

GENDER & PEACEBUILDING:

**AGENCY AND STRATEGY
FROM THE GRASS ROOT**

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**FACULTY OF CULTURAL SCIENCES
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FOREWORD

A significant number of academic articles and books have been published on gender, conflict, and peacebuilding, nationally and internationally, with various issues being examined from a range of perspectives, both theoretical and empirical. Some of these, however, have begun to shine an important light on how gender mechanisms and relations operate within the conceptual frames of conflict and peacebuilding. The new conceptual offerings of these publications have been their greatest advantage, as they have promoted the theoretical analysis of the relationship between different gender orientations, including the relationships between women and men, in times of conflict. These writings have introduced new concepts to gender, conflict, and peace studies, across both general and specific disciplines.

The writings of Enloe (2010; 2004; 2000a), for example, have explored gender-based violence, the intersection between gender and conflict, and the complexity of peacebuilding within the constellation of feminist theories. In international politics, Enloe's

(2000b) views of gender and militarism have also been widely cited in discussions of conflict and peacebuilding.

Another writer whose theories have frequently been referenced by international researchers and academics is Carole Cohn, who has detailed a number of gender issues within the global context of conflict and security (Cohn, 2013; 1987). An increasingly large number of Western theoreticians are offering new perspectives for conceptually and theoretically explaining conflict and peace.

Other articles and books have focused more on how gender, conflict, and peacebuilding can have empirical social, political, and cultural effects. The role of masculinity in conflict has been explored by Kunz, Myrntinen, and Udasmoro (2018) within the context of Aceh. Meanwhile, Nanang (2003), Azca (2006), and Baron, et al. (2012) have examined different conflict situations and the contestations of actors within them. In such studies, researchers often take a theoretical and methodological approach, backed by a history of research into conflict and peacebuilding. At the same time, readers are often academics at the university level.

This book offers something different. With one exception, every chapter was written by an author living in the conflict zone they cover, in either Aceh, Ambon, or East Java. These writers personally experienced the tragedies of conflict and the arduous processes of peacebuilding. They heard, saw, and directly experienced the conflicts at the centre of their writing. Later, they became involved, as local researchers and assistants, in a research project, titled ‘The Gender Dimension of Social Conflict, Armed Violence and Peacebuilding’, which was carried out with a grant from the Swiss National Science Foundation (SNSF). This project involved researchers from Switzerland (Graduate Institute, Geneva), Indonesia (Universitas Gadjah Mada), and Nigeria. Research was conducted in two countries, namely Indonesia and Nigeria. In Indonesia, this research took place in three provinces – Ambon, Aceh, and East Java – between 2014 and 2019, and focused on the gender dimensions of conflict and peacebuilding at the micro level.

The chapters of this book are based on their authors' experiences, not only as individuals who experienced conflict directly, but as local researchers. Beyond their informative nature, these writings form part of the authors' narration of the conflict and peacebuilding processes they witnessed. Moreover, with the benefit of their experiences in international research, they have also attempted to forefront a perspective that, for many, is quite new: a gender perspective.

Almost all of the researchers who contributed to this book used data that they had collected through their research in conjunction with their own experiences and observations during the conflict and peacebuilding processes. The chapters of this book are semi-popular – some elements, including the presentation of data, follow academic standards. However, these chapters are not purely academic. Many also rely on the authors' own individual knowledge and observations of incidents. For this reason, they also contain a minimal number of references.

The Ambon conflict referenced in this book is the horizontal conflict that broke out at the end of the New Order and early years of Reform (1999–2003). Viewed as an ethno-religious conflict, it primarily involved the residents of the Maluku Islands (Azca, 2006). Following the conflict, many aspects of Maluku's economic, political, social, and cultural life were transformed. In the economy, for example, the division of labour between men and women shifted, with women having greater economic access. Socially, there was a shift in settlement patterns, with once heterogeneous villages becoming homogenous. Politically, increased opposition emerged between Muslim and Christian partisans. Ultimately, the peacebuilding process was rapid for such a large horizontal conflict, and relied heavily on local culture.

Meanwhile, the Aceh conflict covered in this book actually comprises the lengthy string of conflicts that have long plagued the province of Aceh in northern Sumatra (Zuhri, 2015; Siapno, 2002). Wars and conflicts occurred internally between the Acehnese during the kingdom eras, and externally between the people

of this province and the Dutch and Portuguese colonial regimes and, later, the Indonesian government (Schulze, 2005). Much of this struggle has been rooted in the Acehnese people's concept of jihad, which means to struggle against the 'kafir'.

The majority of the cases discussed here occurred following the New Order government's declaration of a Military Emergency in Aceh (1989–1999), or during the administration of President Megawati Sukarnoputri (2003–2004) (Aspinall, 2009).

The final topic is the frequent conflict over resources in East Java. Two areas that have received national attention are Banyuwangi and Lumajang. Conflict over resources has become increasingly common since political reform began in Indonesia, as the New Order government's interventionism has given way to increased market freedoms and new economic structures. This situation has created significant opportunities for individuals and corporations alike to become involved in various sectors, including tourism, mining, and agriculture. However, increased contestation over resources has inevitably sown the seeds of conflict (Solichah, 2015). Land and water scarcity, as well as industrial penetration, have frequently resulted in fighting between groups with perhaps equally valid, but competing interests. This is particularly prominent in East Java.

Gender is a perspective that may be used to examine cases of violence, conflict, and peacebuilding, both through research and through writings such as those contained herein. The investigations that form the basis of this book were carried out in two phases. In the first phase, which took place between 2014 and 2016, the research focused on conflict, and as such several of this book's chapters deal with gender issues within the context of conflict. The second phase, carried out from 2015 to 2019, concentrated primarily on peacebuilding. Many chapters of this book thus also examine the connection between gender and peacebuilding.

Most of the authors examine the agency of women during periods of conflict. They emphasise that, although rural communi-

ties traditionally position women as primarily handling domestic affairs, women have nonetheless had the agency to narrate their ideas, conduct negotiations, and implement their own conflict resolution strategies. The transformations of women's roles during times of conflict, in particular, is highlighted. Women are not only shown as having become the backbones of their families, but also as experiencing transformed political, social, and cultural roles.

The first chapter, written by women's rights activist, Dati Fatimah, is titled 'They, the Brave: Narratives of Women's Agency in the Peasant Movement in Wongsorejo, Banyuwangi'. Here, Dati details the concrete roles taken by women in an agrarian conflict in Banyuwangi. She examines the organized agency of female farmers involved in the Organisation of Women Farmers of Wongsorejo, Banyuwangi, highlighting their shift from the private to the public sector by becoming agents of opposition. This shift has resulted in a change in power relations, especially in terms of women's social lives. Using unique strategies that promote ecological sustainability, they are directly involved in judicial and organisational processes, playing key roles in the defence of their rights.

The second chapter of this book, 'Gender and Peacebuilding: a Study of the Iron Sand Conflict in Wotgalih Village, Yosowilangun District, Lumajang Regency, East Java', written by Asnawan, examines the conflict and peacebuilding in Wotgalih. This village, located in Lumajang, East Java, has experienced a lengthy conflict as a result of local, government-approved iron sand mining. Horizontal conflict has occurred between residents who support the mining and those who oppose it. In this chapter, Asnawan explores how women's agency transformed in this village during the conflict. Despite previously being limited primarily to the private sphere, during the conflict women became the backbones of their families, peacebuilders, creators of reconciliatory spaces, active agents of the judicial system, and orators.

The next four chapters deal with their writers' experiences with the conflict and peacebuilding in Ambon. The first, titled 'Moluccan Youths' Imaginings of Peace', was written by Meike H.E. Pi-

eter. Whereas the chapters on East Java focus primarily on women's agency, Pieter examines the involvement of Ambon's youths in peacebuilding. He expounds upon the literary and artistic approaches to peacebuilding used by the young men and women of Ambon. By writing literary (poetic) works, the Ambonese youths have explored their experiences during the conflict and espoused a hope that future conflict can be avoided. These poets include former combatants, who not only witnessed the conflict, but participated actively in the fighting. This chapter also examines the use of street art for the similar promotion of continued peace in Ambon.

'The Markets: Meeting Places for Reconciliation', written by Rizard Jemmy Talakua, explores how women created and used markets to create and maintain peace. These markets, known as *pasar kaget*, were established as emergency measures during the Ambon conflict. Also involved in peacebuilding were the *Papalele* and *Jibu-Jibu*, women who walked through – and sometimes between – villages to sell their wares and therefore financially support their families during the conflict. Besides their financial implications, these markets' greatest impact was in the creation of new spaces wherein women could promote both economic exchange and reconciliation. It is in these spaces that social bonds were restored and maintained.

No less thought-provoking is the subsequent chapter by Fadli Pelu, titled 'The Dynamics of Conflict and Conflict Resolution in Ambon'. Fadli explains in detail the different stages of the Ambon conflict, covering the period from 1999 to 2003. Chronologically, each phase of the conflict is laid out, based on the empirical experiences of the author. Although many of these stories are shared (or known) by the Ambonese people themselves, Fadli presents a detailed account of the triggers and consequences of the conflict. Interestingly, Fadli is able to examine these stages from a gender perspective, highlighting how women had specific experiences that changed as the conflict wore on.

The last chapter on the Ambon conflict, ‘The Role of the Latupati Customary Institution as a Conflict Resolution Mechanism in Maluku’ by Restia Christianty, examines the role of the *Latupati* in times of conflict. In Ambon, *Latupati* are customary legal bodies that enable the meeting and exchange of ideas between different village (*negeri*) governments. Traditionally, they have been used for discussions regarding specific cases or subjects that custom dictates must be resolved jointly by communities. Restia argues that, by enforcing customary law, the *Latupati* attempt to find solutions that accommodate shared interests. These *latupati* institutions have played a significant role in the conflict resolution and peacebuilding processes in Ambon.

The third and final section of this book focuses on the conflict in Aceh, the distinct character of which informed its conflict experiences and peacebuilding processes. These experiences and processes have consequently differed from those found elsewhere, and thus provide us with an opportunity to uncover different perspectives of conflict, and how women impact and are impacted by it. ‘Women Who Persevere in Conflict Zones’, written by Tabrani Yunis, is the first chapter on Aceh, and explores the dark fates of the women of Aceh during the conflict. Unlike in East Java and Ambon, where women are narrated as highly empowered in dealing with conflict, in Aceh, women had to fight much harder because of the extraordinary pressures on them. The vertical character of the conflict, as well as the involvement of the Indonesian military and the militant Free Aceh Movement, further weakened the position of women. Nonetheless, Tabrani notes that women were able to improve their situation by devising their own strategies of dealing with the conflict. Cot Kheng, the village that came to be known as the ‘Hill of Widows’, serves as just one, grim example of the realities of Acehnese women’s lives when the conflict was at its destructive peak, and highlights, above all, their resolve in refusing to capitulate to these realities.

The next chapter, ‘Acehnese Women and Local Politics’ by Raihal Fajri, explores the role of women in post-conflict Acehnese

politics. Women who participated in the conflict as combatants report feeling discriminated against in their political activities. In their view, their contributions during the conflict was of equal importance to those of men. However, after the conflict, it was the male members of the Free Aceh Movement who were prioritized in receiving access to post-conflict compensation and benefits. As Raihal shows, these women have nonetheless forged their own path in Acehese politics, finding space in Aceh's partisan politics.

The final chapter of this book, written by Iqbal Perdana, is titled 'Women in Post-Conflict Village Development'. In this examination of the participation of women in post-conflict village development, Iqbal details how women have attempted to become involved in village development activities. In spite of their efforts, women have continued to be marginalised in development, and their roles have remained minimal, with empowerment activities at the village level often being dominated by men. Although some headway has been made here, this situation has nonetheless endured even as women have consistently shown that, when given the opportunity, they are able to extract greater economic performance than men, along with demonstrating a more effective ability to follow through on development plans and deliver on project goals and milestones.

This book, as a whole, explores the intersections of gender, conflict, and peacebuilding in three different parts of Indonesia that were either once or continue to be afflicted by a struggle unique to their socio-cultural setting. For some readers, a broad view will be found – several of the topics discussed here will be common knowledge to the inhabitants of these areas – but, taken together, these chapters provide a wealth of information and a valuable look into the variety of approaches taken by people with diverse backgrounds to achieve peace, to uphold it, or simply to survive together when it appears to be a distant dream. Each chapter thus serves as a means of empowering people who have long been forgotten in narratives that are dominated by rulers and

elites. The honesty with which the authors approached their work, the reflections on their own lives within the very conflict zones they cover, and the care they have shown for the people whose stories they share is significant, in that it not only gives a voice to the marginalised and forgotten, but represents an opportunity to those who are still plagued by conflict – to perhaps find a way out of a plight that may seem too dire to bear, to understand what may lay ahead, of the effort it will require to reach and then maintain peace, and most importantly, to realise just how much power they have in them to transcend culture, boundary, and gender, to turn the tide toward peace.

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**THEY, THE BRAVE: NARRATIVES OF
WOMEN'S AGENCY IN THE PEASANT
MOVEMENT IN WONGSOREJO,
BANYUWANGI¹**

Dati Fatimah

INTRODUCTION

The involvement of farmers in peasant movements and land conflict is an important element of the developmentalist narrative in Indonesia. In the years of the New Order regime, led by President Suharto (1968–1998), farmers faced extensive political pressure that limited their space and stymied their courage to speak out. Repressive means were successfully used to silence opposition in many cases of land acquisition. Such repression was a powerful tool, as the New Order government cleverly exploit-

¹ An early draft of this chapter was presented at the 8th International Graduate Student and Scholars Conference on Indonesia, held by Universitas Gadjah Mada in October 2016. This article has been revised with the findings of a field study conducted in 2017.

ed anti-communist sentiments – which have pervaded Indonesia since the massacre of 1965 – to demonise (potential) peasant movements. The social and political exclusion of farmers through their labelling as members or supporters of the forbidden Communist Party of Indonesia (Partai Komunis Indonesia, or PKI), together with physical repression, were just some of the dangers faced by all peasant movements. Within this context of political repression, millions of hectares of land were seized from small-scale farmers, planters, and traditional societies. A consequence of this in modern-day Indonesia is that it has led to land disputes throughout the country. The Consortium for Agrarian Reform (Konsorsium Pembaharuan Agraria, or KPA) records that, as of 2016, 2,829,254 hectares of land are under dispute, with 86,745 families involved. The majority of these disputes have been associated with the plantation, property, and infrastructure sectors.

In Wongsorejo, a district of Banyuwangi, Java, land conflict began in 1980, when land-usage rights (*Hak Guna Usaha*, or HGU) over 603 hectares of kapok (*Ceiba pentandra*) plantations were given to PT Wongsorejo. This land had been a major source of income for local residents, who had lived on and managed the area since the 1950s. In 2012, PT Wongsorejo's HGU rights over the land ended. The company received a new permit in 2014, with its land rights converted to building-usage rights (*Hak Guna Bangunan*, or HGB). Additionally, on this HGB land, the Banyuwangi government sought to build the Wongsorejo Industrial Estate, Banyuwangi (IEB), an industrial complex. At first, the Regent of Banyuwangi intended to build this complex on 2,000 hectares of land located far from residential districts. However, over time this plan morphed into using 220 hectares of land belonging to PT Perkebunan Nusantara XII (PTPN XII). Over these 220 hectares of land, conflict broke out between the company and the residents of Bongkoran Village.

The emergence of the peasant movement in Wongsorejo, as with the emergence of numerous peasant movements throughout Indonesia, occurred after the fall of the New Order. The politi-

cal openness that followed the end of the New Order gave fresh wind to many social movements, including peasant movements. Inspired and influenced by the emergence of similar movements elsewhere, several community members became aware of the need – and subsequently developed the willingness – to defend their rights. They were later connected with and reinforced by several civil society organisations, including the Lembaga Bantuan Hukum Surabaya (Surabaya Legal Aid Centre) and the Association of East Javan Farmers (Paguyuban Petani Jawa Timur, or Papanjati). Community organisation began, including through the establishment of the Organisation of Farmers for Wongsorejo, Banyuwangi (Organisasi Petani Wongsorejo Banyuwangi, or OPWB), which initially included as members some 1,000 residents from Bongkoran Village, Wongsorejo. However, internal organisational dynamics and the company's active intimidation efforts led to a drop in membership and support. By early 2017, only 287 peasant families remained actively involved. These families were responsible for 220 hectares of land, with each family working an average of $\frac{3}{4}$ hectare of land.

The processes and narratives behind the peasant movement in Wongsorejo have generally reinforced its plans and activities. The political openness now available offers space for such movements to grow, but farmers – as part of the lowest classes in society – have faced numerous hurdles and dead-ends in their political struggles. In their endeavours to protect their rights, the peasants of Wongsorejo have held numerous demonstrations and made various efforts to influence public policy. However, even as they have attempted to reach out to policymakers, they have been met with fierce pushback. Criminalisation, violence, intimidation, and seemingly endless roadblocks have tainted the peasants' struggles. At the same time, they have been increasingly marginalised by policies that prioritise the interests of capital-holders, who are considered to be more capable of contributing to and stimulating development. This can be seen, for instance, in Banyuwangi Regency's aforementioned decision to allocate 220 hectares of land

in Bongkoran to the construction of an industrial district.

An illustration of the winding road taken and violence faced by OPWB can be drawn from its experiences since its establishment. On 28 September 2014, ten farmers were beaten by a group of men thought to have been hired by the company. On 12 January 2015, another farmer, Busana, and his wife were pistol-whipped by three people suspected to have been Marines. Later that year, three farmers (S, U, and D) were taken into custody by the Indonesian Police and accused of committing violence against and threatening employees of PT Wongsorejo. This arrest was coloured by threats of violence against N's wife; a scythe was held to her neck (Ningtyas, 2015). This act of violence culminated in court proceedings which, on 22 May 2015, found the three farmers guilty and sentenced them to four and a half months' imprisonment. Further violence occurred on 18 January 2016, when PT Wongsorejo began to carry out its plans to construct a post on the disputed land. Resistance led to physical conflict between local women and the company. Two villagers, Saypul Bahri (25) and Mrs Samsul (50), were rendered unconscious and rushed to the hospital (Membunuh Indonesia, 2016).

Numerous efforts have been undertaken, both by OPWB and by organisations supporting it – most significantly in recent years, Kontras Surabaya – to reinforce the organisation and protect the farmers. OPWB, backed by 287 families, submitted a formal protest against the planned development on the disputed land; in March 2015, a letter was sent to the local regent by the National Commission for Human Rights, recommending the cancellation of its development plans (Faktanews, 2015a). Recognising the acts of violence perpetrated by state security forces and by persons hired by the company, the Victim and Witness Protection Agency (Lembaga Perlindungan Saksi dan Korban, or LPSK) protected seventeen local farmers.

In many studies of social movements in Indonesia, gender aspects have often been ignored. This may be because the issue of social exclusion is considered more important than gender is-

sues, which is problematic because – even when discussing social exclusion – consequences and narratives may differ between men and women. Land acquisition, for example, may have different implications for men and women, including in their livelihoods. Likewise, it is necessary to examine how and through whom social movements (such as peasant movements) emerge and grow. Where is the position and narration of women in this struggle, this peasant movement?

This chapter focuses on exposing where and how the positions and narratives of women in peasant movements form. It also seeks to explore how women and gendered agency emerges within social movements. This requires an analysis of how, specifically, women's agency has influenced peasant movements and, conversely, how peasant movements have influenced the gendered relations of power and their dynamics.

In the study that served as the basis of this chapter, gender analysis is used to examine a social movement in more detail than simply identifying patterns in women's participation, along with how gender, as a social system, operates within specific social, political, economic, and cultural contexts. This study also illustrates how gender intersects with other social systems that influence disparity, including race, ethnicity, and class, in such movements. The opportunities provided to men and women to participate in political movements are influenced by their positions within broader social and political structures; as such, gender analysis must appreciate differences in mobilisation patterns, structures, and communication networks (Kuumba, 2002).

This chapter draws primarily from data and information collected through two field visits to Banyuwangi. During the first visit, conducted in late October 2015, the author gained an understanding of the context of the peasant movement, including its narrative and gendered agency. These experiences were enriched through observations of the conditions in the field, including the tensions that were evident between the farmers and the company. The second visit took place in January 2017. In addition to the collection

of updated information on the case and the peasant movement, this visit also focused on determining the extent to which women had been involved in the conflict, including formally within the Organisation of Women Farmers of Wongsorejo, Banyuwangi (Organisasi Petani Perempuan Wongsorejo Banyuwangi, or OP2-WB) and informally through the dynamics, stories, and views of the farmers of Bongkoran. Another goal of this second visit was to obtain further data from the village government and from district-level female figures, as well as to consider the influence of this land dispute on the operations of the company and on the nearby Alasbuluh Village. Data were collected through focus group discussions in these two villages, interviews with key community figures, and observations conducted while living with local residents.

WOMEN AND GENDER NARRATIVES IN PEASANT MOVEMENTS

As with most social movements, the narratives that most commonly emerge in the public's eye regarding the Wongsorejo peasant movement focus on the strong leadership roles played by men. This can be seen in the structure of the organisation and its leadership, as well as the selection of issues and development of strategies. Within the organisational structure of OPWP, for instance, all members are men; representation is determined per housing block, with representatives also being men (as the heads of their respective households). Likewise, meetings and strategic discussions are automatically subject to male authority, and can last until late at night.

However, in practice, the roles and contributions of women are an integral part of the OPWB movement and its activities. It is the women who seek manoeuvring space and who subtly ensure the movement's sustainability. Several examples of women's flexibility and significant contributions to the movement include the following.

