

## DYNAMIC SOCIAL INTEGRATION: SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF RELIGIOUS FOLLOWERS IN AMBON

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### Abstract

*The social dynamics in post-conflict Ambon, Maluku, 1999-2004, indicated that even though people were segregated in the Islamic-Christian areas, gradually social integration began to occur naturally. The process of integration that occurred also gave birth to new values and inclusive views that give hope to future peace building. Using the theory of social integration of dynamic adaptation of the Parsonian structural-functional classic paradigm and combined with a qualitative research model, this study successfully formulated several important findings. First, social integration occurred in the city of Ambon could run naturally through economic interactions, consensus on political balance and inclusive religious spirit. In addition, the presence of public spaces such as offices, schools, malls and coffee shops served as a natural integration medium that is increasingly important in the dynamics of the society. Second, the new social integration has created an increasingly important meaning that leads to a model of active harmony characterized by a process of the increasingly active social interaction between different religions, as well as strengthening pluralism and multiculturalism insight due to campaign by educational institutions and civil society groups. Third, this study also reminds us that although there has been a process of the increasingly positive social integration in Ambon city, people still need to be aware of the growth of radical religious ideologies at a certain level, and also of strengthening identity politics in the long run that will potentially give birth to primordial and ethnocentric attitudes that are harmful to the development of peace.*

**Keywords;** Social Integration, Conflict, Peace, Ambon

### INTRODUCTION

The conflict that occurred in Maluku during the period from 1999 to 2003, was one of the greatest humanitarian tragedies in Indonesia. The conflict was manifested in acts of collective violence with strong religious symbols has caused tremendous destruction, both in terms of number of casualties, damage to property and destruction of the moral and social order of the religious communities in Maluku whose impact is still felt today. The conflict has also

created social segregation between the Muslim and Christian communities. Not surprisingly, Azumardi Azra (2000) once referred to the Maluku conflict the most devastating social conflict in the history of modern Indonesia. It was powerful religious conflicts which could eventually be stopped through a long and complicated dialog process. It all began with the Malino peace agreement in 2002, both parties finally agreed to end the conflict as a way to build peace. They were trying to get back to normal life and strived to leave behind a great tragedy that made them hostile to each other for several years. Slowly, social relations between people of different religions, ethnic and cultural were re-established. I started with economic activities, religious momentum and social interaction that naturally occurred through the public space.

Social phenomena that have become common in Ambon, certainly could be referred to as a positive sign of peace. However, the extent of the phenomena which serve a solid foundation for building harmony and peace would require new analytical studies. The study of social integration can serve as the gate to analyzing and evaluating the process of change that has occurred after the conflict, because the concept of social integration today is not just talking about the unification of plural societies of different religions and ethnicities in a common identity, or assimilation between dominant and minority groups (Rita Pranawati, 2011). Furthermore, the concept of social integration as discussed by some social scientists, should be able to show the forms of social relations that are authentic; recognizing each other's existence, mutual trust and equality (Asutosh Varsney, 2000). Likewise, social integration must be seen in the context of a new morality that has grown to the extent that supports harmony and peace in society that will bind them in a social equilibrium (Biku Parekh, 2008).

This paper is basically a process of critical evaluation of the dynamics of peace building in Ambon city at this time, especially with regard to the nature of the efforts of the community to build a more harmonious social relationship in the midst of social segregation. There are still social segregations, where settlements are separated by religious identities: Islam and Christianity. This phenomenon has become the right moment to examine the changes that occur in the post-conflict Maluku. Is a process of social integration getting better and authentic between ethnic and religious communities in Ambon? Then what about the form and process of integration that is taking place at the moment, does it contribute to the strengthening of peace or on the contrary does it hold a potential conflict to re-explode in a dangerous escalation?

Generally, the focal theory selected as the grand theory in understanding the phenomenon of social interaction and efforts to build peace in Ambon is

the theory of social integration. In the sociological study, the theory of social integration is part of the structural functionalism paradigm introduced by Talcot Parson (1927-1979). This paradigm assumes that basically people are in a social system that binds them in equilibrium. This is reflected in two basic understandings of social integration, first, the control of conflicts and social deviation in a particular social system, and second, bringing together certain elements in society in order to create a social order (George Ritzer & Douglas J. Goodman, 2009). This process aims to integrate social groups in society, by bridging the differences caused by a number of factors such as territory, culture, religion, interests, social class and so on, so as to reduce the gap caused by these factors.

