

The Role of the Latupati Institution in Overcoming Religious and Social Conflicts in Maluku in 1999

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Abstract

This study aims to explore the role of the Latupati institution in the Leihitu area in resolving the Maluku social and religious conflicts in 1999. This study uses a qualitative method with a case study approach, data sources taken through direct interviews with ten informants consisting of the chairman of the Maluku Latupati customary institution assembly, the secretary of state, educational, religious, customary and community leaders. All data were then analyzed thematically using NVivo 10 qualitative analysis software. The results showed that there were four ways that Latupati did in resolving conflicts, the four strategies were (i) making customary law a unifying tool for the community, (ii) carrying out dialogue between figures religion, education and customs, (iii) making agreements between communities to respect ancestral customs, (iv) making the Latupati customary institution a forum for interacting with the kings of all countries to find solutions to problems faced by the community. The results of this study have proven that the role of the Latupati traditional institution is very real and successful in resolving religious and social conflicts in Maluku that occurred in 1999. This method can certainly be a reference for other regions in Indonesia in resolving conflicts in the community.

Keywords: *Community institutions, latupati, community conflict, thematic analysis*

Abstrak

Penelitian ini bertujuan untuk mengeksplorasi bagaimana peran lembaga Latupati di daerah Leihitu dalam menyelesaikan konflik agama dan sosial Maluku pada tahun 1999. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif dengan pendekatan studi kasus, sumber data diambil melalui wawancara langsung kepada sepuluh orang informan yang terdiri dari ketua

majelis lembaga adat Latupati Maluku, sekretaris negeri, tokoh pendidikan, agama, adat dan masyarakat. Seluruh data kemudian dianalisis dengan tematik menggunakan software analisis kualitatif NVivo 10. Hasil penelitian menunjukkan bahwa terdapat empat cara yang dilakukan oleh Latupati dalam menyelesaikan konflik, empat strategi tersebut adalah (i) menjadikan hukum adat sebagai alat pemersatu masyarakat, (ii) melaksanakan dialog antar tokoh agama, pendidikan dan adat, (iii) membuat kesepakatan antar masyarakat untuk saling menghargai adat istiadat leluhur, (iv) menjadikan Lembaga adat Latupati sebagai wadah berinteraksi raja-raja semua negeri untuk mencari solusi terhadap permasalahan yang dihadapi masyarakat. Hasil penelitian ini telah membuktikan bahwa, peran lembaga adat Latupati sangat nyata dan berhasil dalam menyelesaikan konflik agama dan sosial di Maluku yang terjadi pada tahun 1999. Cara yang dilakukan ini tentu dapat menjadi rujukan bagi daerah lainnya di Indonesia dalam menyelesaikan konflik di tengah-tengah masyarakat.

Kata Kunci: *Lembaga masyarakat, latupati, konflik masyarakat, tematik analisis*

Introduction

The social conflict that occurred in Maluku in 1999 was the biggest humanitarian tragedy in the history of inter-religious relations in Indonesia, even the conflict can be said to be the worst event in the history of social relations related to religious issues in Indonesia (Safi, 2017; Rahawarin, 2013; Umagapi, 2017).

According to Waileruny (2010) & Jati (2013) in general there were three stages of conflict in Maluku in 1999. *First*, various waves of violence spread throughout almost all of Maluku in 1999 and the first half of 2000. calm, where an increase in the organization of violence was followed by the government's inability to end the re-emergence of violence. *Second*, the new wave of violence started by the militias is getting bigger, with the addition of the security forces and the imposition of civil emergency. This happened in the second half of 2000 to 2001. *Third*, there were still violent incidents (after February 2003) especially around the commemoration of the proclamation of the Republic of South Maluku (RMS) on 25 April, although the scale of violence began to decrease.