First, women are the backbone of the OPWB movement's mass mobilisation activities. In various crisis situations, mass mobilisa-

tion has been completed most quickly and effectively when done by women. This was observed directly by the author one evening, towards the end of October 2015, when a small crisis broke out after PT Wongsorejo parked one of its trucks on the disputed land. Within minutes, news of this had spread and numerous women had gathered in front of the security post at the OPWB secretariat. The following day, at 7 a.m., dozens of women garbed in *caping* (conical bamboo hats) were ready on-site, awaiting command. Several had come from the village of Palpitu, located 40 minutes by foot from Bongkoran. These women were not simply physically present: they brought their courage with them when they went face-to-face with security. Several women had also brought with them plastic bottles of pepper or sand, hiding these bottles in their shirts in case they needed to be used for self-defence if this tense situation developed into physical conflict. For an entire day, the women abandoned their households, kitchens, and farming activities to secure the disputed land. It was observed that the number of women was significantly greater than the number of men. Several male farmers said that the women of Wongsorejo are highly militant in their demonstrations, both in their respective villages and at the government offices they visit.

Second, OPWB's resistance strategies have been influenced considerably by its members' everyday struggles, in which women are the main actors. One example is Nur (pseudonym), who works every day as a farmer and a merchant. She tells how, when the kapok trees were first planted in Bongkoran, she and another village woman snuck into the plantation and poured pesticide on the seedlings to kill them. Once the plants were sufficiently tall, she would climb over the fence and pour her petrol mixture. This was done stealthily, at night, and even Nur's husband did not know. As a result of these actions, dozens of kapok trees were killed and had to be replaced by the company. Their skill in first choosing the time, tools, and materials for, and then carrying out, this sabotage indicates both the courage and the intelligence of these women in their day-to-day acts of opposition. Aside from this, women – as

with men – have also played an important role in monitoring the situation, even spying on activities and movements they consider dangerous. They do such monitoring furtively, using opportunities such as when they collect grass and when they cross the company's land while going to or returning from the market. They believe themselves to not draw as much suspicion as the men, and thus have exploited their situation to more efficiently gather information.

Third, women show courage when taking risks to ensure the safety of men, their families, and the community. These courageous acts have included, for example, efforts to ensure the safety of husbands or other family members who have been threatened by security personnel or by company-hired men. In such situations, the gender constructs in effect mean that men are targeted for 'securing', because detaining men is seen as conducive to hindering or even stopping the peasant movement. However, in times of crisis, when husbands and other family members have been targeted by security forces, women transform into the protectors of men. This courage and willingness to face risk shows women's capacity as agents. Such protective acts were undertaken by, for example, Murni and Siti (pseudonyms). Similarly, Ning (pseudonym) saw her husband become a migrant worker in Kalimantan in order to save himself after being targeted by the company, as well as its spies in Wongsorejo – his fellow villagers. After ensuring her husband was safe, Ning took over his role as family head, dealing with various acts of intimidation and espionage. At the same time, while her husband had yet to find gainful employment in exile, she became her family's primary breadwinner. Of course, protecting (male) family members is not a risk-free endeavour, and thus these protective activities show women's capacity and courage.

Fourth, women have even been willing to guide the legal process in the courts. Challenging the view that women are weak and lack the courage to deal with the legal system, Mbok Sul (pseudonym) has been a key material witness in the residents' court case

against the security forces who assaulted the farmers. More than 60 years of age, she works primarily as a farmer, but has been undeterred in her actions, one example of which is testifying in court. Despite having no formal education, she is a vocal woman, drawing her courage from her understanding that the farmers are fighting for their rights and the truth.

Fifth, at the organisational level, the pressure and influence of women help explain the establishment of OP2WB, the women's branch of OPWB, which has enabled female farmers to become more involved in the movement since its establishment in mid-2015. Initially, OP2WB was understood as the women's wing of OPWB – a channel for involving women in the peasant movement. It can be seen as a step forward in the organisation's efforts to accommodate all residents, as well as recognition of the contributions, roles, and strengths of women. However, it should also be taken cautiously; is this not a limitation of women's freedom of movement? This concern is not groundless, as OP2WB's mandate has been limited to traditionally women's endeavours, such as healthcare and clean water, whereas the core organisation remains a space for and under the authority of men. This concern should be seen within the context of changes in the dynamics of OPWB and OP2WB. When the author conducted her first field visit in Wongsorejo, women welcomed OP2WB warmly. However, they recognised that its leaders had much to learn about organisational management, and that OP2WB had yet to conduct many activities. However, during the second field visit, OP2WB was seen as playing a key role, a backbone that supported the OPWB when the latter's (male) members lacked the drive for its activities. Some of the women involved in OP2WB showed an increased analytical capacity, as well as an ability to articulate their ideas and interests. They had also become involved in important organisational decisions, both in OP2WB and in OPWB, and established networks with peasant movements elsewhere, including the anti-mining movement in Kendheng, Rembang, Central Java, and the anti-mining and anti-airport movement in Yogyakarta, Java. Men's

reception of this development varied. OPWB's administration welcomed it, as the women's passion and involvement had proved to be a significant boon when men had since lost their passion for such activities. Some male farmers, however, were guarded, asking why women had become forefronted in the peasant movement's activities.

THE DYNAMICS OF AGENCY AND WOMEN'S MOVEMENTS

During the author's second field visit, in January 2017, there were indications that women had taken an increasingly important political role in the peasant movement. Developments included, for example, the monthly *istighasah* (mass prayer) activities, the payment of monthly membership fees (albeit irregular), and delegates having been sent to participate in other communities' capacity-building exercises. In the previous year, the Foundation for Human Protection (Yayasan Perlindungan Insani) provided significant support in the community's efforts to build its capacity and protect its people. Significantly, those involved were mostly from the women's wing of the movement; the male main organisation, meanwhile, had lain almost dormant.

What, then, were the benefits of organising for women? In a focus group discussion at Omah Tani Bongkoran, the women stated that their organisation had prepared them with strategies and tactics for defending their land rights. This differed from their previous experiences, which had been driven by emotion rather than strategy. Organising also gave them courage, both by giving the women individual experiences and by enabling them to share their experiences with their fellow members. During the second field visit, Lies – the coordinator of OP2WB – also noticed a change in her husband's views of her activities. His initial reticence was assuaged when other organisation members told him that the coordinator would not bear all burdens on her own. This development is interesting, as it illustrates how men's support for women's leadership had changed at the family level.

However, the women also mentioned that they lacked cohesiveness, as indicated by one woman's resignation after she had received a warning from the coordinator in front of other members. The coordinator's criticism was well-intended – she suggested that using violence (as some members had done) would not provide a solution, but rather only lead to legal trouble. Nonetheless, doing this in front of her peers was seen as inappropriate and even counterproductive, as it ultimately offended and shamed the reprimanded individual. To deal with such problems, the organisation must continuously improve its internal communications and resource management.

Also interesting to note is the critical commentary of the men: why do women now appear to be the organisation's golden children? This may indicate resistance to the shift in gender roles, as well as concern regarding women's leadership practices. Regarding such insinuations, Lies said that their concerns were unfounded, as no matter what, OP2WB was part of and fought towards the same goals as OPWB. However, she recognised that such jealousy was necessary as it could invigorate the movement.

Interviews with people outside of Bongkoran produced several further notes on the involvement and leadership of women, both in this specific movement and in peasant movements in general. It was observed that the movement tended to operate on its own, and thus was not seen as representing public issues. In both Wongsorejo and Alasbuluh, the informants interviewed showed little support for the issues and movement in Bongkoran. One woman, an activist with an influential religious organisation in Wongsorejo, stated that she knew of the circumstances in Bongkoran, but rarely communicated with the women there. She also suggested that a lack of education had created the conflict in Bongkoran. Resistance to the movement was also evident, as seen in an interview with the village chief of Wongsorejo. He stated that he had difficulty communicating with the people of Bongkoran, and had been manipulated by the peasant movement into providing written support for their demands.

The limited support for this movement must be noted because residents outside Bongkoran, both in Wongsorejo and Alasbuluh, are at risk of similar problems and could potentially be impacted by changes in the environment caused by the company's activities. In 2018, there was a severe flood in the lower part of Alasbuluh, which was seen as resulting from the sand mining carried out by PT Wongsorejo. This deluge swept away several heads of cattle (as well as one house), flooded dozens of homes, and destroyed agricultural land. The residents of Alasbuluh initiated a large demonstration, demanding the closure of all company operations, and the village government established communications with the company. Although in this case the company did stop its mining activities, the Alasbuluh village government has continued to face pressure from residents, even as mining permits are issued by a higher body and despite the administration's lack of knowledge about the process.

Furthermore, residents of these two villages are presently dealing with the same issue: the planned development of the industrial complex, including on the disputed land in Bongkoran. During a focus group discussion in Alasbuluh, for example, some participants openly voiced their opposition to the planned development, while others saw the industrial complex as potentially creating jobs for local residents. However, when these findings were discussed with OPWB activists, they indicated that they had not known that an influential group shared their attitude towards the development of the industrial complex. This suggests that strategising and hard work are needed to establish alliances with various actors, through which they can promote a range of shared interests and thereby improve the potential for successful advocacy.

TRACKING WOMEN'S AGENCY IN THE WONG-SOREJO PEASANT MOVEMENT

Peasant movements, as part of the politics of production, are strongly correlated with gender relations in the domestic sphere (Hart, 1991). Gender is not only constructed, but also

contested. Several important questions can be identified. How, at the individual level, do women feel the need to voice their interest in and take concrete actions towards addressing land access and ownership issues? At the family or household level, what are the views and practices used in determining who leads a family, becomes its breadwinner, and protects the family when during times of crisis? Likewise, at the community level, who takes what roles, who makes what decisions, and who sets priorities? Based on the discussion above, one may observe that the politics of production are informed by and inform gender relations, including at the domestic level.

The emergence of women's agency in peasant movements, as discussed above, illustrates the dynamics, and reveals the agency, of women. The above description of the mechanisms of gender-based agency also shows the importance of informal networks that can quickly become important foundations for resistance, along with connecting women from all walks of life. Women work through non-formal channels, including household evening gatherings and discussions in their gardens, and this gives them significant capacity to communicate with and mobilise others during crises. This supports the conclusions reached by Purkayastha and Subramaniam (2004), who see women's agency in third-world countries as being less visible, less prominent, more fragmented, and more distant from the universal approaches (i.e. those established upon the biases of developed nations such as those of North America and Europe, and which dominate various studies of women's agency). When we only consider the formal dimensions of social movements, we will likely fail to understand women's agency within them. It is necessary to consider the subtle contestations and negotiations that occur every day in informal interactions at every level.

Furthermore, the examples and illustrations discussed here cast light on how women influence broader and more sustainable social changes. The transformative agency approach (Kabeer, 2005), rather than looking only at inequality, also attempts to ini-

tiate long-term processes that can transform the power relations within the patriarchal social structure. When women take roles and positions that are more commonly held by men – for instance, as leaders and as heads of families – are they recognised and given greater and more open space for influencing others? Although indications are still early, it appears that conflict and discord offer women the opportunity to escape the rigid limitations of their roles and give them space to have greater influence. Formally, men are (still) the heads of their households, but women can and have been shown to be able to take over such leadership roles. Similarly, men are often the formal leaders of peasant movements, but day-to-day resistance is led by the women at the forefront of their communities' movements, something that may be transformed into formal leadership through the establishment of women's wings. Women's experiences as the protectors of their husbands, brothers, and sons, shows a shift in gendered expectations, and women have been recognised by their communities for ensuring the safety of such men. This shift has been received well, at least in times of emergency, but we can still see it as a test and opportunity for women to prove their capacity as change-makers.

Kabeer (1999) notes that capacity as an agent enables one to present 'the power within', to show one's capacity to influence decision-making processes, conduct negotiations, manipulate others, and even commit acts of subversion and resistance. This capacity may refer to something tangible, but may also refer to something intangible, such as the cognitive ability to analyse and reflect upon issues. This capacity may be individual, or it may be collective.

In order to strengthen peasant movements and women's agency, and thereby promote lasting social change, several challenges need to be overcome. First is the challenge of establishing and mobilising the support of women's networks and policymakers at the local level. This requires connecting specific issues through broader social issues, such as women's empowerment, to ensure there are more opportunities to establish networks. Second, there is a

need to establish connections with broader social movements, so as to enable the creation of joint action plans with a larger support base. Although OPWB and OP2WB have, since their founding, sought to establish links with other social movements in East Java, support has generally remained limited to solidarity. Focusing on the planned industrial development and threat of environmental degradation may enable them to receive broader support than the current focus on their land issues. Third, the female farmers of Wongsorejo should re-examine the influence and negotiation of fixed social-cultural constructs and how these limit the autonomy and space of women within the movement. Phenomena such as child marriage, unregistered marriages, and polygamy have not received significant attention within the movement, despite their significant effects on women. Fourth, there is a need to establish healthier processes for communicating and negotiating with men, in order to minimise men's resistance to women's involvement in and contribution to the peasant movement.

CONCLUSION

In future research, the transformative processes behind the emergence of women's agency should serve as a point of reference and important note. There is no single, magic formula that is equally effective in all social contexts. As such, processes for researching the agendas of renewal and empowerment need to be designed and implemented as part of a project to realise a gender-responsive narrative of agency. The identification of social structures, both empowering and disempowering, must be undertaken by all peasant organisations and communities, as it is through such identification that the keys of social reform can be implemented effectively and produce real change.

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**GENDER AND PEACEBUILDING: A STUDY OF
THE IRON SAND CONFLICT IN WOTGALIH
VILLAGE, YOSOWILANGUN DISTRICT,
LUMAJANG REGENCY, EAST JAVA**

Asnawan

INTRODUCTION

‘Conflict’ is a word that brings to mind fighting, disagreement, and unrest between two or more people or two or more groups. When different perspectives, paradigms, and behaviours cannot be bridged by negotiations, conflict may occur. Some scholars have indicated that conflict occurs when two or more parties struggle to achieve specific statuses, powers, and resources, and subsequently attempt to nullify their opponents. Conflict may also emerge in the struggle of different parties to gain control of resources, positions, or powers, who, in doing so, negate each others’ experiences (Coser, 1965). The desire to erase one’s rivals, or all who could potentially gain access to resources or hinder one’s

own access, is often a driver of conflict. The roots of conflict lie in the thoughts and desires to erase or otherwise hamper one's opponents and thereby realise one's own goals. Socio-political experiences in society may lead to conflict as frictions emerge between different interests; such a situation is often unavoidable. In social life, where a range of interests are found, conflict is common. What must be avoided in conflict is violence, both physical and non-physical, as well as the destructive potential of such violence. Conflict is a problem when it results in violence, as this may lead to death and destruction.

The conflict dimension of natural resource management and exploitation, including in mining and the repurposing of land, has a lengthy history in Indonesian development. Efforts to promote economic growth, key to the developmentalist mantra of the Suharto government (1968–1998), were made by exploiting natural resources (including through mining) to the greatest extent and at the greatest haste possible, in the hope that said resource exploitation would promote growth. It is precisely this point that often led to friction, as the interests of capital accumulation were frequently prioritised over local residents' interests in accessing resources to ensure they maintained a decent quality of life. Many mining permits were issued on lands that had provided for the livelihoods of generations of local people, including forests, farmland, rivers, and springs.

The decentralisation of the government since the fall of the Suharto regime, with local governments having the authority to issue permits in their own territories, has only offered more fertile ground for this process. Thousands of permits have been easily obtained from local government offices, including those in Lumajang Regency. The State – in this case, the regency government – has implemented hegemonic politics over its citizens through social actors that have codified a masculine perspective by passing regulations detrimental to the natural environment. This exploitive ecological perspective is opposed to the feminist one, which sees nature as part of humanity and as needing protection. In re-

cent years, the conflict over iron sand mining in Lumajang has increased in intensity and ferocity, owing to friction between the interests of those who support it and those who oppose it. There has been significant contestation between local community members, both male and female, in the promotion and rejection of the mining. These men and women, whether proponents or opponents, have their own ideas. It cannot be said that all men or all women share the same view. However, there are similar tendencies in how men and women have viewed this iron sand mining. They have attempted to manage the conflict, and to promote peacebuilding, in their own ways. To examine the gender dimensions of these men and women's agency, across both the proponents and opponents of the mining, several points need consideration. First, how have women and environmental groups promoted conservation efforts? Second, what approaches have they used to address natural resource issues? And third, how have women been involved in the escalation and de-escalation of the conflict?

GENDER PERSPECTIVES IN PEACEBUILDING

The term *peacebuilding* first gained currency in the 1970s. According to Johan Galtung, peacebuilding is a tool used to promote sustainable peace by focusing on the roots of conflict and by involving local capacities in areas of conflict (United Nations, 2017). Meanwhile, *conflict resolution* refers to the process of creating sustainable peace and preventing future conflict through reconciliation, institutionalisation, and political and economic transformation (Hopkins, 2017). Peacebuilding focuses on all levels of society, and involves a range of actors – determined by the conditions within the involved social groups – to promote total integration (United Nations Research Institute for Social Development, 2005). The actors commonly involved in the peacebuilding process include:

- a). **International organisations.** International organisations can submit requests to the government to ensure that local and government interests converge, thereby ensuring that the ca-

- capacity to transform existing structures is available.
- b). **Volunteer institutions.** Volunteer institutions may provide the funding necessary for peacebuilding projects. Where international organisations function as donors, they can also function as the implementers of peacebuilding strategies.
 - c). **Non-governmental organisations (NGOs).** In many cases, NGOs have been involved in small-scale projects to reinforce the basis of states affected by conflict.
 - d). **Governments.** Governments may function simultaneously as the subjects and objects of peacebuilding.
 - e). **Specialists.** Peace specialists are those with the expertise necessary to function as mediators, and may include persons from such fields as law, economics, and education.
 - f). **Religious leaders.** Religious leaders play an important role in restoring morals and ethics after conflict. In many cases, religious leaders as subjects help pacify their communities.
 - g). **Academics.** Academics, in many cases of peacebuilding, have given recommendations based on their research and their empirical experiences in the field. They have also provided input based on relevant theories.

Gender equality may be achieved where peacebuilding and reconciliation apply a gender perspective. According to Domingo and Holmes, to include a gender perspective in peacebuilding efforts, two dimensions are necessary. Firstly, during the peacebuilding process, actors in the field must understand that women and men have different experiences when dealing with conflict. In times of conflict, power relations frequently position women as objects – rather than subjects – and consequently, in such situations, women’s rights must be protected. And secondly, actors in the field must recognise the key role of women in peacebuilding and conflict resolution, and facilitate this role appropriately (Pilar et al., 2013).

GENDER MOVEMENTS AND PEACEBUILDING

Ever since nationalist movements created the embryos of new

countries during the colonial era, it has been observed that nationalist experiences have not transformed the basic relationship between men and women (Kartika, 2004). The presence of gender equality activists at the international level may thus be highly beneficial. They may, for example, suggest various alternative (and more strategic) means for achieving world peace. This reflects the arguments of Meghna Guhathakurta in her draft research report, 'The Chittagong Hill Tracts Accord and After: Gendered Dimensions of Peace' (Guhathakurta, 2014). She explains that women's involvement in conflict is frequently positioned as an existing social structure's last line of defence. However, women have a special situation, being frequently identified as political innocents – unlike men, they are often seen as not being involved in conflict. Such political innocence benefits women, as it grants them greater opportunities to conduct negotiations and thereby create peace between belligerents. Furthermore, women frequently have experiences with household and community living, and can apply their knowledge in conflict-resolution activities such as diplomacy and reconciliation.

In detail, three theories have been suggested by feminists to explain why women can become actively involved in peacebuilding (Guhathakurta, 2014). The first reads 'men make war – women make peace', which assumes that male actors are identified with war and conflict whereas female actors are inherently peaceful. The second theory is 'victimisation vs women's agency', which rejects the view that women are merely victims of conflict, noting that they may be actively involved in conflict resolution efforts. This is not because of biological factors that distinguish women from men, but because of their social abilities and life experiences. The third theory is that presented by Guhathakurta, 'cause not consequence', which assumes that social structures, militarisation, and capital are the causes – rather than effects – of conflict.

Based on these theories, women's involvement in conflict can be divided into three categories: women's actions, women's agendas, and women's perceptions. The first category indicates that women can play a constructive role in peacebuilding efforts, even

if their involvement is limited to informal activities. They may become actors, for example, through symbolic protests or through the establishment of communities that cross group boundaries (Guhathakurta, 2014). The second category indicates that women have their own agendas in peacebuilding efforts. In general, the agendas of women focus on the trauma caused by conflict, as shown in women's groups' efforts to mitigate trauma by defending their rights at the local, national, and international levels. The third category, identified by Guhathakurta, covers women's aspirations and perceptions of conflict and their own involvement within it. This involvement is considered important as, in times of conflict, the issue of women's rights is generally not prominent, and as such consistency and alternative approaches are necessary for women to voice their views and promote gender equality.

Based on this discussion, we may conclude that women are not always involved in conflict as victims; they may also be involved in peacebuilding efforts, with roles that may be divided into three categories: *women's actions*, *women's agendas*, and *women's perceptions*. Furthermore, women's peacebuilding efforts may be undertaken through activities such as protest actions and the establishment of movements that (not uncommonly) seek to ensure that their rights are protected.

