

## CONTESTATION OF RELIGIOUS PUBLIC SPACE: CHRISTIANS VS MUSLIMS CASES IN PAPUA

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### Abstract

*The land of Papua has often been associated with the Papua Independence Movement (GPM), in addition to the Independent Papua Organization (OPM) which has been known since the 1990s. The battle between the civil society of Papua against the military seems to keep happening. Killing and shooting each other has always been a public discussion and media coverage. However, the thing that escapes people's attention is a contestation that occurred between the adherents of the religion of the indigenous Papuans who claim to adhere to Christianity, known as the 'mountain people', and the Muslims, known as the coastal and inland people who are regarded as non-natives of Papua. The contestation took place observably in public spaces like the streets, mountains, fields and various religious activities that involved mobs such as Kebaktian Kebangkitan Rohani (Spiritual Awakening Mass) among the Christians, as well as talbligh akbar (huge gathering) among the Muslims where they bring in speakers from outside Papua as an attraction. Such contestation has been going on since 1998 that sometimes triggered massive demonstrations and bans on religious activities as well as the establishment of a Muslim school. In the Papuan society, a lot of trouble is religious matters, coming both from the internal and external followers. To data were obtained through direct observations, in-depth interviews with a number of key informants, literature study and written documents related to the issue. The data were processed using interpretative approach as commonly used by Clifford and Geertz in the socio-anthropological tradition or social sciences in general.*

**Key Words:** Freedom of Religion, Public Contestation, Papua

### INTRODUCTION

The annual report on freedom of religion and belief issued by The Wahid Institute 2013 stated that from January through December 2013, the number of violations or religious belief reached 245 cases of intolerance. These cases were made up of 106 events (43 percent) involving the State actors and 139 cases (57%) by non-State actors. Meanwhile the total number of acts of violence and intolerance reached 280 cases, where 121 of them (43%) were done by the State actors and 159 cases (57%) by non-State actors. (The Wahid Institute, January 2014)

Based on the fact delivered by The Wahid Institute above, there is a fundamental question to be answered by every citizen who claims to have religious belief: what causes violent behavior and actions that violates the Constitution concerning freedom of religion to occur? Isn't freedom to adhere to religious beliefs a human right that cannot be replaced in Indonesia, but why does public contestation related to religion always take place and tend to lead to physical violence and murder?

Based on the data, the State was often criticized as it has actually been regarded as a «failed state» in protecting its citizens to practice a religion and worship. Therefore, if a state is considered a failed state especially in terms of protecting the freedom of belief and worship, it is an uncontested fact, especially with regard to the minorities. Papua became the spotlight which this study will focus on.

*Papua Road Map* written by Muridan Widjojo, S. et al, and other works of Widjojo (2009, 2001) and *The Papua Way – Dinamika Laten & Refleksi 10 Tahun Otsus Papua* (Laten Dynamics and Reflection on 10 years of Papua Special Autonomy by Anthony Ayorbaba (2011) highlighted how the Papua conflict should be approached in order to get the best solution for Papua and the Government. In the meantime, as far as the author knows there are only two written works that really focused on religious conflicts that occurred in Papua, i.e. Christian Warta and a thesis by Cahyo Pamungkas (2008). Cahyo Pamungkas study was entitled: *Papua Islam dan Otonomi Khusus: Kontestasi Identitas di Kalangan Orang Papua (Muslim Papua and Special Autonomy: Identity Contestation among the Papuans)* (2008) discussed how the discourse of Islam and Christianity is used in the formation of the discourse Papua and Indonesia. Further, Cahyo Pamungkas (2008: 174-175) by using Bourdieu's analysis of the discourse of capital, *habitus*, and domain concluded:

First, the Papuan Muslims in the subordinate position are trying to get recognition of their cultural identity which is flexible in the midst of the ongoing Special Autonomy. Second, the subordinate position of the Papuan Muslims in the realm of the Islamic diversity on the land of Papua contested credentials with Muslim immigrants through construction of Papuan identity politics as represented in the Islamic discourse of *blessing on Papua* and peace on the Papuan land discourse as well as other praxis on the advocacy of human rights violations. Third, Muslims the subordinate position in Papua in the realm of politics and diversity in Papua contested their identity with the Papuan Christians through discourses that Islam is part of the customs of the indigenous Papuans and the praxis

of mediation between Muslim settlers with Christian Papuans related to the question of the establishment of places of worship and Islamic schools. Conclusion of this study is a strategy by Muslim Papuans to get recognition of their cultural identity will be carried out by formulating their true flexible identity, i.e. combining Islam and Papua, contesting its cultural identity with Muslim settlers and Christian Papuans in the arena of identity politics in the land of Papua, as well as internal consolidation through the creation of the Papuan Muslim Assembly (MMP).