According to Trijono, (2003) at the time of his research in Ambon, he saw firsthand the conflicts that occurred at that time. People who are ready to fight and carry sharp weapons are along the streets of Ambon city. And also, not to forget,

even in the villages, everyone came out of their houses preparing to fight when they heard gunshots and the sound of the masses marching along the streets of Ambon city. According to Fitriati, et al (2019:70), the people of Maluku went through conflicts that occurred in a period of approximately four years in various ways. What is on their minds is how to survive in a situation that is completely unclear and full of fear, anxiety, and deep suspicion. For parents who prioritize the education of their children without neglecting the safety of themselves and their families, they are forced to flee outside Maluku. Meanwhile, an uncertain situation is experienced by private employees and entrepreneurs whose work and business cannot run smoothly due to the conflict (Natar, 2019 & Roos, 2021)

The Law of the Republic of Indonesia Number 39 of 1999 concerning Human Rights as a source of law also recognizes the existence of customary law as a form of law that applies in the life and legal culture of the Indonesian people, which is indicated in Article 6 paragraph (1) of the Law of the Republic of Indonesia. The law stipulates "In the context of upholding human rights, differences and needs within the Indigenous Law Community must be considered and protected by the law, the community, and the government". Based on these provisions, we can conclude that customary law is seen as an infrastructure used by the Indigenous Law Community in fulfilling "customary rights" so that customary law must be considered and protected by law, society, and the government so that its existence can be maintained.

Customary law as positive law has a distinctive characteristic, namely that most of it is unwritten, but its values are still valid in people's lives by enforcing the customary law. Customary law applies in a limited scope that is only applicable in the customary community where the customary law lives or is located, and this situation allows that each indigenous people can have different customary laws from

One another. inhabit the island of Ambon, consisting of 11 states and villages namely; Asilulu, Hitulama, Hitumessing, Hila, Kaitetu, Mamala, Morella, Negeri

Lima, Seith, Ureng, and Wakal. This village / country is led by a king (village head) who is a member of the Leihitu peninsula customary law institution called Latupati. Latupati from generation to generation has been obeyed by the people of the Leihitu Peninsula from all walks of life, regardless of ethnicity, religion and race. They are very obedient to the provisions that have been set by Latupati.

Literature Review

Maluku society is known as a very heterogeneous society. Social heterogeneity in the pre-colonial period was characterized by very diverse ethnic differences and ethnic cultures (Trijono, 2001). History records that in 1999-2004, there was a conflict between religions, namely Islam and Christianity. The background of the conflict in the city of Ambon in particular, and Maluku in general has been widely discussed by conflict observers. Manuhutu (in Ratnawati, 2006:3) stated that the Ambon conflict between Muslim and Christian groups had killed between 5,000 and 12,000 people during 1999-2003/2004. Furthermore, Pieris (2004) explained that conflict was caused by injustice in almost all areas of life in Ambon during the 32 years of the New Order era (1966-1998). These injustices include; the centralization of the New Order's power, the military that was too politically practical, the flood of immigrants who threatened the position of the indigenous people, competition at the local bureaucracy level based on religion, and the intervention of the State against local customs. The hidden conflict then turned into a violent incident on January 19, 1999 when there was a 'dispute' (either *by design* or indeed because there was no government investigation/independent team) between two people of different religions in Batu Merah/Mardika (name of location in Ambon). The incident coincided with the celebration of Eid that year. Meanwhile Lan (in Ratnawati, 2006:4) identified that the factors causing the Ambon conflict were historical factors, individual/group factors, policy factors, institutional or local structure factors, resource management factors and external factors.