A CASE STUDY OF WOTGALIH, LUMAJANG

East Java is an Indonesian province with an abundance of natural resources, particularly minerals. This includes, for example, the Maleman Beach area of Wotgalih Village, Yosowilangun District, Lumajang Regency, which is replete with minerals that can be mined. The regency itself is relatively densely populated, with 565 people/km². In 2013, 1,023,818 people resided there, 498,787 of whom were men and 525,301 women (Badan Pusta Statistik, 2015: 62). Demographically, Lumajang is home to a number of ethnic groups, the largest being the Javanese and the Madurese. One of its most important natural resources is iron sand, which is found throughout most of the regency's southern reaches. According to

the official website of the Lumajang government, the regency has the largest reserves of iron sand in Indonesia, covering 60 hectares, with an iron content averaging 30 to 40 percent and peaking at 60 percent. Six districts have been identified as potential sources of iron sand while two are already used for iron sand mining, namely Pasirian (Bago and Bades Villages) and Yosowilangun (Wotgalih, Darungan, and Tunjungrejo Villages). Two companies handle the majority of the region's iron sand mining activities, PT ANTAM (Aneka Tambang) and PT IMMS (Indonesia Mining Modern Sejahtera).

Located in the plains between three mountains – Mount Semeru, Mount Bromo, and Mount Lamongan – Lumajang has fertile land and extensive mineral deposits. It has extensive potential for mineral extraction, including both Type C materials (sand, stone, coral, and gravel) and Type B materials (iron sand, precious gems, and gold). Both types of materials are believed to be erupted from the active Mount Semeru (annual emissions: 1 million m³/per annum), carried by the many local rivers to the Indian Ocean (Bappeda, 2011). In beaches, such as Meleman Beach in Wotgalih, iron particles combine with sand (Bappeda, 2011). Over time, as Mount Semeru continues its eruptive activities, the amount of both Type B and Type C materials increases.

Wotgalih is surrounded by Krai, Tunjungrejo, and Krajan Villages, as well as the Indian Ocean. It is bordered by Krai to the north, Tunjungrejo to the east, the Indian Ocean to the south, and Krajan to the west. Owing to its location along the Indian Ocean, Wotgalih has become a tourist destination, with many domestic tourists visiting to experience the exotic allure of Maleman Beach and its expansive black sands that glimmer in the sunlight. Wotgalih has also benefited considerably from its extensive reserves of iron sand, which span across Maleman Beach. It is these dunes that the people of Wotgalih have attempted to protect from the exploitations of PT ANTAM and its investors.

CONFLICT AND IRON SAND MINING IN WOTGALIH

The conflict that has occurred in Wotgalih is linked to the planned establishment of a mine therein. It is not a land conflict per se, but rather an environmental one, waged over access to resources. Such environmental conflicts can emerge as a result of differing interests in environmental and resource management. Rooted in greed, such conflict may result in discrimination, injustice, and the marginalisation of other interests.

Following the issuance and later extension of a mining permit to PT ANTAM by the regency government, division formed among the people of Wotgalih, based on each individual's position on mining. Some elements of Wotgalih society supported the iron sand mining, arguing that it would bring many benefits and blessings to the community. The people living near the mine and along Maleman Beach would find greater prosperity if the iron sands were exploited, and the local economy would be invigorated (Radar Jember, 2011). Furthermore, the pro-mining group believed that the company's corporate social responsibility funds, totaling Rp 900,000 per month, would be given directly to and managed by the local community, thereby enabling residents to build infrastructure, as well as worship, education, and healthcare facilities (Radar Jember, 2011).

Conversely, other elements of Wotgalih society protested the mining. For example, several demonstrations were held in front of the Wotgalih Village Hall. The village chief, Sunoto, was pressured into rejecting the planned initiation of mining, through a statement issued on 8 July 2010. Later, on 3 December 2010, hundreds of local residents held a demonstration and demanded the resignation of J, the chairman of the Village Development Agency (Badan Pembangunan Desa, or BPD), who supported the mining and was perceived as failing to protect the interests of the community.

The residents of Wotgalih also received broad support from environmentalist NGOs, including the Green Troops (Laskar Hi-

jau), the Mining Advocacy Network (Jaringan Advokasi Tambang, or JATAM), the Indonesian Forum for the Environment (Wahana Lingkungan Hidup, or WALHI), the Legal Aid Centre (Lembaga Bantuan Hukum, or LBH) of Surabaya, the Forum for Human Rights Advocacy Studies (Forum Studi Advokasi Hakasasi Manusia, or FORSAM), and the Forum for Wotgalih Solidarity (Forum Solidaritas Warga Desa Wotgalih, or FOSWOT). Besides the demonstrations, the people also filed a legal challenge against PT ANTAM in court. Meanwhile, charges were filed against four local residents who opposed the mine, for allegedly committing criminal acts, including harassment and assault. An argument had broken out over the planned mine, and these four residents were believed to have forcibly abducted and beaten a person who supported the mine. Ultimately, after the Yosowilangun Police took control of the situation, this case was brought to the courts, and after a ten-day trial, the four men were sentenced to six months in prison, minus time served, and were required to pay a fine of Rp 2,500 in accordance with Article 335, Paragraph 1(1) and Article 175, Paragraph 1(1) of the Indonesian Criminal Code.

A different situation was noted among the people who supported the mining, who were not involved in such actions. They were seen as never perpetrating acts of anarchy, something that can be attributed to their sense that their position had already received the support of Lumajang Regency, which had issued the permit allowing PT ANTAM to carry out the iron sand mining. The later extension of the permit further reinforced the supporters' belief in the security of their positions.

The issuance of mining permits to PT ANTAM in Wotgalih, as well as their extension, has had both physical and non-physical effects on the environment and society. In 1998, three holes of at least five metres in diameter and fifteen metres in depth began to form as a result of mining, providing early evidence of the mining's deleterious physical effects (Memo, 2010). The roads in Wotgalih were also negatively affected. After being separated from contaminants, iron sand was carried by truck to a weighing sta-

tion in Munder to ease the transfer of sand to larger trucks that would then take it to its ultimate destination. At the time, Wotgalih's roads were classified as IIIA, making them suitable only for trucks weighing a maximum of eight tonnes. However, these sand-carrying trucks would consistently be overburdened during their trips, resulting in a rapid deterioration of the village's roads.

Mining activities also exacerbated coastal abrasion. After mining activities removed the dunes that had long shielded the village, seawater began entering residents' wells, and Wotgalih found itself at an increased risk of tsunamis. This situation was worse during high tide, when high waves would crash against the beach. Even the coastline began to change (Majalah Alfikr, 2011).

At the same time, the economic benefits promised by the company when it began mining in 1998 proved evasive. Generally, demand for labour was limited, as the company used machines known as magnet separators. Each machine could be operated by only four workers and a foreman. Most of these workers were drawn from the local population, but none earned a living wage. Foremen were paid Rp 300,000 per month, while ordinary labourers (most of whom were local men) received only Rp 150,000 per month. In comparison, the Lumajang Regency government received an income of Rp 1.2 billion per annum from the mine. As such, it may be concluded that the mining proved to be not only socially and environmentally detrimental (particularly to the people of Wotgalih), but also had no significant economic benefits for them.

Socially, the opening of the mine resulted in horizontal conflict (between specific groups in Wotgalih) and vertical conflict (between the people of Wotgalih and the local government). Residents' differences of opinion regarding the mine and the extension of the company's mining permit polarised the community. Meanwhile, as a result of the mining, discord broke out between the residents and the government. Members of the Wotgalih community perceived the government as having failed to listen to their opinions and aspirations, and were angered that they had not been

consulted when the local government decided to extend the mining permits. Conflict also occurred between local residents and their own community, with the former viewing PT ANTAM as having been unfair in its socialisation and as having kept secrets from local residents.

The social conflict in Wotgalih was exacerbated by the local government's decision to extend PT ANTAM's mining permit, through Letter No 180.45/287/427.12/2010 on the Granting of Authority over 504.4 Hectares of Land in Area KW.09.PP.0290 in Wotgalih Village, Yosowilangun District, Lumajang Regency (dated 28 July 2010) (Radar Jember, 2011). Afterwards, local residents blocked PT ANTAM's mining activities, preventing it from resuming operations regardless of its permit. The government's extension of the company's permit resulted in fragmentation and polarisation within local society, as reflected in the ostracisation of anyone who supported the mining. Social disharmony could be observed, for example, in those who opposed the mining being unwilling to attend the funerals of supporters – even if these supporters were their own family members. Similarly, proponents of the mining would not be allowed to purchase goods or everyday necessities from shops owned by its opponents.

As the various effects of the mining discussed in this chapter suggest, it could be said that the decision to begin resource exploitation did not bring blessings – welfare, prosperity – to the people of Wotgalih. Rather, it caused social fragmentation and environmental degradation. Tensions remain, and open conflict may break out at any time.

WOMEN'S AGENCY IN CONFLICT AND PEACE-BUILDING

It is not easy for women to position themselves in conflict situations. They have often been perceived as incapable of handling the public roles that are dominated by men. When women attempt to show their capacity, such as to gain social appreciation, they are marginalised in various ways. Nonetheless, in extraordi-

nary situations, they play crucial roles that are recognised as having significant impacts. Women, it has been shown, dedicate their energy to various phases of conflict. This has also occurred within the context of the conflict in Lumajang, including in Wotgalih.

Protests against the mining in Lumajang have continued, and one such demonstration at the Lumajang Regency Offices – involving thousands of people – led to anarchy. Residents of Wotgalih and their allies, frustrated by the regent’s unwillingness to hear their protests or aspirations, destroyed the fence surrounding the complex as well as some other public facilities. As clarified by one participant, the dozens of protests held by the people of Wotgalih, demanding that the regional government rescind PT ANTAM’s mining permit, were not funded by outside interests; residents even sold their chickens to ensure they could attend these demonstrations. Meanwhile, among women, five tendencies were noted.

First, women served as the backbones of their families, the guardians of the area, and the protectors of their families. In this time of conflict, men could not optimally fulfil their obligations to their families. As such, women supplemented their roles, or even became the main breadwinners in their families, such as by becoming labourers at the watermelon farms bordering the Wotgalih coast.

Second, women functioned as peacebuilders. After open conflict, women played an important role in peacebuilding activities. They were at the vanguard of reconciliation activities. In Wotgalih, women transformed meeting spaces such as shops and markets, as well as the grounds on which religious activities and local rituals were held, into effective meeting sites. The intensity of their meetings enabled them to establish communications and restore social relationships. The importance of women’s involvement was noted by L, the chief of Wotgalih.

Third, women played crucial leadership roles in the conflict. In Wotgalih, an anti-mining organisation known as FOSWOT was established. Over time, as interpersonal coordination became

increasingly important, the organisation established women's and youth wings. However, female leaders attended all of the meetings held by the core FOSWOT organisation. Women, such as S, served as the spokespersons of anti-mining activists during the conflict. Women also acted as the coordinators of protest actions, which involved hundreds of Wotgalih residents. They were tasked with mobilising the masses, fundraising, and obtaining food for their activities.

Fourth, women were involved in the legal battles of the people of Wotgalih. For example, S testified in court about the assaults that occurred in the village.

Fifth, women worked to avoid anarchy in their demonstrations, serving, among other things, as orators. Demonstrations involved a massive number of residents. Estimates suggest that they were attended by almost 90 percent of Wotgalih's 9,000 residents, and at some protests more than eighty cars were parked. Prayer groups, which *nota bene* were dominated by women, were also mobilised against the mining under the leadership of S, a women's leader and frequent orator. Such widespread activities were intended to show that the people of Wotgalih had truly and completely rejected the mining of iron sand.

CONCLUSION

In a period of conflict, the women of Wotgalih have sought to serve their fellow villagers in a number of ways. When clashes broke out, women played an important role in reconciliation, working to build peace in an environment fractured by division. Women were also involved in the conflict as actors, as seen in the founding of the anti-mining organisation, FOSWOT, in Wotgalih, and its subsequent women's and youth wings, through which the women represented the voices of anti-mining activists. Women were also involved in legal battles, going so far as to testify in court against the perpetrators of violence in their village. These women worked together to prevent anarchy in their movement's demonstrations, speaking publicly at its vanguard. Ultimately, the

women of Wotgalih have taken on a diverse number of roles in carrying out what they perceive to be best for their village, whether it be as the anchors and protectors of their families, the guardians of the land of their birth and on whose resources they rely, or as active peacebuilders in a time where only strife and discord seem to persist.

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MOLUCCAN YOUTHS' IMAGININGS OF PEACE

Meike H. E. Pieter

INTRODUCTION

The socio-religious conflict that broke out in Ambon and other parts of Maluku in 1999 remains etched in the memories of the province's people. Although they continue to feel the trauma of the conflict, they have sought means to treat it. Various social actors have used assorted approaches to become involved in peacebuilding. Some have done so through politics, economics, or social activities. These social actors are Ambonese of various ages, genders, and ethnic backgrounds; all have had a role in ensuring lasting peace in Maluku.

Aside from such community-led peacebuilding efforts, as well as those of religious and social organisations, the Indonesian government has used a range of means to promote peace. It has facilitated dialogue between religious leaders, involved the mili-

tary and national police, and passed various pro-peace policies (Waileruny, 2011: 20). Furthermore, it has sought to promote recovery and reconciliation, such as by building a large monument (the ‘World Peace Gong’) in Pelita Park in the centre of the city. This monument, the 35th World Peace Gong, was inaugurated by the sixth President of Indonesia, Susilo Bambang Yudhoyono, on 25 November 2009 (Indonesiakaya, 2010). This monument drew the attention of the local populace, who likewise desire Ambon to become as conducive, safe, and comfortable as before the conflict. Although there remain questions as to whether such an enormous gong is truly promoting peace in Maluku or simply a symbol, it has taught younger Moluccans to better understand tolerance and promote peace.

Youths have similarly been involved in manifesting and maintaining peace. It cannot be denied that, during the conflict, many youths were involved in the fighting. They sought not to prove who was strongest or most powerful, but simply to survive and to defend their faith (Waileruny, 2011: 8). However, today, they work to promote peace through their art and literature, which have enabled them to create interfaith dialogue through their works and create a shared narrative. Of course, it must be asked what these youths have done through their art and literature? Various art venues are present in plural Moluccan society, primarily in the city of Ambon, which are used by youths to restore their confidence. Thus emerges other questions: which youths are involved in these artistic activities? What groups do they represent? Are they only Christians, or are there also Muslims? It can be seen that all youths have united, becoming one group. All – be they Muslim, Christian, Catholic, Hindu, or Buddhist – have used their art to help them heal their trauma.

PELA GANDONG AND YOUTH INVOLVEMENT

Maluku has a number of traditional *negeri* (villages) characterised by the slogan, ‘*hidup orang basudara*’ (people live as brothers). Between these villages are a number of *pela gandong* relations

(kinship based on friendship and alliance), which characterise and unite the people of Maluku. Such social bonds are very important for the youths of Maluku, as they signify a culture of alliance, friendship, and mutual respect. This can be seen, for example, in the use and practice of *pela gandong* in promoting peace, through which the youths of Maluku have become aware that the religious majority and minorities in Maluku have long been united as kin.

Pela refers to kinship bonds between a majority-Muslim village and a majority-Christian one that are established from a sense of obligation, a shared fate, or a desire for mutual assistance. Take, for example, the *pela* between Galala and Hitu Lama. When the Immanuel Church in Galala was going to be renovated, the youths of Hitu Lama came to help with the refurbishment. Another example can be seen in the *pela* between Batu Merah and Passo. When the cupola of the An-Nur Mosque was installed, men from Passo provided assistance, including in lifting the cupola and in placing it atop the mosque. *Gandong*, meanwhile, refers to kinship bonds between a majority-Muslim village and a majority-Christian one that are rooted in blood ties, such as when brothers live in different villages. These bonds are established through rituals known as *Angkat Pela* or *Angkat Gandong*, meaning ‘to make a *pela*’ or ‘to make a *gandong*’.

Over time, the establishment of *pela* bonds has extended beyond villages. In August 2016, an *Angkat Pela* ritual was performed to unite the Christian University of Indonesia, Maluku (Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku, or UKIM) and the State Islamic Institute of Ambon. Indirectly, this *pela* ritual has united the students (youths) of Maluku and promoted further peace. This shows that the government, academics, and youths have played various roles in peacebuilding (Malukupost, 2016).

ART AND LITERATURE FOR PEACE

Artistry refers to expertise in the production of works that are seen as having a specific aesthetic quality (KBBI, 1989: 816). Artistry may also refer to the mental capacity to create something

of extraordinary value (KBBI, 1989: 816). Meanwhile, literariness refers to the language (words, styles) used in works of literature (rather than ordinary books); literature, in turn, refers to written works that are perceived as having such qualities as originality, artistry, or beauty in their contents or their approaches (KBBI, 1989: 786).

Art and literature cannot simply be separated from image and imagination, the mental ability to imagine or create images (paintings, literary works, etc.) based on one's experiences and realities (KBBI, 1989: 325). Both art and literature trace their roots to the heart. As such, the youths of Ambon have used them to convey messages of peace. All of their feelings and desires are voiced directly through their art and literature, as are their understandings of peace itself.

The word *peace* may be among the most frequently used in Maluku. Peace means no more war; no more unrest; and security (KBBI, 1989: 182). Peace means the end of enmity and conflict (KBBI, 1989: 183). The attainment of peace in Maluku has been a source of pride for all of the Moluccan people, and the youths – the heirs of Ambon – must continue this peace into the future.

Peace is realised through the activities of diverse social actors, including youths. Integral in peace is the role of the government, which is responsible for passing policies and laws that promote social order and ensure security and protection. Similarly, governments should be active in promoting harmony between different social groups. However, where they neglect this role, shifts in values and behaviour may create intolerance and even conflict between tribal, racial, or religious groups.

Peace, within the context of Maluku, has always been positioned as part of Moluccan culture. It has been seen, for example, in the context of *pela gandong* and the slogan, '*katong samua basudara*' (we are all brothers). This refers to the understanding that, although the Moluccan people consist of two large religious communities – *Salam* (Islam) and *Sarane* (Christian) – they share

the same lineage and heritage. This view has been emphasised in efforts to combat the othering processes that have limited peacebuilding efforts (Setyaningsih, 2014). More specifically, *pela gandong* – as an element of Moluccan culture that has been emphasised in peacebuilding – have been used to restore the social bonds that had been severed by the conflict.

Over time, the youths of Maluku initiated their peacebuilding process through their artistic and literary skills. Following UNESCO standards, Ambon was declared a world city of music (Ambon City of Music) on 29 October 2016; this led the local youths to become even more active in their artistic endeavours. Not all youths have been involved in these activities. Most of the youths involved are male; however, while female youths are a minority, they are not prohibited from participating. Artistic activities have varied, with a prominent activity being the Panggung Puisi (Poetry Stage) on which young poets (both from Ambon and elsewhere) read their works. For example, take the poem, ‘Aku Menulis di Pantai’ (I Write on the Beach), by Brigel Lodewik Waliana (*Sahetapy dkk*, 2013: 15):

*Water, return to the heart
Return to the season of romance
When the waves made love with the sand
The water embraced it longingly
With sounds of passion
Melodies of day and night*

Another example can be seen in David Yonry Leimena’s poem, ‘Jejak Pagi (Cerita tentang Papa)’ (Traces of the Morning [Father’s Story]) (*Sahetapy dkk*, 2013: 21):

*Early morning, pitch black
Songs of warriors about
Breaking the cold silence*

*With the pure dew
Men's bodies, standing strong
Hearts held high, mouths grateful*

Or 'Nona Konde' (Lady in a Bun), by Eko Saputra Poceratu
(Sahetapy, 2013: 27):

*A young man
Seeing her hair bound tight
My heart, bound
My heart, molten
Whose heart could not?
A pretty lady, hair bound tight*

Falantino Eryk Latupapua, with 'Untuk Pattimura' (For Pattimura) (Sahetapy, 2013: 36):

*Oh, how I desire, Pattimura!
To beat my drum for
That woman in the four-colour silk
Who dances with your muscles and slapping strings
And place her smile upon the neon lights of city and village
As the scribes of old write: a smile of freedom*

In 'Menabur Pasir' (Spreading the Sand) by Mariana Lewier
(Sahetapy, 2013: 79):

*From the beginning, all waited
And the flow of time covered
The sky reaching towards the sun
Behind the old huts of the datuk
Who wove the history of the land of the thousand isles
With parapets and strings
Bringing life upon oaths of fraternity*

*Now, eroded by the waves
Smoothen white sands of the conscience*

Or Martha Maspaitella's poem, 'Jejak Hujan Di Tanah Siwa Lima' (Drops of Rain on Siwa Lima) (Sahetapy, 2013: 83):

*Try to turn your face
To every dry forest
That cannot bear
The drops of rain
That flood
Erase the fertile land
And fell the trees
Home of fauna*

Marthen Reaso, with 'Beta Pattimura' (I am Pattimura) (Sahetapy, 2013: 89):

*I am Pattimura, of Maluku
I defend the motherland
Not myself
But my brothers, left and right*

*I am red and white
Not red...
Not white...*

'Doa Seorang Anak Seusai Perang' (A Child's Prayer after War), by Ronald Regang (Sahetapy, 2013: 132):

*God?
Thank you!
Greetings to the blood on your robe*

*The blood of enemies I spilled
On the steps of the mosques and churches of Ambon*

Rodi Fofid, with 'Menari Bulan' (Moon Dance) (Sahetapy, 2013: 144):

*I smile at the moon
The moon flirts with me
I give my heart to the moon
The moon gives its heart to me
'Come!'
I say to the moon*

There are still many more young poets from Ambon, including (as with the above poets) from the group Ambon Manise. Another collective, Seni Beta, includes a number of singers of Moluccan origin who are presently working in Jakarta, including JP Band (known for its love song 'Move On'), as well as Glend Fredly (with his frequent collaborators Tompi and Sandy Sandoro), Monita Tahalea, Gaby Idol, and John Tanamal. The group's members also include young and emerging singers, such as Marionie Serhalawan, Falantino Eryk Latupapu, Willy Waas, Michael Pelupessy, Michele Sahetapy, and Nurul Toisuta (Mus, 2016).

