UNRAVELING COMMUNAL CONFLICT IN SOUTH LAMPUNG

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Abstract: This paper will try to dissect the dynamics of communal conflict that happened in South Lampung. By looking at the background which is quite complex, in terms of differences in race, religion and social inequality, then there are some prominent questions to ask. Why religious issue does not occur in the conflict of South Lampung which is involved two religious-ethnicity communities in two different villages? And to answer and parse this problem, this study use the theory of escalation brought by Jean D. Pruitt and Robin, as well as the theory of ethnic conflict proposed by Ashutosh Varshney. The result is the communal violence occurred in South Lampung has local characteristic. However, it does not have a single cause but a slice of interrelated issues. The mainstream analysis putting the religion or the tribe as the root cause of communal violence in South Lampung is not entirely correct. Since in reality, either the factor of ethnic, politics, religion, or economy or even personal grudges has contributed to have the conflict of South get escalated.

Keywords: Konflik; etnik; agama; Lampung Selatan


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INTRODUCTION

Religion in Indonesia has a very significant role, even in conflict and its reconciliation process. It can be seen from the various conflicts that occur, especially in areas that have a high level of heterogeneity. In 1999, conflict in Ambon puts religion as part of the problematic matters and it is often used to trigger a conflict between followers of Islam and Christianity even wider. Conflict in Poso (1999), which should be completed after the Malino Agreement on December 20, 2001 (consensus-Muslims and Christians-to end the conflict) churned back when the bomb exploded at the Traffic Police Station Poso in late October 2012 (Kompas.com, 1 November 2012). The religion influenced several conflicts in Indonesia because it is a sensitive part of identity that trigger conflict easily.

Some arguments about religion and conflict stated that the socio-political conflict escalates because of involving religious sentiments. Mark Jurgenmeyer confirms that religion is a strong factor of conflict which imagine the cosmic war between the believers.¹ In contrast, William Cavanaugh did not believe that religion is the source of conflict. Religion is only the tool and an instrument for an political elites expressing their rebellion.² Both of arguments are used in the way scholars defines whether certain conflict is religious conflict or not.

Both arguments did enough to explain in the case of conflict in South Lampung tragedy at the end of October 2012. Although, clearly there are ethnics and religious differences between the actors. They are Balinese and Lampungnese who engage as the actors of conflict. On Sunday (28/10), the mass of the village of Agom (Lampungnese) attacked the people of village of Balinuraga (Balinese) on Sunday, October 28th 2012. Local residents claim that the conflict is not driven by religious sentiments directly so it cannot be regarded as a religious conflict. Or in other words, religion has not played an important role in the escalation of conflict in Lampung. So, how come religion did not have any particular contribution on conflict where the actors have different religious and ethnic background.

There are some research are conducted about the South Lampung conflict. Anisa Utami has written the process of conflict resolution of tribal conflict³ and Eva Achjani Zulva who asserted that Lampung conflict is the

conflict identity which caused by provocative policy.\(^4\) Other argument comes from Abdan Khubban who revealed that the cause of conflict is not only influenced by unequal social condition, but also the statements or behaviour that could provoke hatred within society.\(^5\) Most this paper will agree with previous argument, but the conflict between Lampung against Bali if it is not about the Baliness with their Hindu faith against the people from Lampung who were mostly Muslim, so why religious background that inherently lay on their ethnicity have no any contribution on conflict. This paper try to figure out that question which have different picture than other religious-ethnic conflicts in Indonesia.

In spite of having been implementing democracy, in fact, Indonesian’s social structure does not support the implementation of democratic system. Democracy substantially is the recognition of diversity, equality, peaceful resolution of conflict and institutionalized. Unfortunately, these indicators are not possessed by the society yet. Democracy is only recognized in a formal and only the expression. Therefore, what happens today, many conflicts sparking violence emblazon Indonesian country. The case of Sampang conflict has not faded yet, but in the same year Indonesia has already been stirred by communal conflict occurred in South Lampung.