So far, the study of social integration has often been influenced by a discourse of power of a union in a strong shared identity to overcome the differences. A social commentary that highlights the subordination of the minority forces to submit and to be united under the power of the identity of the majority. Then as a continuation of such perspective, a concept of assimilation is promoted, where minority identity and culture are expected to converge with the cultural identity of the majority. In his study of national integration, Nazaruddin Syamsudin argued that social integration is part of the concept of national integration which basically covers two fundamental issues. First, how to get people to be submissive and obedient to the demands and interests of the nation and state. Second, how to improve the normative consensus that governs the positive behavior of the community or individuals in it (Nazaruddin Syamsuddin, 1996). Nazaruddin's view, actually represents many political scientists of his day who viewed the state as the sole political and social entity whose existence should be taken care of, although in the process it inevitably ignores the diversity and differences that have become a social fact in Indonesia.

Since the 1998 reform, which was characterized by democracy and democratic discourse that encouraged openness, many scientists criticized the concept of integration as part of the discourse of the hegemonic power. Many scientists and researchers looked at the concept of social integration as a social science concept that has lost its context in the midst of the demands of democracy and respect for differences. Therefore, every study that promotes social integration is regarded as a theoretical activity which is unattractive and pro-status quo. However, from my point of view, what social scientists need to do is to release a scientific concept from power interpretations that have ruled over it. As argued by a sociologist, Heru Nugroho (1999), social scientists today require balancing the public discourse in a balanced manner to participate

and engage in discourse about diversity, without any coercion from the state to civil society.

Similarly, this paper seeks to promote the concept of social integration in a democratic society, which sees the difference as a political reality that must be managed democratically. The democratic view of the concept of social integration emphasizes on the importance of equal relations and mutual benefit. Biku Parekh (2008: 84-87) explained that the process of social integration in a democratic society requires three factors. First, the agreement of the majority of its members to certain social values which are fundamental and crucial (moral contract). Second, people are drawn together in various social units of mutual monitoring with potential social aspects. This is to maintain the dominance and control of the majority over the minority. Third, there is interdependence between social groups within a community who are assembled for the fulfillment of economic and social needs as a whole.

The main reason for the birth of social integration in a democratic society is the existence of a situation where people can communicate and interact in an egalitarian, full of confidence and mutual need. Asutosh Varsney (2003) referred to such situation is only possible through civic engagement, both through the interaction initiated by groups of civil society (*organized civic network*) and interactions that occur naturally through the public space of egalitarian (*everyday civic network*). Both of these processes can foster trust which ensures that different groups in the community will not engage in violence to others. Social integration also requires recognition of the invalidity of the difference and the right for those differences to live in the community. With such recognition, tolerant attitude towards differences will appear. Another important requirement is a moral contract (Parekh, 2008), a form of shared values that bind society in equilibrium.

A new view of social integration in a democratic society certainly will not deny the existence of conflict as an integral part of social phenomena and changes. Conflict, as Ralf Dahrendorf (see George Ritzer & Douglas J. Goodman, 2009) argued, is a social phenomenon that is always present (inherent/omni-present) in every human society. Human communities wherever they are will always have the possibility of conflict (Tuhana Taufiq, 2000), including in Ambon. However, conflict potential does not need to be encountered in a manner of hegemonic power, as the society and the state need to manage a variety of potential conflicts that exist in such a way that they can be accepted by all parties (Maswadi Rauf, 2000).

Patterns of social integration in the midst of conflict, social segregation and conflict that still is rampant which I referred to as a “dynamic social

integration". In other words, the dynamic of social integration is the process of unification of society that occurs naturally, without the subjugation of the majority against the minority, or vice versa. In a dynamic social integration, conflict and disagreement should be constructively interpreted and managed by democratic means which can be accepted by various existing interest groups. No society is completely free of conflict; society's ability to manage and control conflicts will determine whether or not a potential conflict could develop into a destructive collision.

The case of peace building in Ambon discussed in this study could be an interesting lesson about a dynamic model of social integration. Although the Ambon people remain divided over social segregation based on religion, they are involved in an effort to manage the differences by nature, partly through cultural initiatives. The people in Ambon have tried to build a process of social integration on the foundation of the values of the new wisdom that will bind them together even though they still recognize the differences between them. Shared values that promote harmony and peace that serves as a positive *habitus* in society (Pierre Bourdeou, 2008). Such *habitus* will be a mental or cognitive structure by which the people in Ambon will strive to restore social relations that had torn them apart.