Groups such as TrotoArt, Seni Beta, and Christmas Carol have been established especially by the youths of Ambon to perform songs of peace. They are open to all members of society, and include members from Ambon's religious majority and minority. For example, both Muslims and Hindus have been involved in Christmas Carol's dance performances, which take place every December. TrotoArt and Seni Beta have facilitated young Moluccans in performing their music on the sidewalks of Ambon. Meanwhile, Christmas Carol's activities are held in Baileo Oikumene Field.

Frequency of performance varies. Panggung Sastra holds its activities every two weeks, or if needed for another activity, under the coordination of Rudi Fofid, Bengkel Sastra, and other young

writers. Meanwhile, TrotoArt holds its performances when needed, or when the members feel it is appropriate, under the coordination of communities such as Paparisa Ambon Bergerak and Bengkel Sastra. Performances by Seni Beta are more regular, being held monthly, and involve singers and artists who are active in Jakarta; these are sponsored by Siera Latupeirissa Production and Rumah Beta, under the coordination of Rudi Fofid.

Conversely, Christmas Carol holds its performances annually, every December since 2011, to voice its gratitude for peace and to celebrate Christmas. It is organised collectively by Mango Tree Community and Ambonesia Foundation, with the support of the Protestant Church of Maluku (Gereja Protestan Maluku, or GPM). Initially, performances only involved Christians. However, since 2014, the artists involved have come from a range of denominations and religions. Non-Christian collectives contribute to the Christmas Carol performances. For example, the Maluku branch of Parisada Hindu Dharma Indonesia (PDHI) has performed the *cendrawasih* (paradise) dance, the Indonesian Buddhist Trusteeship (Buddhist Paduan Suara Perwalian Umat Budha Indonesia, or Walubi) choir has sung its songs, and the Kaila Collective has contributed Islamic dances. All of these have involved Moluccans of different gender, religious, racial, and even tribal backgrounds. They have worked together to present the beauty of 'living as brethren' (*hidup orang basudara*), as promoted by Fr. Jacky Manuputty (Siwalimanews, 2016).

This diversity shows that the people of Maluku have sought to honor pluralism and make it part of their everyday lives, thereby ensuring that all members of society work together to rebuild the city. Fr. Jacky Manuputty, a Christian (GPM) figure and peace activist, once said on a local talk show ('Bacarita Orang Maluku', broadcast by the Maluku/North Maluku office of TVRI):

Peace is a noun that has never been truly attained. We owe a debt to the younger generations, and must create peaceful conditions for their lives in the future. Rehabilitation is our

shared responsibility, part of their fundamental right to a better quality of life.

Meanwhile, Walubi's chairman, Wihelmus Jauweriss, stated that the people of Maluku are mature, and the concept of peace is thus more than simple rhetoric. It is made manifest in their everyday lives. Recognising that religion is closely linked to the Indonesian identity, Abidin Wakano of the Indonesian Council of Ulama (Majelis Ulama Indonesia, or MUI) has reminded people to not use religion for their personal interests, as religion was taught by God to promote peace and humanity (Mollucastimes, 2016):

This can be seen, for example, in the lyrics to the song, 'Pancasila Rumah Kita' (Pancasila, Our Home), written by Franky Sia-hailatua and arranged by Sierra Latupeirissa and Nurul Toisuta. As sung during the Christmas Carol performance on 22 December 2016, this song included the lines 'Hanya Nama Yesus' (Only the name of Jesus) and 'La Ilaha Illa Allah' (There is no god but God), respectively affirmations of faith in Christianity and in Islam:

*The Pancasila, our home
A home for us all
The values of Indonesia
A home for us all
For all to praise His name
For all to love another
For all colours together
For all standing united
For all sharing
For every one
You feel, I feel*

*Only the name of Jesus
There is no god but God
Only the name of Jesus
There is no god but God*

*Give me strength
Only the name of Jesus
There is no god but God.*

This collaboration between Seira and Nurul is intended to show that different religions can only be united through a sense of tolerance, such as that found in the *pela gandong* of Maluku. As such, there are no limitations on the performances of Muslims and Christians. At the time, Seira (a Christian) and Nurul (a Muslim) decided to perform together during Christmas Carol, which was directed primarily at Christians. Their collaboration produced a song, titled 'Pancasila Rumah Kita'. Integrating phrases from Christian hymns and Arabic worship, this song drew considerable attention from local society.

The meaning behind the lyrics of their collaboration, 'Hanya Nama Yesus' and 'La Illaha Illallah', indicates worship that is simultaneously the same and different. In the performance, Seira sang the line 'Hanya Nama Yesus' while Nurul sang 'La Illaha Illallah'. In context, 'Hanya Nama Yesus' indicates that Jesus as the Lord is worthy of the worship and praises of his flock, while 'La Illaha Illallah' asserts that none is worthy of worship and praise except God (Allah) (Tanesia, 2012). As such, when Seira and Nurul performed together, they simultaneously presented their differences and worshiped their God on the same stage. At the time, the public's enthusiasm for this song was extraordinary, as shown by the audience's applause. The audience, certainly, felt proud for these two youths; a stage used for a Christian celebration offered an opportunity for unity, and showed how Maluku no longer limited people – Muslims, Christians, Catholics, Hindus, or Buddhists – in their expressions of peace. As such, the performance offered not only an example of the pluralism of Moluccan society, but also showed how peacebuilding efforts were being maintained. The unity of these two young Moluccans, each of a different religious background, was not limited to their duet on stage. They had often worked together, creating something of extraordinary value.

Senses of mutual suspicion began to erode as audiences from both communities (i.e. Muslim and Christian) saw that the conflict had not been beneficial to them. There were no winners or losers, no strong or weak. There was only loss, the lost of family and of possessions. Abdul H. Latua, representing the Islamic organisation Muhammadiyah, stated that ‘all want Maluku to become better. A good (peaceful) condition must not be disturbed by pointless rumours’ (Mollucastimes, 2016).

Similar messages are conveyed through poems written by Moluccan youths. See, for example, ‘Biarkan Katong Bakalae’ (Let Us Fight), written by a young priest named Jacky Manuputty (*Sahetapy*, 2013: 59):

*Tell me
which is better, peace or conflict?
For in my land, peace and conflict roll together
Fighting by morning, fighting by night*

*We fight till we bathe in blood
But with blood too we fight
Drink it together when the fighting ends
Without a care as to the winner
For fighting is the nobility of the customary warrior
The obligatory, as the fighting ends
Without any intervention*

In this poem, Jacky is expressing the situation in Ambon/Maluku, where conflict is common but can always be resolved (i.e. peace can be restored). Initially, the conflicts in Ambon were limited to small-scale conflicts, such as two groups exchanging blows over a football game. This was most common around Mardika Village, before the current market was constructed. These fights were short-lived, and did not spread, leading to the saying ‘*pagi bakalae, malam bakubae*’ (fighting by morning, peace by night). However, in Jacky’s poem, emphasis is given with ‘*pagi bakalae*,

malam bakalae' (fighting by morning, fighting by night), focusing on the socio-religious conflict that broke out in 1999.

The conflict in Maluku was resolved through cultural values. The conflict and its victims are presented in the lines, '*We fight till we bathe in blood / But with Blood too we fight / Drink it together when the fights end*'. In this line, the blood is used to symbolise the victims, but at the same time refers to the traditional peacebuilding process or '*bakubae*' (in the line *meminum darah*). Through the lines, '*Without a care as to the winner / For fighting is the nobility of the customary / The obligatory, as the fightings end / Without any intervention*', Jacky concludes that conflict and fighting in Maluku (specifically, between different villages) is not long-lasting. The belligerents, united as kin through traditional *pela gandong* bonds, would end the fighting without the intervention of outside parties.

Moluccan culture and local wisdom, as understood by its youths, lays the foundation for social responsibility. The youths of Maluku have not only inherited their traditional bonds, but also the spirit of Thomas Matulesy, Captain Pattimura, who fought colonialism and sought to free the Moluccas. Recognising this spirit, the youths of Maluku have sought to maintain peace. They have recognised themselves as Pattimura, as shown in Marthen Reaso's poem 'Beta Pattimura' (I am Pattimura):

*I am Pattimura, of Maluku
I defend the motherland
Not myself
But my brothers, left and right*

*I am red and white
Not red...
Not white...*

*Ask not for whom I fight
I fight for the people of Maluku*

*Ask not whom I oppose
I ask that we all love another*

In this poem, Marthen expresses that the persona 'beta' (I) is a youth who has taken the role of Pattimura in Maluku. Pattimura became a hero of Maluku when he united with the other youths of the region to fight for freedom, and even made the ultimate sacrifice in the hopes that the archipelago would not fall under the control of the Dutch. Relying on this tradition of heroism, the youths have found legitimacy as 'young Pattimura', as the heirs of the captain, and have fought to defend their land as their forefathers had. This is reflected, for example, in the line, '*I defend the motherland / Not myself / But my brothers, left and right*'. Maluku is a land where people '*hidup orang basudara*'. Marthen emphasises, '*I am red and white / Not red... / Not white...*', drawing on the symbols of the conflict (red referring to Christians, and white referring to Muslims). As such, the 'young Pattimura' focus not on difference but on similarity. The lines, '*Ask not for whom I fight / I fight for the people of Maluku / Ask not whom I oppose / I ask that we all love another*' in this poem, meanwhile, convey a message that the 'young Pattimura' fight to preserve the peace, to promote love and tolerance.

The struggle of Pattimura is felt clearly by all of the youths of Maluku, who hope that future conflict can be avoided and a sense of kinship can be promoted. Take, for example, the following lines from Ronald Regang's poem 'Doa Seorang Anak Seusai Perang' (A Child's Prayer after War):

*God? Thank you!
For embracing me on many nights
Being my thick blanket
As I bathed in bullets in Ambon*

*God? Thank you!
If the roads are red as blood*

*If the roads are white as snow
I will go, as long as You are*

*God? Thank you!
If you can, please make angels
Of our martyrs and our shahids
The sweet black angels of Ambon*

Ronald Regang is simultaneously a victim and perpetrator of the conflict, and wrote this poem after the end of the fighting. As stated previously, the youths of Maluku were not only victims of conflict; some were also perpetrators, seeking to survive and to defend their faith. Ronald was one such youth, and he wrote his poem based on his perception of God's involvement on the battle-field. God's protection was evident to him, and proven through Ronald's continued survival; this is expressed through the lines, '*God? Thank you! / For embracing me on many nights / Being my thick blanket / As I bathed in bullets in Ambon*'. During the conflict, Ronald had found himself to be exhausted by the fighting, such that he surrendered himself to God and swore that he would go wherever God was. This is illustrated with the lines, '*God? Thank you! / If the roads are red as blood / If the roads are white as snow / I will go, as long as You are*'. His religion was his shield during the conflict, even as victims from both sides fell in defence of their faiths. Ronald expresses this clearly through his lines, '*God? Thank you! / If you can, please make angels / Of our martyrs and our shahids / The sweet black angels of Ambon*'. He expresses a hope that their sacrifice would not be forgotten, and that they would become angels in Heaven.

These Moluccan youths' peacebuilding activities, as manifested through their creativity, has been influenced by efforts to reassert regional and cultural identity. As one Moluccan poet, Rudi Fofid, said:

The poets of Maluku have romanticised love and beauty, as seen in the lyrics of many Moluccan songs. They have sought to defend life and nurture it. They have challenged social inequality, power, and even God. All has flowed as naturally and as clearly as the waters of the Banda and Arafuru seas, fluid yet able to sink ships.

Desiring the restoration of harmony between Muslims and Christians, the youths of Maluku have voiced various aspirations for the future. They have dedicated their energy towards ensuring that peace is maintained in Ambon, and throughout Maluku, so it can be passed to future generations. This, they argue, must involve the education of the younger generation, thereby enabling them to deal with future challenges. Nobody in Maluku desires further conflict, and as such relations between the majority and minorities must be maintained, including through *pela gandong*. With sufficient education, when potentially dangerous rumours spread, they will be more selective and critical. In this manner, they can ensure that the kinship between Muslims, Christians, Catholics, Hindus, and Buddhists is preserved, without any disruption, suspicion, or anxiety.

CONCLUSION

All of the artistic endeavours undertaken by the youths and social actors in Maluku have been directed towards preserving the peace in this land of a thousand isles. When peace exists in Maluku, and tolerance influences all social interactions, all members of Moluccan society can live together in one, pluralistic society. The maintenance of this peace also involves various art and literature programmes, through which youths can attempt to convey their messages of peace to all of Maluku. The government has likewise sought to maintain peace, and thus has an obligation to ensure that this peace is not disturbed for personal gain.

Peace is not about red and white, about *Obet* and *Acang*, about *Salam* and *Sarane*. We love peace. Let nobody violate our trust, for

this trust is not without its fruits. We are all brothers. We have restored trust, reaffirmed our hopes. *'Jang kas tinggal katong bakalae lae.'* Greetings from the laboratory of peace – Ambon, Maluku.

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THE MARKETS: MEETING PLACES FOR RECONCILIATION

Rizard Jemmy Talakua

INTRODUCTION

This chapter is based on its author's experiences and reflections on markets, primarily in how these sites of economic activities became loci of reconciliation during the Ambon conflict. While working towards reconciliation (in 2001–2005), the author had difficulty finding a means through which the belligerents could communicate. At this time, the author found a group of women who had created inter-community communications in the markets of Ambon. The markets, as public facilities, became vital. They were sites where residents of Ambon – no matter their religious, ethnic, cultural, and social backgrounds – could meet, communicate, socialise, and ensure their families' basic needs were met.

The social conflict that broke out in Ambon and its surround-

ing areas on 19 January 1999 has been identified by political and social scientists to have been rooted in various issues, including religion (Marasabessy, 2002), politics (Pieris, 2004), economics, culture, and the military (Manuputty, 2004). This suggests that the resolution of the conflict could have been achieved easily. According to Aritonang (2004) in *Sejarah Perjumpaan Kristen dan Islam di Indonesia* (History of Christian and Islamic Contact in Indonesia):

Various means were used by the government and private actors, at the national and local levels, from both communities (Muslim and Christian), to reveal the roots of the problems using a range of perspectives. Although these actors asserted neutrality, the humanitarian conflict in Ambon did not stop. Rather, it lasted some four years (1999–2003), longer than in other areas. The conflict in Ambon led to numerous deaths and significant financial losses.

However, no matter how complex a situation, there must be a solution, even if one must ‘paddle against the stream’ and overcome internal and external challenges over a lengthy period of time (Rumahuru, 2005). This can be seen in the case of Maluku Province and its capital, Ambon. Although the conflict that marred the initial post-Suharto years in Ambon has subsided, caution remains necessary; true peace does not simply mean an absence of conflict (Barash, 1991).

The author recognises the naiveté of approaching the religious and social issues of Ambon based only on ‘one’ element of society, such as the political elites. Reconciliation would remain nothing but discourse if produced through such an approach. A holistic reconciliation, the author believes, can only result from the recognition that each approach has its weaknesses, and can thus be complemented with other approaches.

The focus of this chapter will be the *pasar kaget* (Rumahuru, 2005), and *papalele/jibu-jibu*, as these traditional economic actors

contributed significantly to the creation of peace and reconciliation in Ambon (Sugiono, 2005; Souisa, 1999). *Papalele* and *jibu-jibu* are Ambonese terms used to refer to people (usually women) who travel from village to village by foot to sell their wares. They are distinguished from other types of merchants. Generally, *papalele* sell the crops produced on their own land, including fruit, vegetables, and tubers, as well as fish they have caught. In recent years, they have begun selling a wider range of products, sometimes reselling the wares of other merchants.

While the author recognises their vulnerability to conflict and potential to exacerbate it, this chapter highlights their positive dimensions. Furthermore, it seeks to determine which dimensions of the markets helped catalyse reconciliation (Kissiya, 2012).

THE MARKETS OF AMBON

Markets have social, economic, cultural, and political aspects (Belshaw, 1981). As such, it may be concluded that they are dedicated to more than just fulfilling the economic needs of citizens, as the places where merchants and customers meet for transactions. Contained within them are other, non-economic dimensions, all of which are entwined with social life. The fact that many traditional societies have existed without markets indicates that, as economic institutions, they are not as old as human civilisation.

The evolution of markets has been influenced not only by the need to meet basic human requirements in the subsistence economy, but a whole range of diverse needs and interests, as well. Indeed, economic approaches were used in the spreading of Christianity (primarily by England, Spain, and the Netherlands) and Islam to Indonesia, including to Maluku (Cooley, 1987). This underscores the importance of markets' social, religious, and cultural dimensions, through which they can create harmony, justice, and balance. These functions are interrelated, with potentially different levels of involvement. In other words, all dimensions of social life – including economic, social, political, religious, and cultural ones – contribute to the creation of harmony, justice, and balance.

However, where any of these elements is lacking, or any of these functions is not fulfilled, inequality and discord can occur (Pieris, 2004).

The economy, despite contributing to the conflict in Ambon, also played an important role in reconciliation; this was manifested in both the formal markets and the *pasar kaget* and *papalele/jibu-jibu* (Maxwekan, 2012). Formally, such activities have existed in Ambon for decades, and have been concentrated primarily in the downtown area. As the capital of Maluku Province, Ambon is a strategic centre of business and trade in this land of a thousand islands. This can be seen, for example, in the migration of ethnic Bugis, Buton, and Makassar to Ambon, whom, together with the ethnic Chinese and some indigenous Ambonese Muslims, have dominated the city's mercantile sector. At the same time, the Christians of Ambon have shown little interest in the sector. This, some scholars have argued, may be influenced by their position during the Dutch colonial era, where they were primarily hired as *ambtenaar* – essentially, white-collar workers (Mailoa, 2006). As such, the Christians of Ambon developed a deep-rooted distaste for hard labour, passed from generation to generation, that led to many Ambonese Christians prioritising the government and education sectors (Cooley, 1987). Although Christians and Muslims held different positions in the markets of Ambon, with Muslims as producers (traders/merchants) and Christians as consumers, relations between these religious communities were generally harmonious.

In the first weeks of the conflict, economic activities at the city's markets ceased completely. Ambon Island's two main markets, in Mardika and Gambus, were burned to the ground. Similarly, traffic flow was limited as the roads connecting the different parts of Ambon were blocked by barricades that had been constructed by various local communities. As a consequence of this, foodstuffs could not be readily distributed (Trijono, 2002).

In Passo, through 2000, there were still some Sulawesi- and Java-born farmers working side by side with 'locals'. Meanwhile,

Batu Merah had numerous traditional fishermen, along with several facilities for storing fish, but this food could not be distributed. Communications were severed, and the conflict continued to escalate. Muslims and Christians stayed within their own territories.

In this dangerous time, both Muslims and Christians began seeking means of communicating with others outside their communities. They began furtively establishing channels through which, despite significant risk, they could communicate and trade foodstuffs. Their economic interests helped them to break the barriers of segregation, to establish communications and conduct transactions on neutral ground. Communications and trade were thus used by these economic actors to ease the tensions of the conflict and unite their fragmented communities.

During the conflict, the situation in Ambon changed rapidly. Safety was not guaranteed, and many buildings were razed. In such an environment, the markets were unable to function optimally. Nonetheless, driven by economic forces and pressures, market mechanisms survived in traditional forms: the *pasar kaget* and *papalele/jibu-jibu* spread throughout Ambon. Although these were not formal institutions, they were able to meet the demands of the time. They were particularly common in the border areas between the predominantly Christian and Muslim communities, where they emerged from both economic demand and mutual fear and suspicion (Syafuan, 2006). This situation, beset with danger, mistrust, and fear, admittedly resulted in the manipulation of prices. Bargaining processes between buyers and sellers were similarly irrational, and at times tense. Although such negative developments cannot be denied, it is important to note that these markets and the meeting spaces they offered had many positive effects.

VEHICLES FOR RECONCILIATION

Fear and an unwillingness to travel far from home were not the only factors behind the reliance on *pasar kaget*, *papalele*, and *jibu-jibu*. These markets' locations on the borders of different social

communities (namely Muslim and Christian ones), along with the courage of the *papalele* (by selling their wares despite being religious minorities), reflect the trust that developed during this time (Maxwekan, 2012). This trust may be attributed to the merchants and other economic actors' decisions to apply a proper business orientation, one that focused on a combination of revenue generation and the provision of some form of social benefit. In this way, they showed an awareness not only of their own needs, but of those of their society, as well.

On the one hand, this ostensible altruism may have had a purely economic motive. Contemporary conditions offered merchants a significant profit-making opportunity. On the other hand, however, the communications and social interactions – the *bakupada* – of these women, in spite of the risks posed to them, helped to ease tensions between the warring factions. Key social foundations were laid for reconciliation, dialogue, and peacebuilding. Because of these communications and meetings, the mutual suspicions and stigmas created by the conflict were gradually undermined. At the same time, a sense of trust began to form – at the very least between distributors and merchants. Additionally, through these meetings and the sense of trust they engendered, they (knowingly or unknowingly) asserted their willingness to listen to and learn from others, thereby targeting the two communities' justifications for continuing the conflict. Belligerents' claims that they were fighting for the greater good, or that they were defending themselves, were challenged by these interactions, and consequently eroded ever deeper as the conflict wore on.

