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Social Conflict in Malifut Sub-district of North Halmahera Regency

Ebin E Danius
Philosophy of Divinity Department, University of Hein Namotemo, Jl. Kawasan Pemerintahan, Vila Vak I, North Halmahera Regency, North Molucas Provinces, Indonesia 97762.
E-mail: ebin@unhena.ac.id

Abstract. Social conflict is always understood as a social phenomenon that occurs in a plural society. The assumptions about conflict are always understood as a conflict of interest for limited resources. Conflict groups are formed as a continuation of the common interest in dealing with other groups. Such assumptions eliminate the location as a source of conflict. This paper wishes to show that to understand a conflict is not enough with social analysis but also needs location analysis. The location of the residence of a community participates in determining the pattern of life and behavior patterns that impact psychologically on the way a society sees the conflict. Specifically, the location taken for observation is Malifut District, North Halmahera district where the place had been a conflict between citizens. The author wants to show that the coastal area as a social environment Malifut community has a share in determining the occurrence of conflict. In this case, the authors will discuss the Malifut community's understanding of the conflict and show the influence of the coastal environment on the understanding of it.

Keywords: Social Conflict, Malifut, Makian, Pagu, North Halmahera, North Maluku

1. Introduction

Malifut is one of the sub-districts in North Halmahera Regency of North Maluku Province. In December 1999 inter-community conflict occurred in the region. The conflict then spread to various regions in North Maluku province. There are several analyses of the conflict. Chris Wilson [1] argues that the conflict occurred as a result of the influence of the conflict that occurred in Ambon. The main contributing factor to the conflict, according to Wilson, is the lack of public confidence in the security apparatus that has led people from two religious communities to choose to secure themselves through groupings based on religious identity. In addition, according to Wilson this conflict is also caused by the formation of sub-district Malifut separate from Kao District. Some villages inhabited by indigenous people refuse to be part of the newly established sub-district.

Klinken [2] argues that conflicts in Indonesia are strongly linked to communal identities. In such conflicts, the opposite sides use a certain identity as a unifying feature. In addition, identity is also used to distinguish between groups in conflict. Identity factors are important when natives dealing with newcomers who differ in religion and culture. Another important factor is politics. Economic disparity, cultural differences, religion, and ethnicity are not strong enough to generate a conflict. Political interests provide direction toward achieving the expected goals of the group. In this case, the political factor can be considered as one that unifies the differences to then generate an open conflict. Related to the conflict in North Maluku Klinken views that the conflict in North Maluku is a direct result of the fall of the New Order regime. Such a view is attributed to the efforts of local politicians to build influence in order to gain a share within the new province to be established.

Bertrand [3] sees on a wider scale by linking conflicts that occur in areas including the conflict in Malifut as a result of the collapse of the New Order's hegemonic power which with the collapse led to the seizure of influence from interest groups to influence the course of government. The collapse of the New Order regime prompted the seizure of influence from interest groups to influence the way of government. Thus it can be understood that the occurrence of conflicts in certain areas including in Malifut is the result of elite opposition in the central government. Such an understanding also implies that the problems occurring at the local level have no power to trigger conflict.
2. Method

All analyzes of the Malifut conflict use a social and political approach as a starting point for understanding the conflict. To understand social conflicts, social and political discourse in people's life is an important factor that cannot be ruled out. However, all of the analyzes described above show that the conflict is understood to be limited to a sociological perspective with a primary consideration of external factors which are then linked to the internal conditions of society. Such an analysis seems to exclude the internal conditions of society. Although of course the internal aspects of society are also related to the social situation but the psychological aspects and the influence of the location of the constituent elements of society become important things that also need to be considered. To that end, the writer approached the conflict from the perspective of the Malifut community itself. Are there certain influences from the location of their residence with their perspective on the conflict? Does the coastal area as a residence produce different perspectives on how they perceive the conflict? In this case the authors believe that people's understanding of the conflict and the way they live it have little influence in the conflict.

3. Results

3.1. The Origin of Malifut Conflict

The Malifut region before 1972 was an area populated by ethnic Pagu. There are several villages in the region, namely Sosol, Wangeotak and Tomabaru villages. In 1972 the local government at that time was the government of North Maluku Regency seeking to the displacement of people on the Makian island. The reason for the move was in a study showing the potential danger of an eruption of the Kie Besi volcano which is expected to drown the island of Makian. The reason for the displacement of the people was in a study showing the potential danger of an eruption of the Kie Besi volcano which is expected to drown the Makian island [4]. The displacement program to moving out people from Makian island to other areas considered more secure is not only a program of the regency government but also a central government program. The displacement of the population began officially in 1975 and from then on gradually until 1982 the people of the island of Makian were transferred to the territory of Halmahera Island.