### **AMBON IN THE CONTEXT OF SOCIAL AND RELIGIOUS**

The conflict that devastated Ambon from 1999 to 2004, has resulted in massive destruction. In addition to the number of victims killed and injured, public facilities and houses of citizens were also destroyed or burnt down. The impact of the conflict also contributed to the split of Maluku society into two communities, namely Muslims and Christians. Communities that had lived and settled in a village consisting of diverse ethnic, racial and religious groups have been displaced and separated and drawn together with their respective communities.

After the Agreement Malino in 2002 took effect, the city of Ambon was slowly conducive, characterized by decreasing intensity of conflict, destruction of weapons, construction of public facilities and the return of refugees who had been displaced in various places (both in Ambon city and other areas). However, the refugees had to face the reality of traumatic and fear to return to their home and meet their neighbors of different religions. Then, the refugees usually chose a new settlement with people of the same religion (Subair at al., 2008).

Christian refugees returned to the predominantly Christian settlements, as

well as Muslim refugees who began to build houses in the Muslim settlements. Most of the refugees took the initiative to barter residence with those of different religions to acquire a home in their new settlements. Muslim communities generally inhabit regions in Waihaong, Silale and scattered in Batu Merah village whose inhabitants were increasingly crowded. Some houses had to be built on the slopes of the mountain and hill with safety concern, and potential to damage the environment and the preservation of nature. Batu Merah village was not really big but it was forced to accept thousands of refugees seeking a new place to live in the Muslim village. While the Christian community chose to live in the Subdistrict of Nusaniwe, such as Latuhalat, Amahusu, Kudamati, Batu gantung, Wainitu and Mangga Dua. Christian areas also included Karang Panjang, Ahuru and some other places in the region of Galala to Paso in the subdistrict of Baguala. In fact, Christian area still looked wider than the area occupied by the Muslim community, but the Christian region was also a densely populous.

Social segregation created sociologically is very worrying indeed. Settlements built on group identities, which are homogeneous and exclusive, are certainly unhealthy and will easily give rise to suspicions, social problems and conflict. The main reason is that no other groups that play a role as a catalyst for conflict issues that arise in the community. In a neighborhood where there are residents who embrace various religions, social integration and the opportunity to protect each other would occur. Petter Blau and Schwartz (1984) mentioned the importance of heterogeneous situation to strengthen the dual loyalty in social life. The point is that a person who is affiliated with a certain religion will maintain good relationship with their own group as well as others. It is a consequence of being in the same neighborhood. This is what experts referred to as "dual loyalty", where the more loyalty a person has in a social circumstance, the more a person has a tolerance and maintain a good relationship to everyone. Through the relationship, heterogeneous society can look after and protect each other. However, the views put forward by Petter Blau, seemed to be subject to correction when observing the phenomenon of conflict in Ambon, where neighbors had been attacking and killing each other. They seemed to have no loyalty to their neighbors who have been living for years around them.

## **SOCIAL INTEGRATION OF VARIATION IN AMBON**

After conflict and violence were slowly down, the people of Ambon tried to rebuild a social life and social relationship because a feeling of suspicion and resentment is still strong in the community. In spite of this, we can see that



people were starting to learn how to manage social life in an abnormal way. Such abnormality was evident when people are forced to accept the fact that life in Ambon city has turned into an extreme social segregation and became the new face of this little city. Moreover, the shrinking residential land has been difficult for the government to encourage the construction of new housing units that could serve as an “oasis” where people of different religions can live together in peace. Indeed, in some places, such as Poka and Wayame people come from different backgrounds, but overall Ambon is a divided city.

Nonetheless, the phenomenon that occurred in Ambon precisely confirmed the veracity of the functional structural theory proposed by Parson (1927-1929) who believed that society is a system that consists of a variety of social units, which will naturally and systematically experience the process of reintegration, and will form a social system which binds people in a social equilibrium (George Ritzer & Douglas J. Goodman, 2009). Humans are social beings who are always in need of a shared life, because as the functional structural theorists believe that humans will always seek to find ways to build a better life together, though in the process, multiple conflicts and contradictions might arise. Basically, human nature requires certain situations to be able to meet economic, political and cultural needs. Conflict and peace finally appear as a contradiction but complementary so that the integrity of variations occurred in post-conflict Ambon in Maluku.

First, social integration will naturally utilize the economic activities in local markets. Obviously, the situation of post conflict society of Maluku had poor economic conditions. In some places, people had trouble getting groceries and other staple food for their daily needs because the distribution was hampered by social segregation and a distant settlement. Each group built its own life, had its own economic activities, its own market, etc. Under these conditions there are groups of people from both communities who communicate and conduct transactions of food needs to be sold to the public in their neighborhood. Groups with economic interests have taken the initiative to break the ice as a result of conflicts, despite living in segregation they had contact through communication and the exchange of goods between traders. Mardika and Batumerah market that is geographically located between Muslim and Christian area in Ambon City acts as a medium that brings these communities together. People from Muslim and Christian community are selling their merchandise here. Gradually, the Mardika market which was burnt down during the conflict, came back to life and became the first public space for them to meet each other. Bugis, Makassar and other traders who left Ambon, returned into the market and rebuilt the destroyed grocery stores and kiosks.