As we know, South Lampung is one of the most strategic regions located between gates connecting Sumatra and Java islands, complemented by two sea ports i.e. Bakauheni and Panjang. Besides, South Lampung is a center of agricultural production of corn and bananas in the province of Lampung. The land area used by agricultural activities and plantations in the district reach to tens of thousands hectares. Potential mineral is also found in this regency. Another promise is the potential of tourism and the mega projects of Sunda Strait bridge infrastructure worth 200 billion which will be realized in the coming 2014. Other infrastructure projects are such as toll roads and the construction of a cross-coast Sumatra. Definitely, the economic potential with the high charge makes many people drool. Unfortunately, all of this should be coupled with the news of the bombardment of communal conflict, which in turn lowers the South Lampung’s reputation as a strategic area.

However, in fact, the communal violence and riots are not something new in South Lampung. According to an informan stated that since 1990 there were about five similar cases occurred in South Lampung. And the latest is the


conflict in Bali Nuraga, Patok and Sidoreno villages happened to coincide with *Hari Sumpah Pemuda*. The conflict taken place on last October 28th broke out into riots engulfing dozens of deaths and leaving thousands peoples to be displaced. Unlikethe previous cases, the 28 October cases surfaced and continued to be blow up by the media. Many speculations emerged about the trigger factor of this conflict, such as differences in race, religion and social level. Some of them are, indeed, accepted by the public. Somehow, the speculations generally appeared only as a reaction to the events shown on the surface by the media.

We now need to consider is: why should be South Lampung? As we know, Lampung province sprawls broadly consisting of fourteen regencies. However, why the communal conflict on October 28 bringing into violence occurred in South Lampung? In reality, Balinese people in Lampung province donot only live in South Lampung, but in nearly all counties and cities in the province of Lampung. The ethnic of Bali in Bandar Lampung, for example, live in harmony in a settlement with other ethnic groups, studying at the same school and so forth. The ethnic composition in South Lampung shows that Balinese ethnic are not to be quite in minority, conversely, the ethnic of Lampung are also not to be in majority. Furthermore, in Candipuro village of South Lampung, the ethnic of Bali even can live together in peace with the surrounding communities for years. Therefore, the question why communal violence is occurred in South Lampung cannot be answered just by a description of the social configurations in South Lampung.

Furthermore, to analyse this conflict, let us take look at the history of Lampung. We know that Lampung is the goal area of successful colonization and transmigration. Thus, that we can say that Lampung is a safe land for foreigners that many people say Lampung is the “land of 

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6 Youth Pledge Day
Various races, religions, and backgrounds came to Lampung, with no uteversounding issue and raising serious violence. That is, people in South Lampung had lived for centuries in harmony and coexisted with various forms of difference. While there were any conflicts, the violence had never been this so bad. Since then, the violence appears as an unexpected prediction by both conflict experts, local government, community leaders, traditional leaders, and other community elements. Why now the fatal violence was occurred? What is clear, the previous society, indeed, is in contrast to the contemporary one.

Last but not least, based on those all reasons; we finally consider that this study is crucial to be accomplished. Seeing that there are some factors and triggers of the communal conflict in South Lampung remained unclearly revealed, we are trying to analyze it with an excuse that it can enhance the dynamical conflict analysis in the study of religion.

Referring to the background of the study explained above, the research problems are formulated. This paper will try to find why religious issue does not occur in the conflict of South Lampung which is involved two religious communities in two different villages.

Understanding those questions and trying to answer them will surely help us to map the conflict and observed how the people respond the change of social relationship. In the coming process of writing, the question will be developed into two questions that provide a more analytic framework to guide our research. The structure of every exploded conflict in violence action consists of “three main parts; they are hard cover (ammunition), the trigger and something built-in it”. Based on that structure, we need to arrange the more questions for limiting the research. First of all, what is the group of the contextual factors which facilitates the violence into the communal conflict? This question means to draw the product of social economic and political history during the time of interaction between the actors. Secondly, what roots of problem or the main cause to be the ammunition of exploded violence actions. Thirdly, what is the correlation of factors having been functioned as pivot of conflict? The last one is the trigger. Since, the chronology of conflict will help us to see the development of escalation in social conflict at Lampung Selatan Residence.