These continued and intense interactions drove merchants to become more familiar with each other, and thereby create space to share stories about the problems they were facing together. There was a shared suffering, as people on both sides had lost their homes, their possessions, and even their lives; people on both sides were longing for the harmonious social relations they had enjoyed before this tragedy of humanity. In other words, the markets offered a space for dialogue to occur at the grassroots level,

crossing community boundaries, without outside intervention. This dialogue helped to carve away at the mutual sense of fear and suspicion between the communities. Ultimately, people on both sides realised that they needed each other, and that togetherness was more important than recrimination. The initiatives of these market actors must be recognised as important milestones in the establishment of broader peacebuilding efforts in Ambon. Without them, true peace – that between individual actors – would remain nothing but an illusion.

One interesting view was voiced by a woman who has been working in markets since before the conflict:

Even before, those of us who sold our wares at the *Mardika* Market were very close. We knew each other and our situations. Even when we practiced different religions, or came from different ethnic groups, we never thought about those differences. After the conflict, we became separated. It was hard to even communicate with them, but we tried to meet in safe places and carry out our market activities while asking about their families. Let the others fight... we at the market were still like family.

These women's willingness to break through the social distance between their communities was also a creative method of channelling their trauma, fear, anxiety, and disappointment. It enabled them to begin the healing process after their conflict experiences. The markets functioned as social therapy, calming people's desire for vengeance and enabling them to endure. They gave merchants and customers alike a means of escaping violence, as well as an alternative way to deal with the conflict than simply 'attacking and retreating'. This started breaking the cycle of violence.

Because merchants and customers felt that they needed each other, they acted cautiously, trying to ensure that mutually beneficial relations could be sustained for a long period. Both desired to maintain their social relations and to further their economic inter-

ests. To the greatest extent possible, they sought to avoid conflict, as further fighting would automatically disrupt their mercantile activities or even result in the destruction of the markets, the inevitable consequence of which would be wares becoming unsellable and the merchants facing significant financial losses. Customers, likewise, would have found it difficult, if not impossible, to satisfy their needs.

It may thus be said that these markets (as social beings) laid the groundwork for future reconciliation in Ambon – that, after years of conflict, peace was made possible by the contributions of these merchants, who worked together to create mutually beneficial relationships. It is through these market interactions, where economic actors created a situation that benefited all involved, that the *papalele* and *jibu-jibu* were able to thaw the tensions between the different factions and promote peacebuilding. The markets, sites of economic transaction, places where people could fulfil their basic needs, unknowingly helped accelerate the creation of a lasting peace in Ambon. The people who met at markets for mercantile activities were also those who creatively found alternative solutions to their problems, who sought an escape from the violence they faced beyond the confines of the markets. Mercantile activities, thus, enabled them to avoid being drawn into the lengthy conflict, as they were able to think of things other than their sorrow, anger, and desire for vengeance. Over time, thoughts of retaliation made way for ones of reconciliation and forgiveness, and these – spurred by the simple processes of sale and purchase and communications between economic actors – became the foundation for future communications between the different social groups.

REFLECTING ON THE MARKETS

While conflict raged throughout Ambon, markets served as the institutional manifestations of dialogue, bringing together groups who had been torn apart by the fighting, and helping to lay the groundwork for later peace and reconciliation. This dialogue

naturally helped promote a culture of peace and non-violence, without any government intervention. Stemming from their grassroots and noticeably inclusive nature, these markets proved that economic activities do not only cause conflict – they can also reconcile communities. They inspired and involved people from all walks of life, and as such were influential in thawing tensions and resolving a conflict that rarely appeared to have an end in sight.

The importance of markets as sites of humanitarian activities should be recognised, so that their continued existence can be ensured. All should heed the roles of markets in maintaining social solidarity. While it is true that markets are often seen as dirty and troublesome, their benefits cannot be ignored. Human beings are both economic and social creatures, and consequently, they must come to understand their existence in their activities and in diverse situations.

Markets are established with good intentions, and help to promote human welfare. However, the involvement of persons with a diverse range of interests often results in them becoming sites of contestation, where different actors seek to promote and legitimise their own interests. As such, in the creation of lasting peace, markets cannot be expected to succeed on their own. Their promotion of reconciliation can be realised best with the support of other facilities, as well as effective management – both by the government and by other stakeholders.

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THE DYNAMICS OF CONFLICT AND CONFLICT RESOLUTION IN AMBON

Fadli Pelu

INTRODUCTION

Maluku is an archipelago with a heterogenous population. For centuries, it was valued by Europeans for its abundance of spices, particularly cloves and nutmeg. With the arrival of the Europeans, the Moluccan people began to establish contacts with other peoples who had their own cultures. As a result, Maluku grew into a land that embodied peace and love in its traditional bonds of *pela* and *gandong*, as well as in the symbol *duan lolat*. However, as colonialism continued, Maluku experienced both political and religious segregation, separating (for example) Muslims and Christians. This situation created conflict within Maluku, as well as tensions between different social groups. The effects of segregation were felt most strongly following the fall of the New Order regime, when political and religious elites proved incapable of uniting the people of Maluku or bringing an end to the Ambon conflict (Triyono, 2002).

The fall of the New Order regime in 1998, accompanied by the resulting political reform, led to turmoil in the social and political lives of most Indonesians, with the state occupying a position of weakness. This presented an opportunity for various groups, including those in Maluku, to take action, such as by seeking vengeance for the marginalisation they had experienced under the previous regime. The conflict that began in Maluku in 1999, for example, has widely been reported as a religious one, between Muslims and Christians. However, looking more closely, it is but a link in a lengthy chain of injustices and marginalisation under colonial and New Order rule (Syafuan et al., 2006).

The conflict in Maluku, and particularly in its capital, Ambon, offers an interesting lesson because it was triggered by a variety of factors, involving not only religious, but political, bureaucratic, and economic elements, as well, along with social jealousy (Manuputty, 2006). Over time, non-religious factors appeared to draw religion into the conflict, resulting in the fighting becoming lengthier and more widespread. The conflict that broke out in Maluku in 1999 caused great suffering for the people of these islands, and at the national level was seen as potentially threatening to the national unity of Indonesia (Jati, 2012).

CONFLICT ESCALATION IN AMBON

The violent conflict in Maluku, which was concentrated primarily in Ambon, was the most extensive of the conflicts that broke out following the fall of Suharto's New Order regime. Between 1999 and 2002, it resulted in some 5,000 deaths, and led to a third of the province's population becoming refugees.

The conflict escalated rapidly, the progress of which can be separated into four stages. The first stage began on 19 January 1999, the second on 24 July 1999, the third on 26 December 1999, and the fourth stage – signified by the arrival of the Laskar Jihad, a group of Muslim combatants from outside Maluku – began in May 2000.

FIRST ESCALATION

The beginning of the violent conflict in Maluku is generally recognised as 19 January 1999, with a fight between a minibus driver and a local thug at the Batu Merah Bus Terminal. This fighting spread rapidly, and developed into conflict between the Muslims and Christians on the Batu Merah–Galunggung border.

The following day, fires were started in various parts of Ambon, and groups of fighters were mobilised – even at the churches and mosques. Maranatha Church, a centre of Christian youth activities, began using red headbands as its symbol, while the Al Fatah Mosque, a centre of Muslim youth activities, adopted white headbands. In this stage of fighting, migrant workers (primarily of Bugis, Buton, and Makassar heritage) suffered the most, as their market kiosks were destroyed or razed. After this, armed conflict occurred sporadically, through day and night (Waileruny, 2013).

GENDER DYNAMICS

This situation led to the residents of Ambon, who had been living in peace and harmony, becoming trapped in a humanitarian and religious dilemma. The Muslims dedicated their energies to defending their religion, as did the Christians. Each side claimed to be defending truth, creating a strong sense of enmity.

Nonetheless, de-escalation efforts were initiated by the two communities, as well as by other stakeholders. In the villages of Ambon, they helped each other, supporting the victims of the conflict who had sought refuge with nothing but the clothes on their backs. As mentioned by one resident of Waringin, in Ambon:

We helped each other and supported each other, shared our food and our other needs. For a long time, nobody else was helping. We had to survive until emergency aid arrived.

Women were involved primarily in domestic affairs, managing their households and their children. They had little room for movement, and because of blockades they had difficulty access-

ing foodstuffs such as rice, fish, and vegetables. Their economic activities were likewise negatively affected, limiting their ability to provide food for their families. Each village sought to survive as best as possible, and to defend itself if necessary. The previous situation, in which they relied on centres of economic activity for their everyday needs, was no longer tenable. These women could no longer shop at the markets, which had been burned down by the masses. However, they were able to maintain their sense of togetherness. Where residents had more food or medicine than they felt they needed, they would share it with others. Women living near conflict areas were not allowed to leave their homes or their villages, as doing so was considered too dangerous.

Meanwhile, ensuring the security of the village and defending against potential attacks was the responsibility of the men. If attacks occurred far from the village, the men would divide themselves into two groups. One group would go into battle, helping the members of their faith, while the other group would stay at the village, preparing to defend it against any attack. This was mentioned by Hendra, a resident of Waihaong, Nusaniwe, Ambon:

When the conflict first broke out, everyone was panicking. It was chaos, fear. However, whatever happened, we defended ourselves as Muslims, who were required to help other Muslims in times of hardship, like in dealing with attacks or helping with the distribution of food. We men, if there was fighting in a nearby village, some would stay and guard the village and some would go fight.

Maluku subsisted in this condition for months. Because the conflict was centred in Ambon, the men in villages outside Ambon (for example, the Muslims in Jazirah Leihitu or the Christians in Aboru Seram, Saparua, and Haruku) would travel to the city to defend their comrades-in-arms or to fight against their opponents, as needed.

SECOND ESCALATION

The second phase of the conflict was triggered by fighting that began in Poka and spread throughout Ambon. On the first day, 24 July 1999, fires ran rampant throughout the city's economic centre. This area was predominantly inhabited by ethnic Chinese, who fled the city. By this stage of the conflict, combatants had begun using homemade firearms.

This second phase also coincided with the 1999 general election, which was won by the Democratic Party of Indonesia – Struggle (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia – Perjuangan, or PDIP). Having been founded as a coalition of the Christian Party of Indonesia (Partai Kristen Indonesia, or Parkindo), the National Party of Indonesia (Partai Nasional Indonesia, or PNI), and other nationalist parties, PDIP was seen as having strong Christian support in Maluku. Indeed, its electoral victory was well-received by the Christian community in Maluku, which hoped that it could regain seats in the bureaucracy. However, the defeat of the long-reigning Working Groups Party (Partai Golongan Karya, or Golkar) and the Islamic parties that had contested the election – all of which had strong support from Ambonese Muslims – sowed the seeds of further conflict. The Maluku conflict expanded, with the Indonesian military becoming involved. The military, with its close ties to Golkar, was viewed as supporting the Muslims, while the police were seen as close to the Christians. This left state security in a difficult position, as it was unable to properly carry out its duties.

GENDER DYNAMICS

The everyday activities in Ambon at this point were approximately the same as during the first phase of the conflict. Women remained in the domestic sphere, responsible for preparing their families' food. Meanwhile, men were tasked with leaving their villages and fighting (Rumahuru, 2005). One phenomenon is interesting, however. When fighting broke out in Poka, the women of Jazirah Leihitu went to the streets to fight. Except, they stayed in a safe area, far from the reach of their adversaries, and were tasked

with providing food, drinks, and medicine to the male combatants. They were directly involved, thus, in the escalation of the conflict. Sometimes they would passionately encourage the men, primarily their brothers and their husbands, to continue fighting in Poka. This was mentioned by Johra, a resident of Hitu:

When there was an attack on Poka, I took part too, even though I stopped at Benteng Karang or Taenu [border areas between Hitu and Poka]... I encouraged the men. Go forth! No retreat! Whoever retreats is an unbeliever!

Meanwhile, the women in the villages were safe, cooking whatever food was available so that it could be distributed among the men who were fighting.

As the conflict continued, it was generally only the men who could move between villages or conduct activities outside their homes. On the other side of this, many women also made efforts to de-escalate the conflict. Some, for example, prohibited their husbands from leaving the village to fight, instead urging them to only keep watch nearby. They forbade their husbands from travelling elsewhere to fight or defend their religion. This was mentioned by Fatimah:

At the time, I couldn't let my husband and my son leave to fight. I was afraid something would happen to them, because then I let my feelings flow. Life is not about hurting each other or killing each other? Why do that? There will be karma.

Because the economic and bureaucratic activities of the city had ceased, these two groups could only contemplate their situation, deal with local issues, and survive. The women who worked as *papalele* or *jibu-jibu*, or who sold fish and vegetables at the markets, were forced to sell their wares in their villages because this

was seen as safer. This resulted in a number of ‘surprise markets’ – spontaneous trade activities.

THIRD ESCALATION

This third stage began on 26 December 1999, with the razing of the Silo Church and An-Nur Mosque of Ambon. This triggered further conflict outside of Ambon, namely in Masohi, Seram.

During this third phase, there were many points of conflict, with belligerents using weapons similar to those of the security apparatus. This development was seen as indicating the potential involvement of non-Indonesian actors, and as a result, the Indonesian military sent no fewer than 18 battalions to secure central and northern Maluku in March 2000.

In this third stage, the word *peace* was taboo. Grievances between the belligerents were simply too strong, and human life was of little value. The supremacy and certainty of law became but a distant memory, and life appeared dark. Those who sought peace – both Ambonese and migrants – preferred to leave the city.

GENDER DYNAMICS

The everyday activities of the residents of Ambon were similar to those in the first and second phase of the conflict. Women remained within the domestic sphere, and their activities were primarily oriented towards their families and their neighbourhoods. In the refugee camps and military barracks, women greeted each other and communicated as best as they could. Meanwhile, outside the barracks, men were killing each other, justifying themselves as ensuring their survival and defending their villages. The military and police were not able to perform their duties; indeed, some even felt compelled to defend their own religion, as well, and chose to join the conflict with their standard-issue weapons. As such, those who were supposed to maintain their neutrality ultimately found themselves promoting the belligerents’ causes.

Ambon, which had hitherto been known as *manis* (sweet), found itself *menangis* (crying) because of the assaults, killings,

and widespread destruction of property that were perpetrated by the men. This continued, day and night, without end. Young boys and girls had to endure the sounds of gunfire and bombs, or even become involved in the assembly of these weapons. The following statement comes from a person who made bombs during the conflict:

At the time, education wasn't a priority. Fighting for our people was our dream. I was forced to go to Ambusang (a place where bladed weapons were made) to make swords for myself and my brother. Together with a few friends my age, and some younger (age 10 to 14), we made arrows from rebar, and tried to collect the materials for making bombs (matches, TNT). ... Because of the situation, without my parents' knowledge, my friends and I... one of them died during our attack on Nania, Baguala, Ambon... were asked to help carry the bombs. We were on the frontlines, behind the bomber, and we were tasked with giving and igniting the bombs. At the time, honestly, we had joined only to see the fighting, and we were scared of killing and being killed.

During the fighting, men who were not involved in the attacks, or who slept soundly in their beds while others were defending their villages, were viewed as cowards and mocked by their peers. These tensions seemed interminable.

FOURTH ESCALATION: ENTRY OF THE LASKAR JIHAD

The fourth stage in the anarchic conflict in Maluku was marked by the involvement of actors from outside of the province. The radical Islamist militia, the Laskar Jihad, led by Ja'far Umar Thalib and with a force of 10,000 fighters, entered Maluku, tipping the balance of power between Muslims and Christians. The Laskar Jihad had been deliberately established for fighting, and received modern weapons and military training, as well as substantial financial support. The militia viewed the Muslims of Maluku as hav-

ing been oppressed because of anti-Islamic *salibis* (cross-bearers). They were driven by the desire for *jihad*, for defending members of their faith. The Laskar Jihad began attacking Christians, whom they believed were being led by Alex Manuputty and his Moluccan Sovereignty Front (Front Kemerdekaan Maluku, or FKM), a separatist movement affiliated with the forbidden Republic of South Maluku (Republik Maluku Selatan, or RMS).

This uneven battlefield, combined with the accusation that they were affiliated with the FKM, only enraged the Christian combatants. The conflict became even more intense and spread further outside Ambon. Ultimately, leaders of the various religious groups determined it was necessary to begin peace discussions. Together, they produced the Second Malino Accord, a peace treaty for Maluku.

GENDER DYNAMICS

For the women of Ambon, their daily activities remained similar to those in the earlier phases of the conflict. Women were primarily involved in the domestic sphere. The refugees, meanwhile, were sent to villages considered safe from enemy attacks. The increased ferocity with which people defended their own religious group was seen in the actions of both men and of women. With the ever-increasing number of victims and amount of destruction, such partisanship was unavoidable. Many in Ambon thought that the conflict was a sign of the apocalypse. This was mentioned, for example, by Umar Mewar, a resident of Ponegoro, Nusaniwe, Ambon:

At the time, what crossed my mind was that, perhaps the conflict in Ambon would prove the trigger for a holy war around the world... starting with us. So I didn't think much about the future.

Similarly, Hairia Fitri, a young woman from Waihaong, Nusaniwe, Ambon, said:

What I knew at the time was that there were signs of the end

of days. As it has been said, there would be a great war before the apocalypse. At the time, we weren't sure if we wanted to live, but didn't want to die.

The arrival of jihadis from outside Ambon reinvigorated the courage and faith of the Muslim men in the city. Although not all of them accepted the arrival of the Laskar Jihad, they nonetheless recognised that these new combatants offered them numerical superiority over the Christians. This was mentioned by Irfan, a youth living in Waiheru, Teluk Ambon, Ambon:

Nobody in our complex liked the Laskar Jihad, because they were quite different, especially in their prayers. They did them a bit differently than we did. I thought maybe they were bringing a new religious sect to us, and so we didn't really like the Laskar Jihad.

The arrival of the Laskar Jihad in Ambon created a new dynamic in the interactions of the Muslims of Ambon, among both women and men. This was particularly evident in the clothing they wore. The Middle Eastern-style clothing worn by the male jihadis left the Ambonese men with a sense of unease, as they saw it as unsuited to the culture and fashion of the Ambonese Muslims. The women, meanwhile, began wearing loose clothing and even niqabs, creating a cultural contradiction that upset many.

On the other hand, the jihadis' fierce fighting to defend the Muslims under the slogan, '*jihad di jalan Allah*' (Holy War on God's Way), as well as their willingness to fight to the death, led the Ambonese Muslims to follow suit. Even though they were faced with a cultural dilemma, they continued their fighting, seeking to uphold the dignity of the Ambonese Muslim community. Fighting became increasingly fierce in the days following the Laskar Jihad's arrival in Ambon.

The Laskar Jihad's wedging itself into the conflict enraged the Christians, male and female alike. In turn, the Muslims be-

gan spreading rumours that a group of Laskar Kristus (Soldiers of Christ) had arrived in Ambon. In such a situation, people felt unsure about life, but were unwilling to die.

The conflict in Ambon escalated even further after rumours began to spread of a group of Christian fighters operating under the command of Alex Manuputty and his FKM. The spectre of the RMS contributed significantly to the escalation of the conflict. Various social organisations and Muslim communities involved men and women in protests against the RMS. This peaked when a convoy was spotted in Ambon, waving the Benang Raja (the RMS flag), resulting in renewed fighting.

THE DE-ESCALATION OF THE AMBON CONFLICT

The de-escalation of the conflict in Poka and Rumah Tiga began in 1999 through dialogue between the leaders of these two regions. At the time, the two communities (Muslim and Christian) swore a joint oath, under the leadership of an imam and a priest. This was mentioned by Noni, a women's activist:

At the time, I was involved, one of the people holding the red and white cloth, together with the Muslim and Christian women as well as the men. We swore an oath, that we would never be tempted by the situation in Ambon. This oath we swore created a bond between Poka and Rumah Tiga, so that we would not be driven by the heated situation in Ambon. This oath was sworn in the auditorium of Pattimura University, Ambon. But afterwards, some did violate their oath.

Subsequently, in 2001, the government – through a joint battalion sent by Jakarta – promoted the de-escalation of the conflict by conducting sweeps. These sweeps targeted the weapons used by both communities, and included field operations to capture snipers and attempts to eradicate the Laskar Jihad and Front Kemerdekaan Maluku. With civilians tagging along, the security forces weren't alone as they carried out these sweeps.

One factor that may have promoted the successful de-escalation of the conflict in 2001 was the restoration of social trust in the military and police, in contrast to 1999 and 2000, when the Ambonese people were apathetic towards – or even distrustful of – the security forces, because they had sided with certain groups. Similarly, in the earlier stages of fighting, they believed that these forces were not taking their mandate to stop the violence seriously. For example, many Ambonese were killed by military gunfire resulting from failures to follow proper procedures. In 2001, however, the situation had changed, and the military and police were perceived as being seriously dedicated towards ending the violence (Safi, 2017).

Before the formal meetings that led to the Second Malino Accord, the women of Ambon had been involved in conflict resolution efforts at the grassroots level. Intentionally and unintentionally, they became activists in the conflict resolution process.