The Ambon phenomenon shows that the market is a place which has of social, economic, cultural and political elements. Activities in the market are not only about economic values (where buyers and sellers meet to hold the exchange of money and goods), but it also has a social dimension that relates each other in a public life. The role of the market that turned into a social medium of integration, bringing together diverse groups that initially built relationship because of economic necessity. Through such contact, the disconnected communication is now re-established. Economic activities in the market served to foster the birth of reconciliation movement in Ambon, which was done without being engineered, natural and inspirational, occurring in the grassroots, very inclusive indeed, which also proved economy is not only a trigger of conflict but also an agent of unifying the two war torn communities (Christian and Muslim).

Second, there were efforts to turn religious events as a medium of social integration. At times we might not realize that ritual and religious events are filled with symbolic meaningful expressions. Abdullah (2006) stated that the activities of religious ceremonies and rituals are the momentum to continue to maintain the values and reproduce religious values as a medium of communication and community integration. Through community religious events, people can build social cohesion and integration to improve social balance. The development of post-conflict Maluku shows that people of Ambon used religious events as a medium for forming social integration and bringing togetherness between them.

There were two religious events used as a momentum for a medium of integration and harmony, i.e. *Musabaqah Tilawatul Qur'an* (Qur'an Recital Competition) (MTQ) in 2012 and the National Gospel Choir (Pesparawi) 2015. In the event the National MTQ in 2012 people of different religions Ambon started to build unity through active involvement in the activities. Although the MTQ 2012 was a Muslim religious event, obviously we could see that Christians and Catholics in Ambon were involved and participated in these activities. The forms of engagement that can be noted was the participation of a choir group to sing march songs of the MTQ, some people taking role as the committee members in a variety of functions, and providing a venue for the MTQ events. Some Christians offered their home as a place to stay for the MTQ delegates from various regions. Meanwhile in various major roads to the narrow alleys in the city of Ambon, Christians put up banners and billboards that made statements supporting the MTQ in Ambon City. Some delegates coming from various regions expressed astonishment at the welcoming gesture shown by Christian community of Ambon during the



MTQ.

Similarly, the National Pesparawi event in 2015, a contest of gospel songs held each year by Christians in Indonesia, also received a warm welcome from Muslims in Ambon City. The Batu Merah Muslim community provided their houses as accommodation for Pesparawi contingents from different provinces. At the Batu Merah mosque, people sang *shalawat* and religious chants to welcome the Pesparawi contingents from various provinces that pass through the village of Batu Merah. They displayed white cloth and ask the Pesparawi contingents to get down from the vehicle to walk on foot with them across the village of Batu Merah as an expression of brotherhood. I also noted the various activities they did together in maintaining a house of worship on the day of religious holidays such as on *Eid* and Christmas. During the activities of Eidul Fitr, a number of Christian youth from Batu Gantung are usually present as volunteers to help keep the Eid prayer activities to be carried out safely. Similarly, on Christmas, many young people from Batu Merah, Waihaong and Silale helped to secure the Christmas service held at churches in the city of Ambon, one of which was in Shiloh Church. A local mass media mentioned that on Christmas 2014, there were 120 members of the mosque teenagers in Ambon City who joined the police and the army in securing 48 Churches in the city of Ambon. According to the Chairman of the Young Generation of the Protestant Church (AMGPM) Maluku, Elifas Tomix Maspaitella, what the young Muslims did to keep the Christmas service safe is the real face of the culture of Maluku, and it also proves that the awareness of religious communities in Maluku to respect each other began to grow again after the bloody conflict a decade ago.

What happened in Ambon showed efforts to make religion and ritual moment as a medium for building integration and social harmony. Religious events have symbolically become a medium that carried messages and symbols that integrate groups of people of different religions in the religious, cultural consciousness. Therefore, according to Julian Steward, religious ceremonies or events implemented by the community are effort to adapt to the changing environment so that through ceremonies and rituals (both religious and cultural) communities can express themselves, preserve and communicate cultural values in order to be references in realizing social solidarity and social integration (Julian Steward in Bambang Hidayana et al., 2012).

