Kong is proof of the influence of the 'state', especially strong countries like China to control regions that do have strong economic, political potential in the international world.

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