The intentional conflict resolution activities undertaken by women included, for example, a series of meetings between women of different religious backgrounds that ultimately spurred the founding of the Movement of Concerned Women (Gerakan Perempuan Peduli, or GPP). This movement sought to establish communications between the various belligerents in Ambon, and served to bridge women at the grassroots level and enabled them to access (male) government officials and advocate for women's issues. It set out to end the fighting and thereby protect the children of Ambon from the ongoing conflict. For example, with the approval of the Governor of Maluku, on 5 September 1999, the movement made a formal declaration urging an end to the violence and fighting. The next day, this declaration was distributed to various media outlets, while GPP went to the streets and tied pieces of fabric to young boys and girls, to their own heads, to *becak*, and to cars. This activity was not met with universal approval, however. The women received threats from men who desired the continuation of the conflict, as did some female students.

In terms of unintentionally impacting the conflict resolution process, this can be seen, for example, in the activities of the

papalele, the women who worked in the traditional markets of Ambon. These *papalele* continued their mercantile activities, undaunted by the conflict, thereby influencing the public perception of security in Ambon. Although they did not intend to end the conflict, the *papalele* were still able to ensure continued communications between the warring religious groups through the markets.

Women are often seen as weak, and as such also as the primary victims of conflict. However, women are also recognised as ‘political innocents’, granting them greater access through their household activities as well as through their social and political affairs. Women serve as important connectors, because they are able to cross the boundaries between belligerents. For example, *jibu-jibu* (fishmongers) were able to sell their wares even in border communities that were being guarded by the military. Furthermore, the fact that men would take turns as drivers in their own communities provides further evidence of how people at the grassroots level understood the conflict. This was mentioned by Awat Ternate, the former *raja* (village chief) of Batu Merah, Sirimau, Ambon:

The conflict was not a religious conflict. It was conflict between groups of people. They only used religion as their trigger. For example, a Christian driver could take a load of fish from Passo, and when he reached Lampu Lima he’d stop and get out. A Muslim driver would get in, because he’d be passing through a Muslim area. After reaching Batu Merah, the Muslim driver would get out, and a Christian driver would continue, because this was a Christian area. Is this religious [conflict]? If it were religious [conflict], we wouldn’t want to help each other.

Furthermore, the trade activities in Mardika helped shape perceptions of security. The people of Ambon could see that the *papalele*, whether Muslim or Christian, mingled in the markets without being hurt. Initially, the trade activities in Mardika were

only conducted between *papalele* and in a short period of time. However, over time, customers from both communities began shopping at the market again. Aside from recognising that Mardika was protected by the Indonesian security forces, these customers also travelled to the village because the commodities were relatively cheaper than those found elsewhere. Foodstuffs, such as fish and vegetables, could be acquired while still fresh, and more selections were available at the market than from a reseller. This further shaped the public perception of security, and led people to conduct their transactions in the market. In time, the market became a place where people could mingle and interact without considering their religious backgrounds. Through the haggling process, communications were established. Ultimately, because of its role in restoring interfaith relations at the grassroots level, the market became known as Pasar Baku-Bae (Reconciliation Market) or Pasar Perdamaian (Peace Market).

Peacebuilding activities at the grassroots level were invigorated when the Second Malino Accord was announced and provided the necessary momentum for the further de-escalation of the conflict. In various places, local communities initiated their own peace initiatives, intended primarily to implement the Second Malino Accord. A range of activities were undertaken, including sports competitions, art contests, and cultural events involving men and women from both the Muslim and Christian communities. Ultimately, such cultural festivals were used to present the history of Maluku and involved youths of different religious backgrounds, something that has been maintained until the present day. Additionally, university students sponsored interfaith dialogues on their campuses.

When discussing the de-escalation of the Ambon conflict, one therefore cannot ignore the role of civil society in creating neutral spaces and promoting relatively inclusive social interactions (Lestari, 2013). Such activities were primarily driven by non-governmental organisations, academics, and religious/community leaders, from a variety of religious and ethnic backgrounds. Some

drew on the *pela gandong* ties between predominantly Christian and Muslim villages. Others sought to expand the public spaces for reconciliation (*baku bae*), including markets, terminals, government offices, sports arenas and fields, and schools.

CONCLUSION

Everyday life in Maluku remains, in principle, strongly influenced by its patriarchal system. As such, women have generally had little influence or involvement in affairs outside the household. During the Ambon conflict of 1999–2002, women were generally not involved in activities outside their homes or their communities; men were the ones with the greatest access to space and time, both in defending their villages and in fighting their enemies.

The gender dynamics of the Ambon conflict were unequal, as women had limited mobility or involvement. The prime exceptions were those involved in the GPP and the *papalele* who sold their wares fearlessly and thereby laid the foundation for peacebuilding at the grassroots level.

Conflict transformed the perspectives, behaviours, and lifestyles of the Ambonese, Muslim and Christian alike. It made them aware of the importance of implementing religious values and norms in their everyday activities, as well as the need to maintain their ancestral socio-cultural values (i.e. the philosophy of *Ale Rasa Beta Rasa* [you feel, I feel] and *pela gandong* bonds). By building upon this foundation, reconciliation efforts have since been able to go further than would otherwise have been possible.

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THE ROLE OF THE *LATUPATI* CUSTOMARY INSTITUTION AS A CONFLICT RESOLUTION MECHANISM IN MALUKU

Restia Christianty

INTRODUCTION

The hostilities that occurred in Ambon, Maluku, following the fall of the New Order regime offers an example of a long-lasting social conflict. Breaking out in the late afternoon of 19 January 1999, it was a manifestation of various conflicts that traced their roots back to the Dutch colonial era and into the New Order (Asyhatri, 2014). Its effects on local society were quite broad, with many residents losing family members, their possessions, and their livelihoods. As the conflict raged, it disrupted nearly all systems present on the island, including the government, customary kinship networks, and the socio-cultural structures that had been developed over generations. For example, government offices became segregated, divided between the Muslim and Christian communities, with people required to seek offices designated for their

specific religious group; this negatively impacted cooperation. The economy was likewise disrupted, with markets, shopping centres, and banks experiencing segregation.

In resolving such conflict, reconciliation is integral, for it is one stage in the resolution (or, peacebuilding) process. Peacebuilding must be understood as an open process, and one that consists of various stages. Social conflict, meanwhile, must be understood as occurring as a result of a hierarchy of social interactions, involving a wide range of factors. Conflict resolution can only be optimally realised once it is combined with relevant mechanisms, which can only effectively be applied in conflict resolution where they involve comprehensive efforts to create a lasting peace. According to Ralf Dahrendorf (in Bakri, 2015), effective conflict resolution relies on three factors. First, belligerents must acknowledge the conflict in which they are involved. Second, the interests being promoted must be laid out, such that belligerents understand each other's demands. And third, belligerents must agree on a set of rules for the new interactions between them.

One component that was paramount in the peacebuilding process in Maluku was customary law, or *adat*. Customary structures have been used to peacefully resolve disputes and mitigate potential future conflict. This has included the *Latupati*, customary leaders with the charisma and authority to enforce values of kinship, provide balance, create harmony, and prevent or resolve disputes and conflict. The role of the *Latupati* in dealing with conflict is significant, as they have been recognised for their influence on the welfare and order of traditional communities. The *Latupati*, thus, offer an example of how local wisdom and custom can provide important mechanisms for conflict resolution. The question, then, is how did the *Latupati* act to bring peace to the Ambon conflict?

CUSTOMARY VALUES AS AN IMPORTANT ELEMENT OF *LATUPATI*

At its core, *adat* serves to create and maintain order within a community. Rooted extensively in ethical and religious norms,

adat offers a set of unwritten rules that create harmony both horizontally (between community members) and vertically (between community members and God).

As with other legal systems, customary law develops within, and is maintained by, a specific society. It grows out of the real-life needs, lifestyles, and worldviews that constitute the culture of its society (Hendra, 2013). The *Latupati* institution, as part of the customary legal system of Maluku, offers government officials from various villages (*negeri*) within their jurisdiction both a forum and a place to meet and discuss their situations and determine the correct courses of action. It may provide decisions regarding an issue, such as disputes between two villages, or apply customary law. It should be recognised that the *latupati* institution is rooted in a kinship system, in genealogical ties that follow the patrilineal line, as well as a shared language, territory, custom, tradition, and habitus. In its implementation, it has been used to create stronger ties between the diverse communities of Maluku. Over time, this organisation has been shaped by its social and cultural contexts, as well as the inter-village and inter-family systems of Maluku, and has been used to create social harmony and order (Bakri, 2015). As such, it serves as an important line of defence against the disintegration of Moluccan society, preserving and maintaining kinship ties between all Moluccans.

These ties are founded on a concept known as *Pela Gandong*, which refers to the blood and symbolic ties between two villages. These villages may be located on the same island or a different one, or they may have the same or different ethnic or religious majority. These *Pela Gandong* ties have an important effect, as they involve all members of society in the preservation of unity and maintenance of social bonds.

Pela gandong relations may involve kinship between people of different religions, and in such contexts infer communities' practicing their religions without seeking to influence others' religious beliefs; harmonious interfaith relations, thus, may be considered implicit within the concept of *Pela Gandong*. Such kinship ties

are important in the local cultural framework, and guide the behaviour of local residents at home, within their family, and in the community. Conflict resolution, using local approaches and systems, can therefore be achieved using these *Pela Gandong* bonds. The Ambonese say that the *pela gandong* system was created and implemented by their ancestors to promote a peaceful society that is both pluralistic and heterogenous (Bakri, 2015).

Reflecting the cultural values contained within the *Pela Gandong* system, the *Latupati* have contributed significantly to the creation of stability and security in Maluku. They have always sought to create true peace, one maintained through the highest wisdom and morals that reflect local values (characteristics) and bonds (ideologies). They have also sought to integrate all members of Moluccan society under a shared local cultural identity. The *Latupati* occupy a significant position within Moluccan society, and even today, the people of Maluku still staunchly adhere to the traditional teachings of their ancestors. This can be seen in all aspects of Moluccan social life, including the continued practice of rituals that are recognised as having religio-magic importance. Moluccans have maintained their own kinship system and social structure, based on tradition and key teachings passed down from their ancestors.

Maluku has a patrilineal system, with kinship based on the father's line. This system is the foundation of the family unit, marriage norms, and inheritance mechanisms. All of the rules and mechanisms of Moluccan society are consequently rooted in this patrilineal system, under which women are prohibited from holding customary leadership roles. This was mentioned by Upu Latu, the leader (*raja*) of Hitu Lama:

In the customary structure, women may not serve as office-holders or as decision-makers. This is seen as taboo. They must only do what has been decided by the *raja* and the elders. For such things, in principle, the decisions are made by the men.

THE ROLE OF THE *LATUPATI* IN CONFLICT RESOLUTION BETWEEN 1999 AND 2005

Efforts to reconcile the belligerents in the Ambon conflict began as early as 1999, from a variety of stakeholders, including the central government, regional government, Indonesian parliament, academics, the Human Rights Commission, and non-governmental organisations. Almost none of these efforts were known to the general populace, barring the few that were implemented following the Second Malino Accord.

Other reconciliation efforts used a customary approach (Krisandi et al., 2013: 8), which sought to restore the kinship bonds between the people of Maluku. One example is the *Panas Pela*, a ritual conducted by the Central Maluku Regency Government as a means of restoring the bonds between the villages with existing *pela* ties. In this, the role of the *Latupati* was significant. They established the Moluccan Council of *Latupati* (*Majelis Latupati Maluku*), which may be seen as having reasserted the role of the *raja* in contemporary society. Within traditional law, the *raja* act as mediators who resolve conflict between different community members (Tualeka, 2012).

Aside from attempting to restore the *Pela Gandong* ties, the *raja* strove for peace between warring communities by creating a *Latupati* Forum (*Forum Latupati*). This forum was established with the intent of promoting cohesion between the elites of the various communities and therefore creating a more conducive environment for peacebuilding. The *Latupati* also served to counter rumours that had the potential to escalate the conflict, using their standing within their respective communities to dispel untruths that spread through Ambon. Their conflict resolution efforts emphasised the *Pela Gandong* values and involved two stages of consolidation:

1. **Internal consolidation.** This consolidation aimed to examine the quality of existing *Pela Gandong* bonds and determine concrete actions that could maintain these bonds and pro-

mote peaceful interactions between different villages. With this knowledge, the bonds between communities could be improved and used to unite the different factions. At this stage, consolidation was handled separately, Christians with Christians and Muslims with Muslims.

2. **External consolidation.** Consolidation during this stage involved initiatives to create meetings between the different communities. Both Muslims and Christians sent delegates (customary leaders, community members, and religious figures) to discuss the potential to reinforce *Pela Gandong* culture.

Generally, in Maluku, religious differences have been bridged through the strength of patrilineal kinship bonds. One family may have its own religion, while another may have their own, but all members of the village are able to worship peacefully. For example, when conflict broke out between the villages of Passo and Batu Merah (which are united by *Pela Gandong* bonds), the *Latupati* communicated directly with the belligerents to ensure that tensions did not spread further. The way in which the *Pela Gandong* bonds of these two villages were used to ensure peace within and between them was recalled by H. Awat, the *Latupati* of Batu Merah:

When the conflict broke out in the city, the youths of Batu Merah wanted to go and fight, but the *raja* before me, he said ‘If you dare [go], I’ll have you go attack Passo.’ Finally, the youths didn’t go fight.

Meanwhile, in Passo, its *Latupati*, Theresia Maitimu, shared a similar experience:

If there are any problems between our two villages, we will get involved immediately and handle things, so no violence happens.

In March 1999, the *Latupati* and *raja* of 47 villages in Ambon met to determine a means of achieving a peaceful solution to the conflict. They sought to create trust between the Muslims and Christians through the *Panas Pela* programme, despite the instability of the time.

Under the *Panas Pela* programme, meetings were held between villages with existing *Pela* bonds (such as Batu Merah and Passo). History has shown that the *Pela Gandong* system has frequently helped resolve problems in Moluccan society (Bakri, 2015). Institutionally, the *Latupati* and the *Latupati* Forum also played an important role in bringing peace to Maluku, including in the signing of the Second Malino Accord on 12 August 2002 (Sahalessy, 2011).

2005–PRESENT

It cannot be ignored that horizontal conflict within and between different communities, particularly neighbouring villages, has continued. For example, fights have broken out between the youths of several villages in Central Maluku. This situation can be attributed primarily to the ethnic and religious heterogeneity of Moluccan society; such differences may create divides, which in turn can lead to violence and conflict. Outbreaks of violence are regular, particularly between neighbouring villages, and fights between individual villagers have sometimes led to mass mobilisation, only for it to be stopped by Ambon's customary institutions, with the assistance of the government.

The most common source of conflict in Ambonese communities is land disputes, in which two or more residents claim the same piece of land. This often occurs when land boundaries are signified only by natural and impermanent markers such as trees and stones. When such disputes emerge within a community, the preferred means of resolution is not the formal judicial system, but rather the *Latupati*, who, as traditional arbiters, are seen as willing to consider and protect community members' customary rights. The *Latupati* and the traditional arbitration system thus continue

to play important roles in the conflict resolution process.

A number of factors have influenced the roles of the *Latupati* in conflict resolution, namely social hegemony, obeisance, and recognition of or respect for their decisions. The continued strength of customary law, along with residents' awareness of the importance of maintaining customs and traditions, has buttressed the *Latupati* and their social role. The *Latupati* have the authority to resolve disputes and shape customary law, working – in this context – as a forum rather than as individuals. Their emphasis on rules and principles indicates an awareness of such a procedure being needed to produce results (Steni, 2010: 22). *Latupati*, thus, remain important because they create and enforce justice. In conflict resolution, they use specific strategies to implement peace programmes, such as promoting social equality, reinforcing access to local wisdom, and strengthening existing customary structures. Customary law is an expansion of tradition, includes within it specific sanction mechanisms, and guides customary leaders in making decisions for the good of their communities and the relations between them. Customary law, as part of local custom, develops within specific communities. It includes specific sanctions, known as 'customary fines' (*Denda Adat*) or 'customary punishments' (*Kena Adat*), and has specific fora that involve elders, religious leaders, and village officials. As such, the *Latupati* have the power to address problems in their communities by using targeted approaches.

In fulfilling their moral duty, the *Latupati* have over time developed a specific approach for resolving problems and promoting peacebuilding:

1. The *Latupati* meet with the *raja* (village leaders). This meeting is the first step towards creating peace between two villages or customary communities, and represents a collaborative peacebuilding effort involving people with shared interests and goals.
2. The *Latupati* meet with village staff, or *Saniri*. In this meeting,

the *Latupati* attempt to identify the best means of creating peace between the belligerents. This meeting is called unilaterally by the *Latupati* institution, and during the process they approach the *Saniri* of the villages and begin talking with the belligerents to determine the best means of ending the conflict. Once an agreement is reached, it is announced to the public, so that they may continue their discussions with good intentions.

3. The *Latupati* meet with the customary leaders (community, religious, and youth) of the villages. This is designed to be a follow-up to the second meeting, and serves to ascertain the degree to which an agreement can be accepted by the belligerents. In this, the *Latupati* are perceived as part of an independent institution.
4. The *Latupati* meet with the general public (*Saniri Besar*) in the villages. Not all conflicts finish with an oath. However, such an oath does frequently result from the peace process. This ritual is intended to provide direct evidence that the peace created through the *Latupati* is morally binding. Such oaths therefore have their own value in maintaining peace. This is rooted in the spiritual and cultural power of custom, one that is maintained as part of Moluccan identity.

Villages that fail to abide by their peace agreements are sanctioned. Some of these sanctions are customary, passed by the *Latupati*, while others are enforced using national law. Possible sanctions include:

INDIRECT SANCTIONS

Indirect sanctions are seen as occurring when the cosmic and religio-magic standards of the community are violated. This belief comes from the principle that one must live in balance with nature and the mystical forces within. Violations of this principle – such as by breaking one’s oath – may lead to disaster and misfortune for the entire village, and indeed disasters are perceived as punishment for such transgressions.

DIRECT SANCTIONS

Direct sanctions involve concrete action, meaning that they are real and actual punishments for specific deeds. Violators receive clear and explicit punishment, in public, as their misdeeds are seen as requiring such sanctions.

In resolving land disputes, for example, Hitu and the other villages of Central Maluku use a *Molo* (diving) ritual. When land disputes arise from unclear boundaries, these disputes may be resolved by having the involved parties dive into the sea absent their diving equipment. The specific ritual is carried out as follows. Each party carries large stones with them as they dive, and then they face off against each other underwater; this is open to the public, and often draws spectators from the village. The first person to rise to the surface is the loser. This ritual is used only in land disputes where neither party has sufficient evidence to prove their claim.

Other rituals are used to resolve conflict safely and peacefully. Take, for example, the making of peace between Hitu and Mamala. The conflict between these villages was resolved using a customary and religious approach. It began with the sacrificing of a goat and concluded with the swearing of an oath, and it was believed that disaster would come to anyone who violated this oath.

WOMEN'S ISSUES AND THE *LATUPATI* CONFLICT RESOLUTION PROCESS

In the patrilineal system of the Moluccan people, particularly in Central Maluku, men clearly occupy a higher position than women. Men are the heirs, the continuers of their family names, the members and leaders of customary society, and the decision makers in their families and their communities. Women, meanwhile, generally hold much lower positions in their communities. They cannot receive inheritances, cannot continue their family names (as, after marriage, they take the name of their husband), and have no standing in customary society.

Likewise, in decision-making processes – including in peacebuilding – women are not on the frontlines. Men are the primary

decision makers, marginalising women even though they, too, frequently fall victim to conflict (Marlay & Clark, 1999). Women are similarly marginalised in conflict resolution, which is seen as part of the male domain. Ultimately, in customary conflict resolution processes, women's rights are often not accommodated for, and their views are only heard by their husbands and family members, if at all.

Even then, however, women have significant potential to create peace and then promote reconciliation post-conflict. This can be seen, for example, in their economic activities and ensuing social interactions (Suwardono, 2012). In Hitu, despite being limited in their economic activities by the conflict, women were nonetheless able to influence the peacebuilding process. The *Jibu-Jibu* (fishmongers), who sold their wares at traditional markets, continued their mercantile activities and thus influenced public perceptions of the conflict and their own security. Although these mercantile activities were not deliberately undertaken to influence the conflict, these women were able to establish lines of communications between villages, and consequently had a positive effect on the resolution process.

CONCLUSION

The customary law of Maluku has been informed by both territorial and genealogical factors, which have in turn influenced the creation of institutions that reflect the traditions and customs of the Moluccan people. Today, the *Latupati* – as a customary legal institution – reflects the importance of togetherness and kinship in Moluccan society, where people are seen without consideration of their social status or religious background. For this reason, it must be preserved to ensure the continued security of Maluku and the safety of its people.

In their contributions to the resolution of the Ambon conflict, the *Latupati* relied heavily on the concepts of reconciliation and *Pela Gandong*, the traditional ties that unite different villages and promote the creation of peace. Such socio-cultural values, deeply

rooted in Moluccan society, offer an important means of creating social cohesion and unity, as well as of gathering support for reconciliation and reconstruction. Culture and kinship have been continuously implemented by Moluccan society to create synergy and promote peace. Likewise, it is necessary to contextualise the *Latupati* as a customary institution that has continued to promote social cohesion across Maluku, in times of both conflict and peace.