Third, the use of public spaces as an arena for social integration. In the context of life in the city of Ambon, the public spaces that play a role in encouraging communication and integration between citizens are centers of economic activities such as the markets, government offices, public schools, and coffee

houses that thrive in post-conflict Maluku. Government offices have a very important role to bring together people from various backgrounds. The employees are “forced” by the prevailing system in the office to work together in an orderly way, while the school has become a public space for all the students with different backgrounds. Although similar to the office, public space during the conflict was based on religious affiliation, even schools were also segregated. However, it began to change, especially for schools located in the border region between Muslim and Christian, such as Senior High School 3 of Ambon. The research conducted by Adam Latuconsina (2013) mentioned that an increasingly inclusive school is a place for fostering tolerant attitude in the future. Students from various backgrounds learn to get to know the religious identity of each of their fellows’ different religions and beliefs, which are expected to form an inclusive character among the young generation. Another public space is the coffee house that flourished in the wake of the conflict in Maluku. The coffee house has become a public space that brings together people from a variety of different identity groups. The relaxed, informal, and humorous atmosphere of the coffee shop can be used to build good relationship between visitors who already knew each other well before, even between strangers. Conversation and social relations that occur in a coffee shop may not directly resolve the problems that arise in the community, but the encounter between people of different backgrounds here enables communication, and exchange of perspectives. Rumors, suspicions and various other forms of negative information get ‘censored’ and clarified through conversation in a coffee shop. Rumors are often the ignition of conflict which can be neutralized, or referred to in the literature of peace studies as “being killed” by the process of exchanging information so that it cannot easily be used for the mobilization of conflict.

Egalitarian public space would be a “bridge” for good relations between religions and ethnicities. Referring to the theory Varsney (2003) on social capital, pattern of relations in an egalitarian public space will create a pattern of relationships which are not formal in everyday life (everyday forms of engagement). According Varsney, informal relationship patterns which have a sturdier resistance to press potential for conflict, is natural and free from political interests and often occurs in formal organizations. However, it does not mean the pattern of formal relationships (association forms of engagement) such as in offices and schools are not important (Asutosh Varsney in Iqbal Ahnaf, 2013). Both types of relationship patterns can play an important role in preventing polarization-based identity that may potentially be used to mobilize conflict.

Fourth, the consensus on the politics of equilibrium, followed by efforts to allocate resources to accommodate all the interests of political identities. This is important because during the conflict, the issues of the balance of important positions in the local bureaucracy were continuously discussed. It even constituted one of the issues fiercely debated in the Malino Agreement in 2002 (Saidin Ernas, 2006). In addition to local bureaucracy, the balance in the management of education at the University of Pattimura was also criticized by a number of Islamic leaders because it was considered to be controlled by the Christian community. In a further development, the concept of balance though not formally regulated in the existing regulations in Maluku, became political awareness and political consensus in the practice of local politics and government.

As a result, the configuration of the political leadership always symbolizes a balanced political accommodation. In post-conflict elections, Maluku Governor, Brigadier General (Ret) Karel Albert Ralahalu, a Christian took Muhammad Latuconsina (Muslim) as his running mate and then won the election. In the second tenure, Karel took Said Assegaf as his running partner and again successfully emerged as the winner. The city of Ambon also adopted the practice of political balance. Jopy Papilaya managed to emerge as the Mayor by taking Syarid Haldler as the vice mayor and in the following period he took Olivia Latuconsina. The current mayor of Ambon (2011-2016 period) is held by Richad Louhanapesy with Syam Latuconsina as vice mayor. Almost all candidates who are involved in the election of the Governor and the Mayor still practice this balance politics with candidates coming from different religions, Muslim-Christian. At the level of local bureaucracy the balance of political consolidation also took place. The government employees were appointed by looking at the allocation based on the balance of religion. So is the case with policy development. As illustrated in several regional development programs, where they were carried out by adopting the approach of balance. For example, the construction of the Islamic Center was followed by the construction of the Christian Center and the Catholic Center, etc. In the past year, the government sent a number of *imams* to perform *Umrah* which was fully funded by the provincial government. At the same time the government also financed a number of priests and pastors for spiritual tourism to Israel.

Political developments like this according to Bachtiar Efendi (1996) is an *allocative policy*, in which the government allocates economic and political resources evenly on all political forces to avoid jealousy and feelings of being treated unfairly. The example of 'each gets a share' politics can also be seen from the perspective of political representation which is indirectly implemented as

an integral part in the process of reconciliation for peace. In this case, the representation is defined as the expression of a position of equality in the relations of heterogenic society. Democracy itself is often interpreted as the voice of the majority, often eliminating the minority voice that had been assumed to be "submission to the paradigm of public interest. So, one of the adjudications made in the representation as the resolution of conflicts in Maluku and Ambon is creating a balance composition of bureaucratic positions between different faiths and ethnicities.