The above mentioned research is interesting and intelligent, but like other researchers, they only focused on the contestation discourse of religious identity in the frame of the State relational discourse hegemony with the existing religious conflict. This sort of subordinating approach to religion as an entity and the reality of politics in the shadow of the dominant discourse of the State, which in the post-war period of the new order, religion was capable of transforming back to be a dominant and hegemonic discourse on the lives of communities and even countries. This occurs because it is a transcendental role as sacred canopy of rationality of individual and communal political action. Thus, through this understanding, it is possible to explain how religion becomes a dominant discourse between the society and the State that potentially generate the emergence of vertical and horizontal conflicts in this state of *Pancasila*. This constellation has not been explained by Cahyo Pamungkas in depth. That is why there are Muslims in Papua who favor the status quo, while the Christian immigrants tend to melt in the discourse about Papua.

Generally, research with ethnic groups and religion as the object and subject of the study has been widely conducted by many, either in the form of theological or practical studies. Each successive researcher presents various findings that inform the specificity and diversity of the community in the performing religious rituals in everyday life. Unfortunately, religious conflicts sometimes cause not only a large number of casualties, but also serious damage to the material possessions which are looted and burned. In the case of a conflict in Jayapura and Papua in general, the overall ethnic and religious conflicts seem to find synergy of the issues of immigrants versus native people.

Santoso (2002) explained the social construction on the reasons underlying the political-religious violence in Situbondo. According to him, the destruction of the Church was an attempt to channel public discontent against the attitudes and decisions of authorities. The social construction of the perpetrators' argument regarding the actions of the Church was that it deserved to be destroyed due to justification in the name of religion in order

to maintain religious identity (Santoso, 2002: ix-x).

In line with Santoso, research conducted by Ratnawati (2003), showed that the conflict of Ambon on January 19, 1999 was the tip of the iceberg of a long history of religious conflict which was engineered by a certain group who fought for land ownership and economic power in the community of the Moluccas. However, eventually Ratnawati concluded that the tragedy showed that the people of Ambon lacked the skills needed to manage religious differences and other differences in society, including the power to refuse outsiders who intended to destroy the harmony in the community. She concluded that the Ambon tragedy was an example of the failure of the State to build a multicultural society (Ratnawati, 2003: 10-13).

Meanwhile, still in the same case, Asyumardi Azra (2003) argued that religion played an important part in the communal conflict in Maluku, though the it noticeable later. He asserted that there was another factor that created hostility and conflict between the two religious groups. When a dispute occurred between the religious groups (Muslims and Christians), religion was used as a tool for a mob to legitimize acts of violence. In addition, mass riots in Maluku came from competition in contested economic resources and the distribution of political power that was disproportionate in the local bureaucracy between the Muslim and the Christian community, at least in the last two decades. Another important factor was the failure of the police and military authorities in tackling the conflict thus it turned out that they also became the perpetrators the religion-affiliated clash (Azra, 2003: 69-71)

Likewise research by Bartels (2011) on the Maluku conflict, concluded that the most important thing in the case of a religious conflict in Maluku is due to a world religion that does not offer much that can support a resolution of the conflict. Maluku was like a bag of gun powder that could explode any time if ignited. This happened because there were some major obstacles, such as the Muslims did not fully accept the Ambon Muslim immigrants, and that Muslims and Christians in Ambon, with the new autonomous region made possible by new regulations, could agree to jointly be more assertive against the outsiders (Bartels, 2011: 141-142). This is a conclusion of some studies that address the problem of conflict in several parts of Indonesia, including Papua in a diverse perspective. From there, we get a picture of that conflict of religion occurred and it is the real thing, including in Papua due to contested public spaces as indicated by this article