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WOMEN WHO PERSEVERE IN CONFLICT ZONES

Tabrani Yunis

THE ACEH CONFLICT AND THE POSITION OF WOMEN

Tension between the central government of Indonesia in Jakarta and the province of Aceh in northern Sumatra has been a consistent theme throughout the respective histories of the nation and its province. This has taken the form of a series of conflicts, which began in the early years of Indonesian independence, and spanned the Sukarno regime (1945–1967) through the early years of political reform (1998–2004). These conflicts influenced the way all Acehnese men and women lived their lives. The main differences between these conflicts lied in their tendencies and their causes. In the nascent years of Indonesia's independence, the opposition in Aceh was part of Indonesia's war against Darul Islam/Tentara Islam Indonesia (The Islamic State/Islamic Army of Indonesia), an Islamist movement led by Tgk. Muhammad Daud Beureuh.

This conflict ended in the 1950s. However, on 4 December 1976, Hasan Tiro established the Gerakan Aceh Merdeka (Free Aceh Movement, or GAM). His declaration of Acehnese independence laid the seeds for further conflict, as the central government was unwilling to allow Aceh to gain independence or sovereignty. In response to Tiro's declaration, the central government initiated military action against GAM, with the express goal of eradicating it.

History notes that this later conflict was exacerbated after the New Order government under Suharto (r. 1968–1998) declared Aceh to be a Military Operations Area (Daerah Operasi Militer, or DOM). The operations of the Indonesian military led to significant suffering among the people of Aceh, especially those living along the eastern coast (Pidie, North Aceh, and East Aceh, before new administrative divisions were created). This period as a Military Operations Area, lasting from 1989 to 1998, was a dark one in the history of these regencies.

Numerous tragedies befell the people of these regencies, many of which have yet to be fully disclosed. During the KKA Intersection Massacre, for instance, hundreds of innocent people – men and women, youths and elders, and even children – were injured. Data collected by the Fact-Finding Team for North Aceh revealed that 40 people were killed in the massacre, with a further 115 people severely wounded; of these, six were children. Meanwhile, data released by the Coalition of Human Rights NGOs in Aceh recorded 46 people killed (two during treatment at Dr Zainoel Abidin Banda Aceh Hospital), 156 people shot, and 10 people missing.

The story of *Rumoh Geudong* is another one that frequently emerges in discussions of death and torture in Aceh. *Rumoh Geudong* was a large house located in Billie Aron Village, Geulumpang Tiga District, Pidie Aceh Regency. During the Military Operations Area period, *Rumoh Geudong* was used as a military concentration camp (as well as a guard post) by the Kopassus Special Forces. Acehnese people were detained and tortured at the camp, and as such *Rumoh Geudong* is remembered by the people

of Aceh – especially in Pidie – as a symbol of military cruelty during the conflict. The spectre of this traditional Acehnese home continues to haunt the memories of the Acehnese people. In 2013, the National Commission on Human Rights Fact-Finding Team, led by Otto Nur Abdullah, released a report that found thousands of human rights violations in Aceh. The team found that, in the case of *Rumoh Geudong*, 3,504 people fell victim to military violence (Suparta, 2017).

The ten-year duration of the Military Operations Area ended with the beginning of political reform in Indonesia. The Acehnese people felt grateful for this political reform, which brought about the fall of President Suharto. Among the policies implemented by the new Indonesian government was one that ended the military operations in Aceh – something of which the Acehnese had only been able to dream during the conflict. They saw political reform as giving Aceh the momentum it needed to escape the cycle of conflict. Reality would ultimately prove otherwise, however. This political reform enabled new conflict in Aceh, as hatred for the central government and military, accumulated over decades, continued unabated into the early years of the post-Suharto era. Instead of winding down, fighting in Aceh escalated rapidly, reaching a new level of intensity.

This can be seen, for example, in the phenomena that emerged during the early years of political reform. Many parties, both inside and outside Aceh, sought to expose the war crimes perpetrated by the Indonesian military. Meanwhile, GAM, ever seeking to release Aceh from the grip of the Indonesian government, grew increasingly bold, spreading its influence and urging the common people to support Acehnese sovereignty. Such tendencies became increasingly prominent as calls for a referendum were voiced with growing fervour and began to receive support from the Acehnese people. This was reflected, for example, in the orations of the *Sidang Umum Masyarakat Pejuang Referendum* (General Assembly of People Fighting for a Referendum, or SU-MPR). It is estimated that 1.5 million people attended this assembly, which was

held at the Baiturrahman Grand Mosque on 8 November 1999. At the time, all elements of society sought a dignified end to the Aceh conflict.

As time would soon bear out, however, political reform did more than enable fact-finding missions into the violence that occurred in Aceh. It also triggered the growth and spread of new problems, which escalated the conflict and brought it to new heights. Open war broke out, and the conflict – initially concentrated on the eastern coast of Aceh – spread throughout the province. Regular gunfights and other forms of armed violence threatened the lives of Acehnese civilians. Beyond being caught between GAM and the Indonesian Armed Forces (Army and Police), civilians also found themselves at the receiving end of regular threats from ‘unknown persons’ (known locally as *Orang Tak Dikenal* or *OTK*), who were always blamed for the gunfighting and killings that occurred both during and after the Military Operations Area period.

Following the designation of Aceh as a Military Operations Area, the province became closed to people from outside it. This isolating of the province was made even clearer following the declaration of a military emergency in Aceh in 2003 by President Megawati Sukarnoputri. With this declaration, the suffering of the people of Aceh worsened. Various efforts were made to change this situation, involving such international organisations as the Henry Dunant Centre, but peace remained an as yet unattainable dream.

Paranoia and suspicion became increasingly common, and the people of Aceh mostly chose to keep silent. They were afraid that speaking would needlessly put them at risk of losing life and limb. This was the experience of every Acehnese civilian, male and female, young and old. However, the trauma was felt most deeply by the women of Aceh, even after peace was attained, because many of them lost their husbands during the conflict, the pain of which continued to be felt for years afterwards.

THE EXPERIENCES AND AGENCY OF WOMEN DURING THE CONFLICT

Conflict had its own consequences, both direct and indirect, for women. Generally, men are the ones who contribute most significantly to conflict (ICRC, 2014). Similarly, it is men who most often produce and escalate conflict, whether it be at the local, national, or international level. Even when they are in the same conflict zone as men, women have different experiences than the men who are involved directly in the conflict. They might not be positioned as actors in the conflict, but they must still face its consequences.

Various narratives of women's experiences in Acehese conflict areas have been found. The story of the women in an Acehese village named Cot Kheng is understood throughout the province as a tragic one. Cot Kheng, a village in Pidie Jaya, has become known as *Bukit Janda* (Hill of Widows). It gained this nickname after its men were kidnapped and killed by unknown persons, whom local residents believe to have been elements of the military who targeted these men as suspected GAM members. Previously, many of these male villagers had fled the settlement. Therefore, women were left as the guardians of their houses, the protectors of their children, and the backbones of their families.

The following is one experience narrated by a woman named J, a resident of *Bukit Janda*.

At the time, I was very pregnant. At eight at night, I went to report to the *keusyik* [village chief], near Nek Uma's place. There were some people there, dressed in red berets, bearing arms. I had to report twice a day, once at 8 p.m. and again at 8 a.m. At the time, my mother was still around. I'd go with her, worried that I'd be beaten. That was after they took the father of my children, two days after.

This is part of J's story about her experiences in Aceh during the conflict. She directly experienced the violence in her vil-

lage. Generally, in Aceh, when men were in a village, they were the ones expected to report to the military and show their identity cards. Outside Cot Kheng, women were generally not required to report. However, because Cot Kheng was almost entirely wiped of its male population, women were expected to handle this task, twice a day, with all their deepest fears in tow.

J continued:

At the time, the Military Operations Area was still in effect. That was the worst. My husband was taken away one night. The father of my children was cutting the rice near the mosque, and he was taken. After arriving there, he was taken along the streets through Kumba Village. At the district chief's office, they stopped. On the fifth night, they were taken away through Trieng Gadeng. There, the five of them were shot. One from Lhok Pusong; one from Alue Sane; two from Uteun Bayu; and one, the father of my children. So the five of them were shot. They were buried together, in one hole. I went to the grave after the Eid holiday. I went to the grave to clean it, but the area had already been cleaned by the local people. Afterwards, we couldn't go anywhere. People couldn't go anywhere. I also had to find a way, one past Meurandeh Alue.

J's narrative presents how her husband died, shot by the Indonesian military together with four other men. This was not the only such incident in the village. Many other women had similar experiences in the villages of Aceh. Elsewhere, women were even tortured, raped, or killed.

Galuh Wandita, the director of Asia and Justice Rights (AJAR), offered another narrative that she felt illustrated the tragedy of Aceh: *Rumoh Geudong*. According to Wandita, *Rumoh Geudong* is a silent witness of the Aceh conflict. It was a place of bitter experiences, as women had to travel there to retrieve their husbands' dead bodies (Razali, 2018). Wandita explained:

It is here that the values of humanity, our values as human beings, were shed. What occurred here is a humanitarian tragedy, one that must be remembered, not only in Aceh and Indonesia, but by people around the world.

According to G, as recorded by Suparta in ‘*Taloe Ingatan Rumoh Geudong*’ (Suparta, 2017), if *Rumoh Geudong* is seen as a dark point in Acehnese history, its victims must be seen as points of hope. Their right to the truth must be asserted. R, one victim who is now 58 years old, told of her experiences with *Rumoh Geudong*. At the time, she was eight months pregnant. She went to *Rumoh Geudong*, after being asked by the village chief, to see her husband’s dead body; according to the information she received, her husband had been shot at Amok Village and taken to *Rumoh Geudong* (Razali, 2018).

Upon arriving at *Rumoh Geudong*, the soldiers asked her, ‘Your husband was in GAM, isn’t he?’ R answered, simply, ‘My husband is not in GAM. My husband is not involved with GAM.’ Dissatisfied with this answer, the soldiers took R up to a room in the house’s second storey. In this room, according to R, she was stripped and raped by a number of soldiers. After they were satisfied, they covered her body – head to toe – in gasoline. ‘They were going to burn me alive,’ she recalls. However, this did not occur. In the early hours of the morning, she was released. Even today, she does not know where her husband’s body is located. All she has left of him is his *sarong* (a garment worn around the waist), perforated with bullet holes, and the *parang* (sickle) that he had used for farming. For her, the conflict left very deep and enduring wounds.

FH, an agricultural engineer, was born in Ule Glee, Pidie Jaya. In 1990, she chose to become a women’s and human rights activist. She focused primarily on the victims of human rights abuses in Cot Kheng. In an interview with *Pena Journal*, she said:

I saw the state perpetrating violence against its citizens. Human beings have the right to life. But every time I'd return to my hometown, there'd be gunshots ringing off. In the mornings, people would whisper, 'Who's been beaten? Has someone been shot?' ... I felt myself motivated. Even chickens don't die like that.

Many women in conflict areas experience extraordinary and even inhumane treatment. Millions of women pay the price for armed conflict. They face violence, including sexual violence, as well as forced relocation, loss of loved ones, and even death. They also lose their freedom and suffer in various other ways (Veteran Affairs, 2016).

Armed conflict and war forces women to persevere, to take over many roles that are often given to men. Women must ensure their continued survival, and many of them – knowingly or otherwise, voluntarily or by necessity – take over traditionally male roles. Women consequently find themselves performing a multitude of diverse tasks when conflict worms its way into their lives.

As a result of the Aceh conflict, women were not only forced to deal with the Indonesian military and police, but the separatist GAM, as well. Many women were forced to take on roles that they had never held before, becoming spies, couriers, and logistics providers, and even bearing arms and joining the fighting. Inong Ballee, the women's branch of GAM, claimed some 3,000 members.

War often leaves women in dangerous positions, but they are not necessarily vulnerable or even victims. Sometimes they take an active role in times of conflict, as activists or as fighters. Many have offered – and continue to offer – assistance and protection to victims.

The narratives above have presented some of the experiences of women throughout Aceh during one of its most volatile periods. Yet to be voiced, however, are the sorrowful narratives of the women who were caught between the Indonesian government and GAM. Many findings have shown that the conflict that

plagued Aceh for more than 30 years had significant detrimental effects on women. It, and the violence that pervaded the province, transformed many aspects of women's lives. This included, for example, transformations in their responsibilities during and after the conflict. Women, who before the conflict had been burdened with domestic duties, had to accept dual roles. At home, their duties were still what has been known as *sumur, dapur, dan kasur* (the well, the kitchen, and the bed), but as the conflict wore on, these duties began to extend beyond this traditional domain. In addition to continuing to take care of their households, they were also expected to earn an income for their families. As widows, these women were also expected to raise and tend to their children. Even more tragically, many women – particularly those whose husbands were members of GAM (sometimes voluntarily and sometimes not) – simultaneously became shields and hostages. Women had to protect their children and their husbands. As such, they were responsible for their families' finances, security, political affiliations, and more.

Korban dan Kesaksian Perempuan Aceh (The Victimhood and Testimony of Acehnese Women), a booklet published by Eye on Aceh (Sydney, Australia) with the support of Urgent Action Fund (2004), reflects on the hardships imposed on women during the conflict. In this booklet, it is reported that the National Commission on Human Rights, in its investigation of the military operations in Aceh, found that 3,000 women were widowed between 1989 and 1998. This situation inevitably forced them to take on dual roles in the household.

It cannot be denied that the position of women in Acehnese families and society differs significantly from the position of women elsewhere, especially in developed countries where gender equality has made considerable progress. For instance, Acehnese women are traditionally not recognised as the heads of their households. Even though – in practice – many were still not recognised as the heads of their families, during the conflict many women were forced to act in such a capacity following the loss of

their husbands. This resulted in what John Naisbitt identifies as severe culture shock. Many women were not prepared for the burden of their dual roles, a shock that led to further suffering.

The shift in women's roles and responsibilities led to shifts in their lifestyles and their relations. Aside from becoming the heads of their households, women frequently had to serve as shields for their families.

In the waning months of 2004, it appeared that another year would be passing with no end to hostilities in sight. Peace, it seemed, would be ever more difficult to achieve. Then, disaster struck. On 26 December 2004, Aceh was hit by a massive earthquake and tsunami, and the doorway to peace was opened. Peacebuilding efforts following the disaster led to an agreement being reached between the Indonesian government and GAM. Mediated by Martti Ahtisaari, the former President of Finland, the Helsinki Accord that brought peace to Aceh was signed on 15 August 2005.

At a seminar on United Nations Security Council (UNSC) Resolution 1325 about Women, Peace, and Security, the Minister of Women's Empowerment and Child Protection, Linda Amalia Sari Gumelar, emphasised the need for women to have a role in peacebuilding. She argued that, in conflict resolution efforts to date, the involvement of women has been minimal, even as women and children around the world continue to deal with armed conflict. Gumelar also highlighted the negative effects of armed conflict on all members of society, with a specific focus on women. As she stated, 'This is because of their gender and social status being shaped strongly by patriarchal culture.'

Inherent in patriarchal culture is the imposition of many prohibitions that limit women's movement. However, in difficult or dangerous times, such as during widespread and intense conflict, women are often dragged into the conflict, either as victims or as fighters and protectors of their husbands and children. They also become their families' primary breadwinners, particularly when their husbands and other men flee their villages. Such a burden is

certainly heavy, particularly given the fact that women and children in conflict areas (such as the mountainous Cot Kheng) tend to have limited formal education, skills, and aspirations. In short, despite having a relatively low intellectual quality, they are forced to carry a significant burden (Firdaus, 2014). Furthermore, such women rarely have networks outside their village. They lack an understanding of the protections guaranteed, for example, by the first paragraph of the preamble to Indonesia's 1945 Constitution. According to the Constitution, the state is expected to protect all of the Indonesian people.

They do not understand the significance of this protection, because when conflict occurs they receive no such protection. Far from the skyscrapers of Jakarta, the promises of the Constitution may seem a quaint, distant dream, especially when long-term conflict leaves them trapped by disempowerment, poverty, oppression, and the spectre of the past. They have no sense of security or comfort. Furthermore, the women of the Hill of Widows have no knowledge of the significance and benefits of the Convention on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW). Indeed, during the Aceh conflict, many experienced violence and the violation of their rights at the hands of the Indonesian military and police – up to and including physical and non-physical torture.

The women of the Hill of Widows also know nothing of UNSC Resolution 1325, even though this resolution has guaranteed protection and peace to women, and emphasises the importance of equal participation and full involvement in conflict resolution and peacebuilding. This resolution has essentially never reached them, and it failed to protect them from the violence and stress of the Aceh conflict. As such, for the women of the Hill of Widows, UNSC Resolution 1325 has yet to make any significant positive contribution to their lives. It is far removed from their everyday lives, when, in the midst of conflict, none of its protections are afforded to them (UNSCR, 2004).

Recognising their lack of knowledge of the protections guaranteed by the state after receiving guidance from various NGOs, the

women of the Hill of Widows have sought to improve their situation. This can be seen, for example, in how they have received greater recognition from people advocating for women's rights. In the late 1990s, when people were too afraid to speak, too frightened to reveal what had occurred at Cot Kheng, a local NGO called YADESA – at the time, led by the late Drs A Gani Nurdin – worked together with advocates such as Faridah Haryani to expose the human rights violations that had occurred there (Yusuf, 2014). They took several widows from the village to Jakarta to meet with the central government and inform it of what had happened in Cot Kheng. This received a response from the central government, then under the leadership of President BJ Habibie, which promised to pay compensation to the heirs of victims and to make them civil servants.

However, when the conflict between GAM and the central government escalated, the stories and experiences of Cot Kheng's widows wound up being forgotten in the face of renewed bloodshed. The residents of the village considered their condition to have worsened compared with the previous regime, and that their every action was the incorrect one.

As a result of the conflict, the local economy collapsed. Residents were limited in their ability to access agricultural land, due to the military's systematic operations in which the identity cards of local residents were scrutinised. Likewise, when they could reach their farmlands, local residents could not stay for long. Productivity suffered, and over time, so did the welfare of the villagers.

LEARNING TO LIVE WITH OLD WOUNDS

When the central government and GAM signed the Helsinki Accord on 15 August 2005, a sense of relief was felt throughout Cot Kheng. After the Accord, the Acehnese were able to enjoy the beauty and serenity of peace. They were able to return to their orchards, their fields, and even leave their village to improve their families' economic situations. Although their financial situation could not be fixed immediately, the people of Aceh enjoyed peace and the ability to earn an honest and decent living. The residents

of the Hill of Widows have come to feel that the current peace may be sustained forever.

Today, Aceh has known peace for ten years. However, the hope of a better life and improved welfare remains distant for the people of Cot Kheng. Although peace has been achieved, the central government has yet to show much concern for the village's welfare. In other words, the compensation that residents have expected for their suffering during the conflict has yet to be realised. Poverty remains widespread in this village of 230 people, and the unemployment rate – especially among women – remains high. They seek a better life, both for the present and for the future, but welfare continues to be nothing but a fantasy. Unfortunately, the Hill of Widows has yet to change significantly since the conflict.

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ACEHNESE WOMEN AND LOCAL POLITICS

Raihal Fajri

INTRODUCTION

In Aceh, peace has not only involved discourses on the reintegration of former combatants following the signing of the Helsinki Accord on 25 August 2005 (Kemlu, 2006). It has a broader meaning, encompassing how one can live as part of a people and nation that has frequently been marked by conflict (Pemerintah Aceh, 2005).

Space for the Acehnese people – including former combatants – to participate in practical politics has been provided through Law No. 11 of 2006 of the Republic of Indonesia regarding the Governance of Aceh, specifically Chapter IX: Local Political Parties. This law contains not only a definition of local political parties, but also regulates such things as women's representation; this can be seen, for example, in Paragraph (4), which requires at least 30 percent of representatives to be female, and Paragraph (5), which deals with the administration of local political parties (Partai Nasional Aceh, 2019).

Is it true that this law is the sole reason for women's involvement in Aceh's local political parties? Certainly not. There is another historical moment at play: the destruction of the weapons of the Free Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Merdeka, or GAM) as a consequence of its peace treaty with the Indonesian Republic. This disarmament was a major reason behind the decision of the Inong Balee (former members of GAM's women's branch) to become involved in Acehese politics.

A GAM representative stated that a total of 1,056 weapons would be surrendered for destruction, with 840 of these in usable condition. This figure was reached through the assumption that one weapon was available for every five members of the Nanggroe Aceh Army (Tentara Nanggroe Aceh, or TNA). Using data supplied by GAM, 3,000 members of the TNA were identified and received money for reintegration; all of them were men. The former Inong Balee – the women who had fought for GAM – firmly protested this policy, which they perceived as ignoring them and their contributions during the conflict.

One former Inong Balee, Y, argued:

There is much proof of women combatants. Many references in the news, in the mass media, and in the testimonies of witnesses who saw and heard how Zainabon, one member of the Inong Balee, opened fire on a truck in Aceh Jaya and killed 15 soldiers.

At the time, several Acehese politicians, Irwandi Yusuf, Sofyan Daud, and Cage, had mentioned the involvement of female combatants to the acting governor of Aceh, Azwar Abu Bakar. They desired for the Inong Balee to receive compensation, just as the men had. Although Azwar Abu Bakar accepted this proposal, he included the funds for reintegrating the Inong Balee in the GAM (non-TNA) category. This decision further motivated

the former Inong Balee fighters to seek recognition.

Subsequent momentum for the political involvement of the former Inong Balee came after the first reintegration funds were distributed by the Social Office in November–December 2005. They had gained some recognition as a result of the political activities of former fighters under the leadership of Masyitah Ali. Local parties were soon established, in accordance with one point of the Helsinki Accord, and they recognised the need to include women in their organisations. This is reflected, for example, in the aforementioned 30 percent quota requirement.