### **DYNAMIC SOCIAL INTEGRATION AND ENERGETIC SPIRIT OF INCLUSIVENESS**

Ambon conflict shows the dynamics where the social system which was formed after the conflict tend to look for a new pattern of relations between communities. Despite social segregation, slowly but sure, the people of Ambon (Muslims and Christians) try to find new forms of awareness about peace. It raises awareness of social practices and new social interaction, which is more open and inclusive, even with more powerful energy. This phenomenon could be described as energetic inclusiveness which serves as a model of dynamic social integration in Ambon

First, the strengthening energetic spirit of inclusiveness in the practice of active harmony. Overall, it can be said that the values of inclusive religious understanding is slowly growing and developing within religious communities in Ambon, especially among the religious leaders who realize the significance of fostering the values of inclusiveness in favor of peace. Even in reality, the values of inclusiveness have given birth to a new model of an active religious harmony. Society not only acknowledges differences in society, but actively seeks to learn and improve solidarity in social life.

The use of the term 'active harmony' in this paper is to distinguish the general discourse of religious harmony which has been used by the state. For example, in the discourse of the New Order regime, this concept seemed to be passive and hegemonic. Harmony was interpreted only as not to interfere and meddle in the affairs of people of different religions and cultures. So, during the New Order era, the concept of harmony was restricted by policies that seemed repressive. In the SARA (tribe, religion, race and intergroup relations) policy for example, for the sake of harmony, one should not discuss matters concerning the differences. This obviously gave birth to a closed attitude toward differences even at the birth of harmony that was created on the surface. Some sociologists saw the model of harmony of the New Order as a passive harmony, where people only knew there were different beliefs and

political views but obviously they did not get to know the differences, because it was regarded as disrupting social stability.

Meanwhile, in the concept of active harmony, it not only created tolerance as mentioned above, but also appears to make active efforts for mutual dialog and enhance mutual understanding. Harmony is built on awareness, knowledge and trust in those who are different. In the concept of active harmony, an egalitarian and inclusive dialog is very prominent, as people are encouraged to discuss the differences in an effort to learn and recognize differences. Moreover, dialog aims to understand the views according to the view of the one's own construction, not of ours. In this context the term dialog between religions, which is very important in building tolerance, is more than just a passive harmony.

The context life between religions in Ambon indicated that the values of harmony that develops actively which is marked by the emergence of religious institutions that perform interfaith dialogs particularly among the Protestant Church of Maluku, which officially made the concept of inter-religious dialog part of religious service. Education and training curriculum for Christian priests in Maluku began offering intensive study on inter-religious dialog between Islam and Christianity, and no longer focusing on a comparative study of religions that contain binary opposition perspective.

The strength of civil society that thrived in post-conflict period also emerged as a force that is actively campaigning for the model of harmony, as shown by a number of theologians and activists who joined the agency EL-AI-EM. Since 2005 a number of activists of the institute have been focusing on consolidating public dialogs related to various social problems, not only theological religious issues but also contemporary social problems such as HIV/AIDS, Drugs and domestic violence. Public dialogs held to build shared perceptions on several contemporary issues were rolling in daily public discourse in the city of Ambon. In addition it also conducted a limited variety of interfaith meeting, to examine and map the development of the security situation periodically. The mapping of the situation is then delivered to multiple stakeholders, with connections and influence in society. An activist of the EL-AI-EM, Wakano Abidin said that efforts to establish a dialog is as a way to foster a tolerant attitude and religious life in Ambon as part of an active harmony.

As described earlier, the role of the communities from different groups of religion in religious events such as the MTQ, Pesparawi and participation in securing houses of worship during the holidays and Christmas is the real form of active harmony. Society is not only willing to respect the differences, but also engages in concrete actions to institutionalize the values of harmony as a

way to build a tolerant life together.

The concept of active harmony is a new spirit of diversity that is being developed in Ambon despite the difficulty to develop it because sometimes the activists have to deal with criticism and a lawsuit from conservative religious groups. In the future, the spirit of active harmony will become new values in the spirit of religious citizens of the city of Ambon. Here it can be seen that indirectly conflict has prompted new religious models that are much more progressive in addressing the differences of belief.