The theoretical framework we will use is the ones thought by Pruitt and Robin relating to the escalation of conflict. Besides, we will apply the theory brought by Ashutosh Varshney relating to ethnic of conflict. The

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transformations that occur during escalation according to Pruitt and Rubin\(^8\) there are five types of transformations. They are: 1) Light to heavy. Gentle tactics are supplanted by heavier counterparts. 2) Small to large. Issues proliferate and there is a tendency for parties to become more and more absorbed in the struggle and to commit ever-increasing resources in order to prevail. 3) Specific to general. Specific issues tend to give way to general issues and there is deterioration in the relationship between the parties. 4) Doing well to winning to hurting the other. Interest in doing well is replaced by decidedly competitive, objective and, finally, after continued escalation, by the objective of hurting the other. 5) Few to many. Conflicts that begin with a small number of participants often grow, as collective efforts arise at the prospect of one party’s failure.

While referring to Ashutosh Varhney’s concept, he argues that covering commonalities across the many cases of violence has been the standard research strategy.\(^9\) This strategy will continue to enlighten us, but it can only give us the building blocks of a theory, not a theory of ethnic conflict. The logic underlying this proposition is simple, often misunderstood, and worth restating. Suppose that on the basis of commonalities we find that interethnic economic rivalry; a) polarized party politics, b) and segregated neighborhoods, c) explain ethnic violence (X). Can we, however, be sure that our judgments are right? What if a), b), and c) also exist in peaceful cases (Y)? In that case, either violence is caused by the intensity of a), b), and c) in (X); or, there is an underlying and deeper context that makes a), b), and c) conflictual in one case but not in the other; or, there is yet another factor d), which differentiates peace from violence. It will, however, be a factor that we did not discover precisely because peaceful cases were not studied with the conflictual ones.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Based on the theory of Tamrin Amal Tomagola, there are three elements of the trigger of conflict, 1) unequal distribution of social and economic development, 2) the absence of the state in the management of security, and 3) the external factors. The conflict of Lampung have those triggers which will be revealed through various interview result and stakeholder’s comment on mass media.

First, the unequal distribution of development is the cause of conflict. It is shown based on various speculations of that rise in the media, some experts

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said the problem comes from economic, political, and transmigration problems. Mohtar Mas’ud, researcher of Gajah Mada University found that conflict is caused by the process of ‘state building’ and the accumulation of capital which led to demographic changes. He emphasized that the resettlement should get more attention, “the local government does not have a development scheme that considers the effects of social and economic change”. The Vice Chairman of Commission III, Aziz Shamsuddin, insisted that horizontal conflict in South Lampung is not inter-ethnic conflicts. He suspected there was a hidden agenda of certain parties that become conflict erupts. Related to the issue of religious, MUI rejected that South Lampung conflict is a religious conflict, but the communal village conflict. Chairman of the Indonesian Ulema Council (MUI) South Lampung Hamim Fadhil said “Once again, this is not a religious conflict but the conflict between villages, by the actors are Hindu and Muslim”. However, anthropologists from the Indonesian Institute of Sciences, Fathi Royyani confirmed that when the issue of religion is played, then the issue of ethnic can be easier to make larger conflict. The argument from public figures show similar problem from other places which is related to inequality distribution of livelihoods and social dissatisfaction toward government policies. However, it still not get more detail answer why the conflict in Lampung did not portray religion as important as other conflicts.