One of the locations of the displaced people of the Makian island is the Malifut region which was then part of the Kao district. The local people welcomed the inhabitants of the Makian island. Local people even provide their residence as a temporary residence for migrants from the island of Makian. Friendship is also quite good where it is seen with the provision of land from indigenous to immigrants. Giving the land according to the native population to support the early life of the immigrants.

Some sources discussing the Malifut conflict argued that the main factor causing the Malifut conflict was the creation of the Makian Malifut sub-district [5] [6]. The Makian ethnic who are immigrants in Malifut are delighted to the establishment of the sub-district. The Makian ethnic who are immigrants in Malifut are delighted at the establishment of the sub-district. The forming of the new sub-district gives the Makian ethnic authority in Malifut to take care of their own sub-districts. The forming of the new sub-district gives the Makian ethnic authority in Malifut to take care of their own sub-districts. Prior to the establishment of the subdistrict, the population of the Makian ethnic group still relied on the sub-district government on the Makian island. This situation is of course difficult for them because the location of the island of Makian far from Malifut. Note that the Makian ethnic migration process to the Malifut area was not accompanied by the displacement of the sub-district administration. This has an impact on government administration that is still controlled by the sub-district on the island of Makian. The establishment of Makian Malifut sub-district based on Government Regulation number 42 year 1999 where one of the articles regulates the removal of Makian Subdistrict located on the island of Makian. This abolition for Makian ethnic groups has been relocated to victory because they think in reality many residents on the island of Makian are refusing
to move. With the removal of Makian sub-district on the island of Makian making the inhabitants still surviving on the island of Makian will itself out of the island.

For the indigenous people, the establishment of Makian Malifut sub-district raises its own problems. As indigenous people they refused to join the new district. In addition to the issue of the name of the sub-district as well as ethnic issues become an important factor. In addition to this, according to Judo Poerwowidagdo [7] in addition to ethnic issues, minor conflicts between indigenous peoples and Makian ethnic communities have never been resolved completely. In this case people are not quite sure that the government can solve their problems. As a result people choose to solve their own problems in ways that are deemed appropriate by them.

3.2. Conflict in Perspective of ethnic Pagu

The indigenous people who inhabit Malifut are the ethnic Pagu community. Ethnic Pagu is one of the original ethnic groups in Halmahera Island. This ethnicity is spread over several villages in Kao District. Specifically in the discussion of the Malifut conflict, this Pagu ethnic inhabit some villages in Malifut namely Sosol, Wangeotak and Tomabaru villages. Although living on the coast, the main livelihood of ethnic Pagu is on forest products and gardening. The hallmark of this ethnicity is their calm nature with a softer intonation of language than the other ethnic Halmahera.

For indigenous peoples, the coming of Makian ethnic to their territory is not a big deal. The socialization done by the government and their friendly attitude made the acceptance process work well. It should also be pointed out that the place of the people of the Makian ethnic who is now the first village of the Sosol villagers. The name of their village was originally Malifut. Malifut itself the name of a tree that grows coastal beach. However, because of the frequency of their village hit by the tide, they decided to move their village to a safer place. The initial location of their village was then used as a settlement location for migrant residents of Makian ethnicity. This placement is according to citizens Sosol as an act that does not respect them as indigenous people. But their anger was not directed at the Makian ethnic but to the government that placed the migrants in their territory.

In addition, such rapid development with all the supporting facilities provided to the immigrants evokes a certain jealousy. Their silence is more on their efforts not to take the issue to a position that will confront them with Makian settlers. The most obvious thing in their view is that the state has enough money given to migrants. As indigenous people, they have never felt the attention of the government where it can be seen from the facilities provided to them. The very rapid development that is intended for the migrants raises a certain jealousy for the indigenous people.

Observing the development developments given to migrants also led to a sense of ownership of the land they owned. For indigenous people the government should appreciate their existence and the land they have. The central government in this case seemed to ignore the ownership of the land and assume that the land given to migrants from the island of Makian is unprocessed land so that it is a state land that can be given to anyone who is desired by the state. This fact also generated suspicion from the indigenous population of the managers governing the removal of the Makian population into their territory.

Land issues are a major issue for indigenous Malifut people [8]. Governments that do not pay attention to their complaints are then added to the attitude of ethnic Makian who seem to want to control their land makes the indigenous people's discontent increasingly accumulate. The result is that they take back the land left to the migrants. In addition they began to draw clear boundaries of their land with the land granted by the government to the Makian ethnic.