Second, the energetic spirit of inclusiveness in the idea of pluralism and multiculturalism as a new form of consciousness to establish peace in Ambon City. Several local institutions in Ambon, such as NGOs, religious institutions and universities strive to internalize the discourse of pluralism and multiculturalism in the local people's life. They make it as a campaign theme, slogan or discussion of religion and culture in public spaces and, of course, in the academic world. In fact, there are universities that adopt it formally as part of the vision and mission implementing it in the academic and socio-cultural program. Pluralism is used openly by the Maluku Protestant Church (GPM) in framing religious dialogs. Pluralism is usually paired with the practices of local wisdom as *Pela* and *Gandong*. On its 80th anniversary in 2015, the GPM promoted the theme of pluralism as outlined in the texts of the church to the public campaign. Pluralism is considered the extraction of the experience of protracted conflict and revitalization on local wisdom as a medium of dialog in diversity. Lis Marantika of GPM Maluku mentioned that the pluralism theme promoted by the Maluku Protestant Church was in line with the spirit of the brotherhood, religious and moral messages in the Holy Book. What Lis referred to certainly has empirical justification when seeing the whole process of transformation of the post-conflict Maluku Protestant Church. GPM continued the program to encourage an understanding of the importance of pluralist attitude in religious practice in Maluku. To the leaders of GPM, Ambon and Maluku society can make pluralism a new narrative to unite themselves in diversity. The process is carried out through egalitarian dialog, and the revitalization of the values of local wisdom. In addition to effort made by the church, the Maluku Christian University (UKIM) also campaigned themselves as the "campus of brotherhood of people", which according to its president would give the knowledge to all students regardless of religious and ethnic groups. The choice of the theme " campus of brotherhood of people" put emphasis on the importance of the spirit of brotherhood that is integrated in the learning process at the university. The UKIM also launched Peace Studies Center, which specifically examines the conflict and peace in Maluku.



Meanwhile the Muslims also continued to campaign on the concept of multiculturalism as a social discourse to express the spirit of brotherhood. Even the State Institute of Islamic Studies (IAIN) Ambon included multiculturalism in the main vision and as a central theme that frames the whole academic activities at IAIN Ambon. Multiculturalism was adopted in the academic curricula of all study programs, student activities and other academic activities. As the implementation of the vision of multiculturalism, in 2015, a number of students from the Department of Sociology, Faculty of *Dakwa* and Ushuluddin IAIN Ambon sent to apprentice students to the Maluku Protestant Church (GPM). The internship at the church was one of the major breakthroughs made in building IAIN students' understanding and knowledge of diversity and differences. Through understanding the differences, (by experience) students are expected to have an attitude and character that respect differences and avoid hostility to other groups who have different beliefs

Referring to Diana L. Eck (2002), the spirit of pluralism that is being built in Ambon can encourage energetic and active engagement in the face of segregation and diversity. An awareness of plurality will encourage inclusive religious dialog to talk and listen, open minds and promote a shared understanding of the reality of differences. Through a campaign of pluralism and multiculturalism, various social groups in Ambon want to find a way to build mutual understanding and better cooperation despite the fact that geographically and sociologically the people of Ambon city still remain in segregation. The academic concept of Pluralism and Multiculturalism is expected to be used to manage differences and diversity in Maluku.

### **CHALLENGES OF RELIGIOUS RADICALISM AND THE APPEAL OF IDENTITY POLITICS.**

Even though I have demonstrated various positive developments in the dynamic social integration that occurred in the city of Ambon and their new values attached to them, along with that there is still potential conflict that needs to be addressed. It is mainly related to the threat of religious radicalism that is constantly looking for a place in the community of potential conflict, such as what happened in Ambon. Similarly, the threat of the practice of identity politics tends to highlight the primordial fanaticism which is currently a common symptom of political praxis in Indonesia. Radicalism network is referred to in this paper is the phenomenon of religious groups who propagate notions of exclusive community of Ambon city. The radical understanding can come from both Muslims and Christians who are not in

favor of the practices of active harmony or the campaign on pluralism and multiculturalism in Ambon.

It needs to be reminded because among the Muslims, a radical network still has cultural roots institutionalized during the conflict in Maluku. Movements propagated by radical groups such as Jihad paramilitary troops still left the cultural bases behind that inherited religious worldview that tends to be exclusive. These groups were born of the ex-combatants who did not return to home. They settled in Ambon and built the movement and religious groups that turned out to be different from the religious movement that existed before the conflict: moderate Islam. According to the National Agency of Counter Terrorism (BNPT) the movement called itself the Salafi movement that simply cannot be categorized as a terrorist movement, although it did not rule in the long run, it will lead to a radical exclusivism that is hard and stiff.