Second, the absence of the state where the conflict had been escalated form year to year. Following are some conflicts that occurred in early 2012 at Lampung, some conflicts are closely related to political issues, the elections. On 2012 April 30th, thousands of people rallied to the district office and burned an effigy of Zainal Abidin Pagarlam (ZAP), which stood at the entrance of the city, right on the side of the causeway Sumatra. According Rolip Saptamaji, the context of conflict was the shaping of cultural identity for the purpose of political identity formation. “Communal identity after the new order is always escalating ethnic identity. The identity is effectively able to collect masses of various circles of solidarity can be utilized in political mobilization”. Haris Azhar, coordinator of Komisiuntuk Orang HilangdanKorbanTindakKekerasan/ Kontras also revealed that a tendency of election interest as one of factors of conflict.

10 Tempo.com, November 1st, 2012.
12 Solopos.com, 31th, October 2012.
14 Indoprogress.com, 5 November 2012
but the dominant factor is inequality of welfare and the partial role of the bureaucracy and the law.\textsuperscript{15} The religious sentiments that appeared before and post-conflict will be used for political power sharing.

The third, the external factors is assumed as the other trigger of conflict. The outsiders of conflict from Javanese Lampung, explained that political factor is more important than others. There are about Javanese people who lived at Lampung as migrant resident have never experienced such a large conflict between Lampungnese and them. That’s because Javanese prefer to engage with the local residents and avoid politics issues involve. In addition, He consider the political rivalry between Balinese and Lampungnese. Political issues trigger the conflict, such as the struggle to rule of production and capital sources that eventually led to the socio-economic inequality. Political competition for mobilizing people is hardly using religious symbols and the growing political rumors rarely used religious identity. This assumption is evidenced by the number of political candidates who prefer to embed ethnic titles rather than religious symbols to get support from the community. However, in the 2017 the conflict has raised between Lampungnese and Javanese in Bandar Agung East Lampung. This conflict is caused by the transmigration sentiment issues, ethnic stereotyping, and power struggle between the heads of village.\textsuperscript{16}

The factors of social and economic issues have important part in escalating the conflict, they are 1) transmigration, 2) ritual, 3) social engagement.

First is transmigration problem. Fragile social bond is the significant factor in an environment of conflict that has a high level of heterogeneity, especially the migration areas. Lampung province was originally inhabited by two ethnic groups, namely Pepandun and Saibatin. Since 1905 the Dutch government through massive transmigration policy, they sent Banten, Bugis, Javanese and Balinese occupy this region. The policy continued until 1979 when Lampung no longer become destination of transmigration.

\textsuperscript{15} interview, December 26, 2012

Ashutosh Varshney, developed the theory of social capital is closely related to the conflict and its resolution. The factor of escalation of conflict tension is rumors. Therefore, people needs room to kill rumors. The room is the social networking of civil society, inter-intra communal engagement. Based on his research in India, people who have more intra-communal engagement are more likely to have a potential for violence or conflict more than the people who floated the inter-communal engagement. In the second community, they build relations of mutual interdependence, or called communal peace.

Unfortunately, governments and local communities Lampung lack of attention in the social relationships. Kompas said in its report, that Napal, Balinuraga, and people of Sidoreno, which by local ethnic South Lampung the called them as “pendatang”. The issue of “pendatang” and the “local” has always appear in various kind of quarrels and conflicts between regions. This problem arises because of the fragile social ties. The fragmented environment supports intra-communal engagement by grouping of houses according to ethnicity. The Village of Agom, mostly consist of Lampungnese, while Balinuraga are Balinese. Both tribes are lack of cooperation in the social capital. The fact that the two ethnic groups live separately in shades relatively exclusive (enclaves).