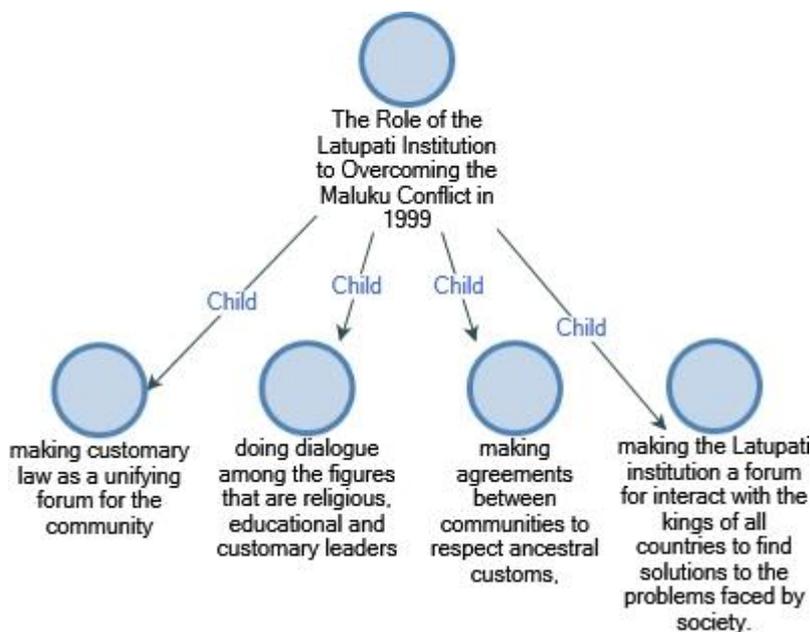
The security condition in Ambon Island - Maluku which was disturbed by the 1999 conflict demanded all parties to take part in the resolution, because this has become the joint responsibility of the community and the government. Starting from the description above, the problem of this research focuses on how the role of Latupati Jazirah Leihitu in overcoming the 1999 conflict, and how the level of community compliance with the role of Latupati Jazirah Leihitu in overcoming the 1999 conflict. This study aims to determine and explain how the role of Latupati Jazirah Leihitu in overcoming the conflict. the 1999 conflict, and how was Latupati Jazirah Leihitu's role in running the government and as a traditional leader in overcoming the 1999 conflict among indigenous peoples.

Method

This study used a qualitative method with a case study approach (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Yin, 2011; Crowe, et al., 2011). Sources of data were taken from ten informants through in-depth interviews who were selected using *purposive sampling technique*, while the selected informants had met four criteria, namely understanding well the problems being studied, still active in the field being studied, had time to provide information to researchers, and provided information. information in accordance with the facts that occur in the field (Sugiyono, 2014; Engkizar, et al., 2018). To meet the criteria as an informant, all informants are the chairman of the Maluku Latupati assembly, the secretary of state, education, religious, customary and community leaders in Hitu Country, Seith Country and Mamala Country Leihitu District, Central Maluku Regency, Maluku. After the interview was completed, all informants were taken, the transcription process was carried out, then the writer took the themes that were in accordance with the research needs. The analysis process is carried out using qualitative analysis software NVivo 10. According to Boyatzis (1998); Clarke & Braun (2013); Syafril, et al., (2021); Engkizar, et al., (2018); Eriyanti, et al., (2020) Elkhaira, et al., (2020) & Maputra, et al., (2020) Thematic analysis with NVivo software is an effective way for a

researcher to analyze interview results so that they can be seen clearly. clear and easy to understand.

Result and Discussion



The meaning of the word peninsula comes from the vocabulary, namely "jazirah" which means island, some historians call the Arabian Peninsula with the meaning of peninsula. While historians call the peninsula in the sense of desert and desert or barren land (barren). There are similarities with the land area of Hitu or Leihitu. The location of the Leihitu Kingdom is in Central Maluku Regency, Ambon Island. Wattimena and Handoko (2012), found that there were changes in settlement development that showed a macro pattern between partial temporal relationships with sites in Morela. Geographically, the research location is an area on the island of Ambon, precisely in the northern part of the Leihitu Peninsula. This area is a coastal area of the Seram Strait or Sea which is to the north. Administratively, the research location is in the Leihitu District, Central Maluku Regency.

According to Pattikayhatu (2008), in the Leihitu peninsula there are several "countries" that form a union, called Uli. On the island of Ambon and the Lease

islands, there are generally two Uli, namely Uli Lima and Uli Siwa, namely the Five Alliance and the Nine Alliance, also known as Patalima and Patasiwa.

The life of the people of the State and Village in the Leihitu Peninsula, namely; Asilulu, Hitulama, Hitumessing, Hila, Kaitetu, Mamala, Morella, Negeri Lima, Seith, Ureng, and Wakal are governed and bound by customary law, and they highly respect the culture and traditions left behind by their ancestors. According to Kluckhohn in Pelly (1994), cultural value is a wide-ranging concept that lives in the minds of most people in a society, about what is most valuable in life. The series of concepts are interrelated and constitute a system of cultural values. Functionally, this value system encourages individuals to behave as determined. They believe that only by behaving like that they will succeed (Kahl, in Pelly: 1994).