While not too prominent, among the Christians there are also religious groups that have a religious view that tends to be exclusive. In contrast to the Christian understanding developed by the Maluku Protestant Church, Christian exclusive groups tend to be aggressive and are considered less tolerant. Yance Z. Rumahuru argued that these groups come from the radical Christian groups of Charismatic Church and Pentecostal Church groups who are usually aggressive in the deployment of the mission. The pretext is looking for the lost sheep in Maluku. In fact, sometimes they also denominated other Christians who are not like-minded. However it seems that this group is not dominant, so that its religious views are less developed in the religious discourse in Maluku.

In addition to religious radicalism, another challenge that needs to be aware of in the process of social integration and religious peace in Ambon is the phenomenon of identity politics. Identity politics is basically a part of an effort made by certain ethnic, religious, and cultural communities to be accommodated in the local political system. However, it is worrisome when it is displayed in Ambon as the city is recovering from the wounds of bloody conflict. The phenomenon of identity politics can bring back the religious and ethnic sentiments that may easily cause violent mobilization.

The contemporary Indonesian political era today show an uncertain reality experienced by the Indonesian related to the strengthening of identity politics. Agnes Heller (in Abdillah, 2002) assumed the identity politics as the politics that focuses on the differences as a major category which it promises freedom, tolerance, and freedom for free play although it raises the patterns of intolerance, violence and ethnic conflict. In the case of Indonesia, and more specifically Maluku, the temptation of the emerging identity politics tends to

carry ethnicity, religion and political ideology.

The operational patterns of this identity politics can be found in today's community indicated by the number of conflicts of interest and the phenomenon of sectoral ego in Ambon, among other things: First, the operationalization of identity politics played its role optimally through the apparatus of government. This is in line with the demands of religious identity and ethnic balance in the local bureaucracy and the political system. Identity politics is revealed by rampant issues of ethnicity and primordial phenomena carried through the issues of religion and ethnicity in important moments such as general elections and legislative elections. Similarly, it is also the case when talking about ethnicities and immigrant issues, which are made up with the majority and minority. Secondly, in the context of identity politics in Maluku, it also utilizes religious expression that contains the tendency to "get rid" of other groups who are considered minorities.

Based on both patterns of operationalization, identity politics seems likely to distort the inclusive religious insight that people have been trying to build in Maluku especially in the last decade, where obviously we can witness efforts to increase the political role of the various local groups in Ambon continues to take political identity setting (Dirk Tomsa, 2008). Local elections have triggered elite and political practitioners to consolidate political interests in the name of religion and ethnicity which are in fact quite dangerous for peace building. Actually, the strengthening of identity politics through the representation of religious and ethnic groups in the allocation of positions in the bureaucracy as being imposed in some government offices in Ambon, have somehow managed to, in the short term, reduce conflict. Nonetheless, in the long run, this is not conducive to the constructive efforts to maintain peace that has been created in the last decade.

## CONCLUSION

This research indicated that even though Ambon is still torn and segregated based on religious identity, Islam and Christianity, there has been a positive process because a social system that is being established in Ambon tends to foster a new spirit of social integration that can be read as a dynamic social integration. With regard to the dynamics in discussion, this research made some important points as the conclusion. First, the dynamic social integration that occurred in the city of Ambon took place naturally, because of the pressure of economic needs that bring people together in a place like the market. At the same time, there was also an initiative to revitalize the values of local wisdom as a bridge of brotherhood. Society also used religious events such as the MTQ

and Pesparawi as medium for social integration while enhancing increasingly positive interfaith cooperation. Meanwhile, different political interests were manifested through the efforts to revive public spaces such as markets, offices, schools, and coffee shops which are surprisingly thriving in the wake of the conflict. However, there was a strengthening of political balance that gave a representation for the sake of religion and ethnicity in the allocation of political and public positions in the bureaucracy and the local political system.

Second, the developments in Ambon lately also indicated the growing strength of the energy that was portrayed in the inclusivity model of active harmony, which was characterized by the process of increasingly active social interaction between religious followers, in an open and conducive dialog. At the same time, the stakeholders such as religious organizations, the forces of civil society and community of higher education also sought to adopt academic concepts such as pluralism and multiculturalism to strengthen the vision of peace in Ambon.

Third, this study also reminded us that although there is a process of social integration and the development of an increasingly positive peace in Ambon, people still need to watch for the growth of the radical religious ideology that at some level still exist in the community, both Muslims and Christians. At the same time, the appeal of identity politics that emerged in the local political momentum such as general elections and local elections should also be handled with caution, because it indirectly will give birth to primordial and ethnocentric attitudes which are harmful to the development of peace in the future.

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