## CONTESTATION OF PUBLIC SPACE IN THEORY AND CONCEPT

The theory of “construction and reproduction of culture” which was put forward by Abdullah (2006) will be used here. Abdullah revealed that the community can longer be understood as a whole entity resulting from a process of differentiation that occurs in various forms, such as (1) the process of community boundaries obscuration caused by incoming and outgoing migration that takes place in various communities; (2) weakening cultural boundaries that lead to socialization process to experience a shift; (3) weakening compliance due to the loss of local leadership in a community (Abdullah, 2006). Cultural processes that cannot be avoided will pose for potentially conflict, beginning with the existence of tensions.

The theory is a continuation of the theory of phenomenology that was proposed to view the paradigm of social facts. Approach to the derivation of phenomenology is a theory of social construction which was conceived by Peter L. Berger and Thomas Luckmann (1990). Berger and Luckmann saw that the effort to understand the social construction is done by defining a reality and knowledge. The fact is implied in the social association expressed through communication via language, cooperation through forms of social organization and so on. The society is a fact of objective and subjective reality at the same time.

As the objective reality, society is beyond the human self and should deal with it, whereas as the subjective reality, individuals within the community are an integral part. In other words, the individual is a shaper of society and the community is forming the individual. The fact is not singular but plural, which is why it is called objective and subjective fact. Objective reality is a reality that exists outside of the human self, and subjective reality is a reality which is within the human (Berger and Luckmann, 1990: 66-225). By looking at it that way, this study looks at how individual religiosity and social construction of Jayapura is formed, so the currently it tends to crystalize toward primordialism, not only ethnicity or religion but also the symbiosis of ethnicity and religion into one. This phenomenon is also marked by a shift in values and social order in the study of nationalism (Nurkhoiron, 2005: 31).

Primordialism discussed in society, that has a diversity of customs and cultures, is an inevitability. Currently, the development of community values often practiced by the community members in line with the birth of religious doctrines with the new strengthened understanding that leads to a notion and claims are constantly being developed and deployed. Meanwhile, the process of the development of diversity is

also growing. Therefore, when religious education is not applied either through family or institutions of formal education, it will lead to a problem that can result in conflict in society.

In addition, public space such as the theory of approach put forward by Jurgen Habermas can show that any public arena always has a fight (contestation) between groups of people. Their interplay among the community is to gain influence and win the fight. Therefore, there is almost no public arena that is not related to contestation, including contestation which emerges from the religious dimension.

### **JAYAPURA AS A CONTESTATION OF PUBLIC SPACE**

Jayapura in terms of number of religions shows a trend that Christianity (Protestantism) is becoming the religion of the most widely embraced by the population with the number of followers is approximately 118,981. Islam is the second religion embraced by more or less 95,506 followers, and Christianity (Catholicism) with 45,109 followers, Buddhism 1,845 followers, and Hinduism 1,569 followers (BPSJayapura, 2012: 74). This data clearly shows that in fact the Christian religion is observed by the majority of the people of Papua. The religious proportion of the population in Jayapura that can be used as a representation of Papua, where the number of Christians and Muslims show an increasing number of followers, can be used as an indication of the geographical and political consciousness of people of Papua, and the Christians in general feel threatened by Immigrants and Islam. Muridan Widjojo, S (2009: 17) a researcher from LIPI, explained that in 2011, the composition of the newcomers was more than the native Papuans, so it gave rise to concern particularly for the indigenous people of Papua, who are predominantly Christian, especially with regard to the issue of Islamization.

Jayapura in the 2000 census, according to the statistical data, gave a real picture of a very rapid population growth which was intertwined with religions. If the focus of the attention devoted to the composition of the population based on religion by comparing the number of Christians (Protestants) and Muslims. In the city of Jayapura, the adherents of Islam were the second biggest with a number of 70,072 followers or 45,05% of the total population which was 155,548. The majority were Christians (Protestants) with a total number of 75,288 followers or 48,40%. The third place was the Catholics with 8,968 or 5,77%. Muslims were predominantly newcomers reaching 121,837 followers and the indigenous Muslim population was 4,958. While native Papuan Christians (Protestants and Catholics) were 149, 272 followers and Christian

immigrants were 62,996 followers (CRCS, 2010: 14-15). The composition of the population based on religion could not be separated from the presence of the massive migration of settlers from outside Papua, and thus the presumption of Islamization and Christianization in Papua in some contexts is very complex.