The Role of Latupati Jazirah Leihitu in Overcoming the 1999 Conflict

The role of Latupati is as a customary body or institution, having the main task of managing and determining and deciding problems related to customs that occur in the community. The Latupati Assembly is used as a forum for interacting with the Kings to find solutions to the problems they face. Bonner in Ali and Asrori (2004) states that social interaction is a relationship between two or more individuals, where individual behavior affects, changes or influences other individuals or vice versa. In addition, Latupati is also a tool that is usually used by community members to resolve disputes that arise between residents, including as a means of resolving the 1999 conflict. The Latupati Institution in Leihitu District has a significant role in fighting for the aspirations and interests of the people in Leihitu District. This institution is influential in solving various problems that exist in every village in Leihitu District in general.

Based on the experience of the 1999 Maluku conflict, the people of Maluku hang on to hope that the conflict will no longer occur. The expectations of the people of the Leihitu peninsula in particular and the people of Maluku in general,

starting from the small people, said that this Maluku conflict event may only happen once and hopefully it will never happen again. The Ambon conflict, which began in 1999 and lasted until 2004, is the biggest humanitarian tragedy in the history of inter-religious relations in Indonesia. The conflict was the worst event in the history of social and religious relations (especially between Islam and Christianity) in Indonesia. The Ambon conflict which later escalated into the Maluku conflict has damaged the basics of humanity.

Based on this, various social reconciliation efforts were carried out by organizing and rebuilding social relations and human values that had been destroyed by the conflict by using religion as the basic foundation. Of course, this reconciliation effort needs to involve all elements of religious groups, especially Islamic religious groups and Christian religious groups. In addition, traditional groups are also involved. So that Latupati Jazirah Leihitu also played a role in re-gluing the human values that were destroyed by the 1999 Maluku conflict and were obeyed by the community to stop fighting.

The Role of Latupati Jazirah Leihitu in Overcoming the 1999 Conflict in the Leihitu Peninsula

In the 1999 conflict, there needs to be one command. The Kings communicated in one container, namely the Latupati Assembly which consisted of State leaders led by Latupati. These Kings then initiated a pre-peace, for example by conducting negotiations in Malino, South Sulawesi, and socializing it to their communities. This negotiation is not a one-off. However, the Latupati assembly went to Makassar, Yogyakarta, and even to England. Latupati also plays a role in building good relations with other Christian communities. For example, Latupati at that time initiated the heat of pela so that conflicts could be reduced. Good relations between countries in the Leihitu Peninsula and other countries in Ambon City, for example, Hitu and Soya, Laha, Galala, Passo, etc., when well established, can reduce conflict escalation well as well.

Latupati is to maintain the integrity of the countries in the Leihitu Peninsula. During the 1999 conflict, there was also an internal conflict between Kampung Islam and Kampung Islam. This is because the other village wants to attack the Christian village, while the other Islamic village forbids it on the grounds that the Christian village is their brother. So that there needs to be a policy from the Kings in the Latupati assembly so that they can get a joint decision. Latupati's internal role in the 1999 conflict can be seen in reducing the conflict in the Leihitu Peninsula. For example, in Negeri Seith, Latupati accommodated the power to maintain relations within their village internally. Because at that time there was an internal conflict in the village, where the Seith Country was at war with other countries. So there needs to be a policy from the King and Latupati in reconciling the warring parties.

Latupati also played a role in reducing disputes within the command clan. For example, in Hitu Country, only certain Pelu clans can become King. The lineage was traced back in a straight line to decide which Pelu clan was the King of Hitu. The same is true in the State of Seith and the State of Mamala. Internally, when the conflict occurred in Mamala, Latupati, who was then the King of Mamala, saved the Christian community in Mamala, by explaining to the Mamala community that a group of Toraja people came to work and not fight. So that the community protects the Christian community until conditions are safe and escorts them to return to their area.

Conclusion

Latupati as a customary law institution is a body where the government of the countries in its working area gathers to discuss things related to custom. They can argue about an issue, for example regarding a dispute between two countries, regarding the application of customary law, even regarding the 1999 conflict that occurred on the island of Ambon, Maluku. Although this institution cannot impose their opinion on other parties or the disputing countries because this body does not

have administrative power over a country that is part of it, the work pattern of the Latupati institution in solving a problem occurs at the joint decision of the States. incorporated in it. So that a unanimous decision which is a joint decision can be obeyed by all parties.

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