Even more, in the reformation era (after the collapse of New Order at 1998), decentralization/regional autonomy that allows the region has maximum power of resources and finance in the region, the communal identity is often directed at the political interests of local elites. In this point bring to the second social issues on how ethnic identity divides both societies into political quarreled groups. The worst conflict is called by conflict Mesuji, the conflict between the natural forest management PT Silva Inhutani and the people who their land had been evicted by the Management. The conflict resolution is failed because of a fundamental problem in the partnership implementation.17

Second is ritual. Some local sources explained that the trigger of conflict is not due to religious conflict, but the revenge which sustained from previous events and social jealousy between the tribes of Lampung and Bali. The conflict is getting worst when the role of ketua adat mobilize of the two tribes instead try to resolve and to calm down the riots. Even other source believe that conflict is organized and sustained for keeping tribal sentiment. Social gaps trigger the act of pitting against one after another. That because the people are lack of mutual respect. The other village views that in the area of Balinuraga, Patok, Sidomulyo, Gelam were less secured and prone to have violence.

Some accidents are caused by the misunderstanding on how ritual sometimes is viewed as a disturbance. When the Balinese want to attend the ritual on the shore, they should pass the Lampungnese village. Unfortunately, they pass the village on the Friday when most Muslim attend Jum‘ah Prayer. That’s why they hate because they think they disturb each other without any effort to reconcile the problem.

The cooperation between Lampungnese and Javanese are more succeed rather than other process of engagement with local people. Javanese have a flexible character which make easily engage with the locals. In fact, although there are about 70% of the Javanese in Lampung, but only few are interested to join politics. Most Javanese population is farmer, while Lampungnese is labour. “There is a new city, known as Metro City, in 1930 the area was still forested, but the year 1993 has become a metropolis,” said Nasrudin. This city is the result of social engagement between migrant and local resident which interestingly grown faster that Bandar lampung as capital city of Lampung.

Third is social engagement. As mentioned before, the lack of social engagement make communities have various issues that is hard to be clarified. The effort of making‘public sphere’ where both communities can engage should be encouraged.

Researchers Center for Security and Peace Studies (CSPS), GadjahMada University (UGM) in Yogyakarta, Rizal Panggabean, explained that in South Lampung conflicts must be resolved completely down to the root of the problem. That is because conflict will continue to recur in the future. In the process of peace building Scott Appleby explains the role of religious leaders who have great potential in reconciliation. This is also supported by ZulfanTadjoeddin which revealed that Indonesia has a cultural character of self intra community, where people still have reliance policy by the elites.
Therefore, he argued that it is more important to mobilize elites in improving inter-communal engagement. Thus, the bonds between the heterogeneous of the people will be more firmly to suppress conflict.

South Lampung conflict is not a religious conflict, but the accumulation of factors of conflict also caused by religious issues. The object of raging mass is not religious symbols such as churches, mosques or temples, but the homes. Haris Azhar, coordinator Kontrast (interview, December 26, 2012) takes based on historical background of the conflict in Lampung, the trigger is not a religion, but transmigration, economic equality, and everyday behavior. The people habitual action is hopefully become an action to resolve the conflict by building space for affirmation. As theory compiled by Catrien Hertog (pp.81) one of peace building architecture is ‘effective channels of communication’, which requires the media space for killing rumors and an attempt of clarification. After all, according to Haris Azhar, it still cannot be denied that religious differences were affirming the difference and triggering sentiment.

In these conditions, the role of religion for conflict management should be conducted by the elite of society, including religious, traditional and political leaders. This figure hopefully can dominate conflict management, through proximity to certain parties and religious practices that are considered able to reduce conflict. Finally, religion can be used as the bridge of reconciliation. Unfortunately, according to Haris Azhar, the religious approach raises the understanding of fatalist, which is enough to forgive, forget about the bad things that have happened. “That would curb of justice toward the victims, destroying the demands of justice of law enforcement. Supposedly, reconciliation must not be negated substantial things, are running balanced between comprehensive portrait and recognition of crimes.” Therefore, religious reconciliation becomes ineffective if it release legal role within.