THE STRUGGLE OF ACEHNESE WOMEN IN THE POLITICAL PARTY

Women's political involvement has a specific historical value in Aceh. During the reign of Sultan Iskandar Muda in the late 17th century, there had been a Balee Musyawarat (centre for discussions) consisting of 73 members, 13 of whom were women. Later on, a number of national regulations were adopted that reaffirmed the need for more female representation in parliament and during elections.

These included, for example, Law No. 31 of 2002 on the administration of political parties, as supported by Law No. 2 of 2008. Potential members of the legislature, whether it be at the national, provincial, or municipal/regency parliamentary level, had to follow Law No. 12 of 2003, as supported by Law No. 10 of 2008. Both of these laws included affirmative action in the form of a quota; a minimum of 30 percent of party administrators and legislative candidates were required to be women (DPR RI, 2008; BPKP, 2003).

This was further reinforced by Article 173, Paragraph (2), Letter e of Law No. 7 of 2017 which stipulates that political parties may only participate in elections – in the context of local parties, provincial elections – after meeting certain criteria, including 30 percent of party administrators being women. Article 256, Paragraph (2) of this law requires one in every three potential candi-

dates for the legislature to be female.

Although presently 12 of the Acehese Parliament's 81 members are women, a situation similar to that in the 17th century persists, where no women have taken functional or administrative positions, such as Faction Leader, Legislative Head, and so on. According to Dr Mariati, women have yet to receive the space or gain the recognition needed to occupy such positions.

The Aceh Party (Partai Aceh, or PA), a local political party whose membership consists primarily of former GAM combatants and leaders, was created to utilise practical politics following the failure of GAM's armed conflict. They considered the potential of female candidates using several criteria, including education. This can be seen, for example, in their backing of Dr Mariati, who was elected to represent Constituency 10 (West Aceh, Aceh Jaya, Nagan Raya, and Simeulu) with 12,268 votes. Similarly, Hj Umami Kalsum, S.Pd, of Constituency 2 (Pidie and Pidie Jaya) received 17,228 votes. The wife of a respected GAM fighter and former leader of Putro Aceh (2007–2012), she is also a former school principal. During the conflict, she was imprisoned for 13 months.

Meanwhile, another local political party, the Nanggroe Aceh Party (Partai Aceh Nanggroe, or PNA), recruited women based on several considerations. Firstly, it selected women who had been activists with non-governmental organisations. And secondly, it sought activists such as Masyitah Ali, who had supported GAM during the conflict and contributed significantly to the public sphere. The only woman backed by PNA to be elected to the Acehese Parliament was Darwati A Gani of Constituency 1 (Banda Aceh, Aceh Besar, and Sabang), with 7,036 votes. The wife of former governor Irwandi Yusuf (2006–2012), she used her social capital to gather voters' support. Because of her position as a former 'first lady', as well as her social activities through the Sambinoe Foundation, this middle-aged woman was able to successfully contest a legislative seat.

She has stated that the involvement of women in parliament

is necessary to eradicate the perception that women cannot actively take part in or contribute to practical politics. Her political education and the significant support of the PNA gave her a space in which she could include women of all backgrounds as party cadres. She learned many things while a member of parliament, particularly on Commission VI. This included how to deal with late-night meetings:

It's a matter of discipline. If a meeting is held, don't do it towards the deadline at night. During the day, during working hours, there is enough time for meetings. Night-time meetings are often done in passing, and usually only a day or two before everything is due, so they appear to be nothing but efforts to meet certain targets. This needs to be fixed so that female members of parliament can maximally participate in meetings. Aside from accommodating the contributions of women legislators, such a mechanism will also promote administrative order.

Another important lesson, she asserted, was that many people have been mistaken in their understanding of their members of parliament. Many perceive parliamentarians as being equivalent to governors and deputy governors, and as such have high expectations for them. However, in reality, parliament consists of many commissions, and they must deal with numerous requests and proposals. If these requests cannot be fulfilled, or these proposals cannot be approved, the members of parliament will be perceived as ignoring their constituents.

According to Darwati, the greatest task faced by female legislative candidates is self-improvement. Potential members of parliament must improve their own capacity to ensure that they can convince voters of their abilities and dedication. Although money does play a role in elections, social capital – such as previous involvement in social programmes – also determines the success of female candidates. Social media, however, is not an effective means of gathering

voters at the grassroots level, as it is only used by a select few.

Although the number of women sitting in Aceh's parliament has increased to 12 (from four in the previous period), the decreased support for local parties is a significant challenge that must be overcome in the lead-up to the 2019 legislative election. Additionally, a significant challenge is putting an end to the exploitation of religious issues in elections, such as the use of hadiths 'forbidding' female leadership (as seen in the 2017 regional elections). Although such campaign strategies are not the only hurdles faced by women, they are still influential, and female candidates must carefully consider running in elections and apply appropriate strategies to gather voter support.

Another significant challenge with which female members of parliament must contend is the unhealthy competition that often occurs between them in their everyday activities. It creates a situation in which women must fight twice to gain control of a parliamentary seat. Not only must they use their energy to deal with men and their interests, but they must also be ready for a 'second battle' with their fellow female members of parliament.

The recruitment of potential legislative candidates, meanwhile, remains a process filled with intrigue and vested interests. Several important comments to this effect were made by Kautsar Muhammad Yus, the previous leader of the Aceh Party Faction in the Acehese Parliament. He noted that the recruitment of female legislative candidates remained influenced by the interests of the men closest to the candidates.

Many become candidates because their parents or spouses were GAM leaders, either at the territorial or *sagoe* level. They contest elections and gather votes while relying on the influence of these leaders, particularly their victories on the battlefield. Such an approach has been used by candidates from the Aceh Party to gain parliamentary seats. If one or two candidates have the necessary leadership capacity, this is simply a bonus.

This tendency, however, has limited the space available for

women without such access. They cannot readily join local parties or become involved in practical politics. The greatest opportunities are available to women who had been combatants and women who, despite not being combatants, were somehow linked to influential GAM members.

Another challenge faced by former combatants is the requirement of a diploma; some women failed to complete junior high school, while others left senior high school. As with men, women may obtain a statement from a *Dayah* (local educational institution) to meet this administrative requirement for candidates. However, in the caderisation process this limits the electability of women.

Nonetheless, there remains space available for potential legislative candidates to further their education. In the lead-up to elections, institutions such as the International Republican Institute (IRI) have held activities (workshops, discussions, etc.) to empower women from different parties. One such example is the Women's Political Leadership Academy, which was held in Banda Aceh in July 2016 and provided training to 50 politically active Acehnese women. The organisers of the event aimed to help these women improve their public speaking and writing skills, as well as to teach them how to work with the media to effectively reach their constituents.

Because of the minimal electoral opportunities given to women in the provincial and regional parliaments, many women have become involved in politics with national parties before running with local parliaments as legislative candidates. This space has also been used by women's activists who had close ties with GAM, such as Arabiyani and Cut Mutia, both of whom are contesting the 2019 legislative election and seek to represent their constituencies (Bi-reun and North Aceh, respectively) in the Acehnese Parliament.

The involvement of such women's activists belies the argument that female candidates are primarily those who have taken the High School Equivalency Examination; both Arabiyani and Cut Mutia graduated from the Master of Laws Programme at Uni-

versitas Syiah Kuala. They have had to overcome significant obstacles before entering this election under the red-and-black flag of their party. Importantly, both had close ties to GAM leaders and had interacted directly with them during the conflict. Their personal capacity and quality, including their educations, has thus been supported by their social networks. As such, their experiences represent a significant step forward in improving the quality of local parties' female candidates.

According to these two parliamentary candidates, the next challenge is winning the hearts of their constituents. Disliking the money politics that have dominated elections, and seeking to reduce the prevalence of this practice, they have sought new strategies that centre around family and friendship. They have also used social media to campaign for programmes, relying on the momentum of certain holidays to expose the issues being faced by Aceh. Presently, they are focusing specifically on the involvement of women in politics.

The dynamics of local political parties offer an interesting topic for further research, especially in the context of the strategies used by female candidates to gain access to legislative seats. In the 2009 legislative election, the Aceh Party received the most votes, thereby gaining control of 33 of the Acehese Parliament's 69 seats. However, not one of the winning candidates was a woman. Similarly, PNA and the Aceh Regional Party (Partai Daerah Aceh, or PDA) were unable to put women in the legislature. This differed significantly from such national political parties as the Working Groups Party (Partai Golongan Karya, or Golkar); of its eight cadres in the Acehese Parliament, three were women (KIP Aceh, 2019).

Dr Mariati was directly appointed as a member of the Acehese Parliament in 2013 – 13 months before the 2014 legislative election – to replace Tgk Ali Murtala of the Aceh Party Faction. In the 2014 legislative election, Dr Mariati was one of twelve women elected to parliament under the banner of the Aceh Party.

Although Aceh's local political parties were created to accommodate the political aspirations of former GAM members, the Aceh Party has sent women from a wide range of backgrounds to parliament. There are not enough resources for the women who had fought for GAM to fulfil the quota.

According to Kautsar, the members of GAM were fighters and warriors. With peace having been newly reached, it would be difficult for them to join a national party. As such, the local political parties were created to integrate former GAM fighters into Indonesian politics. They offered these GAM members a means to 'continue their fight' and promote the values they had maintained during the conflict.

Permission to establish local political parties was included in the Helsinki Accord, specifically in the section, Governance of Aceh, Point 1.2 (Political Participation), which specifies: 'As soon as possible, and no later than one year after this Accord is signed, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia agrees to and will facilitate the establishment of Aceh-based political parties that meet national criteria. Recognising the aspirations of the people of Aceh for local political parties, the Government of the Republic of Indonesia, within one year of or at the latest eighteen months after the signing of this Accord, must create political and legal conditions that enable the establishment of local political parties in Aceh, while consulting with Parliament. The implementation of this Accord will contribute positively to this goal.'

This point led to a deadlock during the negotiations in Helsinki, as the Indonesian government was concerned that GAM could use these local parties to organise itself through official channels. GAM, meanwhile, saw local parties as giving space to former GAM members rather than others. The implementation of this point, including the naming of the first local party, likewise led to a divide within GAM itself. One group, led by Yahya Muadz and Zakaria Saman, urged for the acronym GAM to be retained, but under a different name, the Independent Aceh Movement (Gerakan Aceh Mandiri). The other group, led by Sofyan Daud, disagreed with the proposal. Ultimately,

the idea of repurposing the GAM acronym was rejected by the Indonesian government, and the first local party to be established would be named the Aceh Party. Nonetheless, regardless of its name, this party failed to bring female former combatants into Acehese politics.

Although the process through which local political parties were established in Aceh did not specifically set aside space for women, these parties nonetheless enabled women of diverse backgrounds to become involved in practical politics. Presently, Dr Mariati, a member of the Aceh Party Faction, serves as Deputy Chair of Commission V, which is tasked with handling education.

CONCLUSION

The representation of women in parliament is expected to ensure that women's needs are accommodated. Such an expectation has inspired the political activities of Acehese women, who have attempted to embody the passion of their foremother, Datu Beru. The first woman of Aceh to ever sit in its government in Kutaraja, during the reign of Sultan Ali Mughayatsyah (r. 1514–1530), this Gayo-born woman had an unparalleled understanding of law, politics, religion, and philosophy, which she used despite the dominance of males in her contemporary government.

Now, five hundred years later, the increasingly diverse backgrounds and higher levels of education of women contesting the 2019 legislative election indicates that they – and the local parties backing them – will continue to colour the political climate of Aceh. This should coincide with an increase in candidate quality, as they can learn from the experiences of the women who have already contributed significantly to Aceh at the provincial and municipal/regency levels.

According to documents from the Independent Election Commission (Komisi Independen Pemilihan, or KIP) of Aceh, 32 women have been registered as potential candidates by the Aceh Party (of 93 total candidates), representing Constituencies 1 through 10. PNA, meanwhile, has put forth 29 female candidates – 33 percent of all legislative candidates backed by the party.

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WOMEN IN POST-CONFLICT VILLAGE DEVELOPMENT

Iqbal Perdana

INTRODUCTION

The 1945 Constitution of Indonesia indicates that every Indonesian citizen, both male and female, has certain rights and obligations, including a right to a decent standard of living. The Indonesian constitution thus offers an egalitarian perspective, one which guarantees equal access to men and women. However, in practice, this perspective has yet to be fully realised by the government and by local communities. Disparities between men and women are readily evident in everyday life, and women continue to be marginalised in every aspect of their lives.

Development, meanwhile, has long been seen as an end in itself, rather than a tool to fulfil the fundamental rights of citizens – whether male or female – and therefore guarantee equality. The failure to respect the fundamental rights of women has left them in a weak position in society. For example, women continue to have

less access to education and economic activities than men, leaving them more vulnerable to poverty. Their lack of human capital is compounded by the patriarchal culture of their society and even biased interpretations of religious teachings that seek to relegate them even further. Thus, women face marginalisation, subordination, stereotyping, and violence, as well as a double burden, all of which remain strategic development issues (Sofiani, 2009).

Gender itself is a concept that refers to the roles and responsibilities of men and women, which are constructed socially and culturally. The Indonesian government's policy of implementing gender mainstreaming in national development recommends that funds – a minimum of 5 percent of the national budget – be made available for women's empowerment. Meanwhile, Decree of the President of Indonesia No. 7 of 2005 regarding the Medium-Term National Development Strategy for 2004–2009 promotes a just and democratic Indonesia. This decree includes five main goals, along with certain policy priorities and directives. One of the most important is the realisation of gender equality and the increased involvement of women in development, to be promoted through legislation, development, and public policy. To achieve this goal, it is also necessary to improve Indonesia's GDI (Gender Related Development Index) and GEM (Gender Empowerment Measurement), to reduce the prevalence of violence against women and children, and to improve public welfare (Sofiani, 2009).

In village development in Lhokseumawe and Aceh Tamiang, women's participation has been severely lacking. This was observed in 2006, when the author worked as an enumerator in Banda Aceh, and was tasked with collecting data on women's participation in village development funded through the PNPM Mandiri and Selaras programmes. Women's limited participation in village development is rooted in several factors, including their habits, traditions, and customs, which generally emphasise obedience and patriarchy. As a result, women have limited involvement in development. This is particularly evident in the fact that all of the participants in development meetings and design are men (Pemerin-

tah Aceh, 2005).

Another core issue is what occurs during decision-making processes. Meetings where input is collected and decisions are made do not involve women. For example, in Lhokseumawe, invitations are issued only to the husbands; only rarely are both the husband and wife specified. Likewise, when announcements are made using loudspeakers, they are targeted solely at men.

When the author was collecting information on why women received little opportunity to voice their opinions and make decisions, almost all women interviewed said that men were capable of representing women and their interests. Informants also said men's plans would positively affect women. However, in the field, not all of women's needs have been accommodated. The needs of women, especially those who are widowed, poor, or victims of conflict, never receive funding. Public laundry facilities and programmes for poor women, among other things, receive little attention.

The Selaras programme, initiated by the Acehnese government as a continuation of the PNPM Mandiri programme, is intended to show the government's concern for women and their minimal involvement in village development. The government recognises that women's involvement in development has been lacking, and as such has used Selaras to mitigate it. Unlike its predecessor, the Selaras programme requires the involvement of women in village development. Under this programme, women must be involved from the very beginning, when village residents are asked to provide input and otherwise facilitate the decision-making process. This has increased women's level of participation at the village level.

The most appropriate approach for involving women in development is a GAD (gender and development) approach. Focusing on positioning men and women as equals, GAD requires women to be seen as subjects of development and agents of change. GAD is a bottom-up approach, using the experiences and under-

standing of women as an entry point in development. Its main strength, however, is its emphasis on gender equality. Women and men must work together to assert equal rights, positions, abilities, and opportunities in development, consequently ensuring that both enjoy proportional employment and compensation (Sofiani, 2009).

To create equality between men and women, they must have equal participation. Over time, and indirectly, such equality will promote improved welfare for all. This is because if men (or women) are dominant the failure to create equality minimises the achievement of welfare.

Further observations were made by the author in 2013, while collecting data as part of the Gender Dimensions of Conflict and Peace project carried out by the Geneva Graduate Institute in collaboration with Universitas Gadjah Mada. During this period, interviews and focus group discussions were conducted in several *gampong* (villages) in Aceh Besar and Banda Aceh. Similar experiences were expressed by various informants, particularly by women widowed during the conflict.

Their faces reflecting misery and desolation, these women frequently 'asked for help' so they could 'receive attention'. They complained about the lack of employment. After the conflict, they had been taught certain skills, such as how to sew or make bags. However, as the government and non-governmental organisations limited themselves merely to training them, these women could not benefit from these programmes. Without the support of these organisations, they could not distribute the fruits of their labour to the market. They also lacked the necessary equipment, and thus had to wait to use whatever sewing machines they could borrow.

Gender issues have long been 'planted' in the soil of Aceh, akin to a tree that provides shade but has yet to bear fruit. Its effects have reached even rural villages, where women know of the term 'gender', even if they don't fully understand it. Any mistaken

understanding of gender and gender issues in Lhokseumawe and Aceh Tamiang is likely caused by them receiving only fragments of information. It is also probable that those who have promoted gender and village development have failed to convey the essence of gender itself.

According to informants, information on gender and development has been received primarily from the village administration, including the *geuchik* (village chief), as well as young intellectuals (namely students). However, detailed information on gender and gender issues has eluded them. Similarly, administrators and intellectuals have failed to impart a concrete understanding of gender in a manner that can be understood easily by local residents.

GENDER IN THE *GAMPONG*

Residents of rural Acehnese villages understand *gender* as an effort to make women 'equal' to men. This was discovered by the author in 2016, during another period of data collection. In general, women did not understand the term. Meanwhile, from their limited participation, it was observed that physical and social development programmes were dominated by men. Physical development was conducted primarily to further the interests of men, such as the building of roads or covering ditches. No programmes, like, for example, the construction of public laundry facilities or women's lavatories, were initiated to serve women directly. Such developments were nonetheless necessary, as domestic duties were primarily entrusted to women, in spite of their lack of access to the facilities they needed.

A similar tendency is found in social (capacity building) programmes, which are conducted by the village government at the behest of the local population. The programmes' themes are generally determined by the needs of the population. Most of these social programmes are dominated by men. This includes mechanic, craftsmanship, and welding training programmes. Women, meanwhile, have been taught how to sew and bake cakes. Although these forms of training continue to promote the domestication of

women, and have a wide variance in terms of number of sessions and level of participation, at the very least they promote capacity building.

WOMEN'S ACCESS TO FACILITIES THAT IMPROVE THEIR QUALITY OF LIFE

Three important elements are used as measures of human development. The first is longevity, as measured using life expectancy. A long life is seen as valuable, and correlates with proper nutrition and access to healthcare. The second is knowledge, often measured using literacy. And the third is a decent standard of living, which can be measured using per capita income and purchasing power, as influenced by gross-domestic product (Sofiani, 2009).

In discussions of gender issues, development advocates and social movement activists have noted a divide between men and women in terms of rights, responsibilities, access to and control of resources, and the ability to make decisions at the family, community, and national levels (DTE, 2014).

However, welfare – as defined by Law No. 11 of 2009 regarding Social Welfare as the fulfilment of material, spiritual, and social needs, as well as the opportunity and ability to develop oneself and fulfil one's social function – remains a distant goal for many women. According to Yustinawati Hasibuan, women continue to have limited access to education and finances, which may be attributed to Indonesia's social structure continually positioning women as subordinates and relegating them to the domestic sphere (Timang, 2009). This remains problematic, as women's involvement in development enables them to promote their own welfare. As such, women can only achieve prosperity once they are able to participate equally in village discussions and development.

One example may illustrate how women can achieve this if given the opportunity. In one *gampong* in Aceh Besar, it is the women who drive village development. This village is led by a woman, who has received the full support of the local men. The

gampong has since been presented to other villages as an example of how men and women can work together as equals and thereby promote more efficient development. Such equality requires further emphasis. Gender equality in development must include both men and women in addressing local problems, in reforming institutions, and in promoting economic development. Such an approach will help bridge the gap that limits women's access to resources and their ability to voice their opinions.

It has been proven that, when women are responsible for physical development (drainage, roads, home refurbishment, and so on), they are capable of following the proper procedures and initial plans. Furthermore, there is recognition in Aceh that, if women oversee development projects, said projects will be completed on schedule. This is because, they argue, that women do not spend their time smoking in coffee shops, but rather focus on realising their goals. In development planning, women must be supported by men who have prior experience in the field. Together, they can build their villages, with all contributing their share.

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TABRANI YUNIS, born in Manggeng, Southwest Aceh, Aceh, on 10 October 1962, is an Indonesian-language teacher who has advocated social, educational, women's, and children's issues since

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RAIHAL FAJRI is presently the Executive Director of the Katahati Institute; in this capacity, she has handled the non-profit organisation's operations since 2013. Between 2007 and 2009, she served as Clearing House Project Officer for the Katahati Institute in the field of Policy Advocacy, promoting the creation of a centre for information and policy advocacy that could help the victims of the 2004 earthquake and tsunami in Aceh. She also served as a panellist, representing Indonesia, at the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW61) in New York (13–24 March 2017). At this conference, held annually by UN Women, Raihal presented a paper on the role of women in Aceh's peacebuilding process under the title "Women's Roles in Peace-building: Support for Truth and Reconciliation Commission in Aceh". She is also researcher in the Gender Dimensions of Social Conflict, Armed Violence, and Peacebuilding project.

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