3.3. Conflict within Makian Ethnic Perspective

Ethnic Makian is one of the ethnic groups in North Maluku and inhabits the island of Makian. Makian ethnic community though live on the island surrounded by sea but the main livelihood of society is farmer. The inadequate marine environment makes farming an important thing to do.

The removal of Makian ethnic from the island of Makian to Malifut is not without problems. The main rejection of Makian ethnicity towards this transfer process was their ownership of their land
on the island of Makian. Approaches and guarantees provided by the government make Makian citizens willing to move to the Malifut region.

In view of the Makian ethnic community, the conflicts are caused more by misunderstandings between Makian ethnic and indigenous people. They recognize that the indigenous people's welcome to them is very good. Their arrival was welcomed by the natives and even some of them raised their brothers with indigenous Malifut.

The main misconception is the way the Malifut people see the lives of migrants from Makian ethnicity. The rapid economic development is not due to government grants but because of their hard work in managing agricultural land. In this case, the Makian ethnic seeks to maximize every land they earn to make money. Makian ethnicity in managing the land is also based on their life experiences on the island of Makian. According to them the island of Makian in addition to very limited land also because the land on the island of Makian is not fertile enough so that their agricultural produce is not enough to help to improve the economy. This is also the cause of the many ethnic Makian who migrated to various areas in North Maluku. In this case, what they are doing is the utmost effort to harness the potential of nature without intending to make the indigenous Malifut marginalized. In such a way, Makian ethnic realizes also that the conflict is somewhat due to their lifestyles that always make the most effort in their economic improvement [9].

4. Discussion

The pattern of relations between migrants and indigenous peoples is a factor that needs to be taken into account in understanding the Malifut conflict. The coming of Makian ethnic occupation into the life of the indigenous people of Malifut changed the way the indigenous peoples perceived the value of the land they possessed. Of course this is not a major issue but different lifestyles with different characters and religions are factors to consider in understanding conflict.

As has been pointed out that the purpose of this paper is to show the influence of the location in this case the coastal region to the conflict that occurred. The research shows the different ways in which both communities see conflict. The ethnic Pagu people who are indigenous Malifut even live in coastal areas but their lifestyle is the lifestyle of rural people. An important feature in the life of the inland Halmahera people is in their more subtle language speech and a slightly shy lifestyle. Another important feature is their view of the land. For them the land is part of the living area used for survival. Land boundaries do not become important because basically the utilization of land is carried out for the sake of survival. In such a way of thinking the land is not viewed in an economic perspective but rather on a functional perspective. With such a perspective, land granting to migrants from Makian ethnic groups is regarded as a sign of friendship where the gift is also embodied in the sense of preservation of the indigenous population towards migrants.

In contrast, migrant settlers from Makian ethnic who have been accustomed to the limitations of land in their place of origin use the land grant to the maximum. The migrants immediately demonstrated progress in the economic field. Of course in addition to their own efforts, the government's attention in providing their life support infrastructure is a factor that can not be ruled out in favor of their lives in a new place.

From here clearly visible meeting of two poles of life. Although both communities rely on agricultural produce, their location determines their perspective on the land they own. Indigenous peoples who initially lived in Halmahera were familiar with the abundance of forest products where this formed their mindset in a way of looking at unlimited natural resources for their lives. The vastness of the land makes the indigenous people less concerned with maximizing their land for economic development. This is fundamentally different from the Makian settlers. Living on an island surrounded by sea makes them realize the importance of land use maximally. Especially with the sea conditions that do not always support make them lend their livelihood on agricultural products. Land granting by the government makes them maximally utilize the land. Even with no hesitation they began to penetrate new forest areas that will be used as agricultural land. This action then also
triggered the indignation of the indigenous people because in their understanding all existing land belonged to them by custom.

It is also clear that the Malifut conflict is not a fully politically charged conflict and not a purely natural resource overlap in the region. Communities of the two ethnic groups do not see it as an important issue because basically the main issues that emerge are land ownership rights and unfair government treatment [10].

5. Conclusion

Coastal residential areas with major searches not on fishery produce make two groups of people fight over land for use. In this case the conflict is the result of differences in perception of the land and the difference in the treatment of the land itself. Maximum utilization of existing land by migrants makes their economically visible lives quickly improve. This result also changed the way the indigenous people view their land. This change makes the land no longer seen in the functional aspect but at the economic value of any land they have. Thus changes in the values of life become more materialistic. This change also gave rise to a new awareness that all this time they are only used by migrants. Such an assumption triggers them to take back all the land they once gave to migrants when they arrived for the first time. Thus the conflict that occurred in Malifut from the perspective of indigenous people and migrants is a land-grabbing conflict.

6. References

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