Based on those result, there are five indicators of conflict that is found, 1) identity formation, 2) conflict escalation, 3) political polarization, 4) mobilization, 5) establish of an actor. The people who live in South Lampung identify their self not as the people who live in the same land of other, for example as the citizen of Lampung, but rather they prefer to hold their ethnic identity without any positive social engagement to other ethnics. This condition bring to polarization of identity politically. The political elite use the ethnic symbol and attributes to gain the people intention. They spread the idea of ‘pribumi’ and ‘pendatang’ in getting the awareness of social and economic problems. Even more, the anger of people is easily ignited in daily life, mainly in the political times, when their vote is needed.

The mobilization when the conflict come out can not be prevented. When the young teenagers make a contact (mainly negative contact) try to provoke
the quarrel between each other, the brawl that should be avoided is supported by the elders. The government see this problem not as the ethnic conflict, rather try to solve the quarrel as the teenager problem. When the brawl is stop, instead of making bridges, the stakeholders try to separate them by clear distances that should be passed. That’s make them establish the actor who will be blamed as the criminals. The reconciliation between communities sadly will not be part of their agenda on improving the social engagement. Those five of conflict indicators lead to endless conflict. Even now, when the conflict is rarely happen between both communities by limiting social relations. The peace is identified as the absence of the war/conflict which for Galtung is not be ‘positive peace’. For Galtung. The meaning of peace is influenced by the meaning of violence. Peace is not merely the absence of direct violence which called by negative peace, but also the absence of structural violence which identified by positive peace. For positive peace, the conflict of Lampung should be handled structurally and culturally invites the participation of people on building the bridge between them.

Learning from South Lampung conflict, religion cannot be separated from human identity that will always be carried in the human condition, both in conflict and peace. Nevertheless, there are factors that affect the level of the role of religion in the situation. Why religion can be a major trigger a conflict. That’s because using the issue of religious conflict will provide benefits especially in increasing escalation. Such is not the case in South Lampung, the issue of religion does not have a strong enough role to escalate the conflict. Based on previous experience, especially political record, religious issue did not used for mobilizing the masses, but people rather to use the issue of ethnic or social jealousy. Therefore, South Lampung has unique certain model of conflict which religious issues did not play a lot rather than other conflicts in Indonesia.

Both of ethnics have local wisdom which actually can be the motives of reconciliation and improving the quality of inter social engagement. The Lampungnese have the virtue of PiilPesenggiri which means pride. PiilPesenggiri refers the pride of Ulun Lampung that consist of dignity (pesenggiri), hospitality (nemuinyimah), the title of the name (julukadok), the capability to engage (nengahnyappor), mutual cooperation (gotongroyong/sakaisambayan). PiilPesenggiri is a cultural strategy of Ulun Lampung as a

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resistance toward migrants. Unfortunately, some people misunderstanding on how Pill Pesenggiri™ implemented. Some people understand it as the vanity and selfishness.\textsuperscript{22} in other side, Balinese have the virtue of respecting others which called as sagilik-saguluksalungsabayantakaparasarossarpanaya. The point of view that lead to unity in feeling happiness and sadness while respecting each others. It means the willingness to work hand in hand through the life challenges, both in the state of joy and sorrow (one sense, one soul, being in the same fate and holding the same matters). Hopefully, those cultural values can encourage the meaning of togetherness that not only for their inside-community, but also outsiders communities. Learning each other differences will decrease the negative assumption that lead to conflict.

CONCLUSION

The communal violence occurred in South Lampung has local characteristic. However, it does not have a single cause but a slice of interrelated issues. The mainstream analysis putting the religion or the tribe as the root cause of communal violence in South Lampung is not entirely correct. Since in reality, either the factor of ethnic, politics, religion, or economy has contributed to have the conflict of South get escalated.

\textsuperscript{22} SulistyowatiIrianto; RismaMargaretha, “PiilPesenggiri: Modal Budaya dan Strategi Identitas Ulun Lampung”. \textit{JurnalMakara; SosialHumaniora},Vol 15, No.2 (Desember 2011), 140 - 150.
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