In the social life of religious dynamics in Jayapura, especially after the Reform movement that swept Indonesia experienced ups and downs. This happens due to a number of fundamental changes in the social life of Jayapura. When the Reform era came, the courage of both the natives and immigrants seemed to be seen in a variety of life practice like the improvement of migrants' economic condition and the rise of the demands of the indigenous population that began to become marginalized population. The tension was inevitable where previous suspicions began to resurface in the minds of the natives about the immigrant population being in control of local resources. Suspicion of the presence of immigrant population expansion and control strengthened among them, even to the claim of the rise of Islamisation through public sector such as the control of economic and educational resources.

In fact, many people from Jayapura still embraced local belief as the conviction of their religion. They believe that the local religion is something that has been firmly established before the days of independence even from the days of Dutch colonialism in the past. However due to the mission carried out by the Dutch colonialism, there have been a lot changes to the religions we embrace today. Even since the New Order regime came to power, Indonesian society could only embrace the official State religions such as Protestantism, Catholicism, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, and not other religions.

### **CRUCIFIX AND HOME CHURCH**

The cross is now a prominent landmark in the city of Jayapura. In Several corners of the city, this symbol can be found with many different sizes and variations. Such symbols can be seen clearly on top of the Hill, at the corner of the street, atop a small island in the Bay of Jayapura, even on an entrance gate of a village street. This phenomenon, for researchers is relatively new. In contrast to the phenomenon of the Pondok Natal (Christmas Lodge) that has long been there and decorated Christmas celebrations every year in Jayapura. The phenomenon, according to several informants, appeared after the 2000s. It is interesting to be traced even further, especially with regard to the emergence of this phenomenon and its connection to the relationship

between Christianity and other religions in Jayapura.

In addition to the cross symbol, some places now Jayapura are also decorated in typical Christian names, and this visual phenomenon, now extended by making sites such as the island of Metu Debi, which was declared a site of the evangelists on the land of the Tabi, on Sunday, March 10, 2013 with the slogan "It is God who chose and set Metu Debi as the start of a new civilization for the people of Tabi.» Historical origin of the awareness about religion in Papua seems to affect or at least gives the new awareness to Muslims in Papua to know the history of their existence in Papua. Then the Papua Islamic history books came into existence such as one by Wanggai (2009) and Athwa (2004) or the Jayapura mosque committee effort as already described in the earlier chapter . The writing of this history can be viewed as an attempt of reconstruction and reproduction of the myth of the validity of a group over something, in this case the people of Papua and their land.

The history constructed and reproduced by the Church, where the Church is depicted along with the Papuans who are impoverished, persecuted, chained and even eliminated of their rights and dignity as the original owners of Papua by the Government and along with the anti-Islamization sentiment (not to mean anti Islam), have been able to make the identity of the real Papua a single start to unfold. However, the Muslims in their efforts to reconstruct their own history in Papua could not be practically regarded as useless or even created a desperate situation in Papua. The establishment of the Muslim Council of Papua (MMP) is one of the significant impacts of the new historical consciousness response toward Islam and Papua. Even Muslim immigrants of Yemeni descent, Thahaal Muhammad al-Hamid, was able to fight side by side in harmony for the sake of peace and independence of Papua. The other extreme movement is the growing trend of Islamic liberation theology which is carried out by the new generation of Muslims of Papua, IsmailAsso, going hand in hand with the liberation theology which is carried out by the churches of Papua since 1995.

According to the observations of the researcher, after the year 2000, the construction of the monuments (crucifix) in Jayapura (even across cities in Papua) was triggered by the consciousness regarding the relevance of Christianity as the Papuan identity. The advent of the Christian identity of Papua like this is in fact the result in the wake of the euphoria to the emergence of a discourse of *Raperda Manokwari* as the City of Gospel, as a counterpart of the discourse construction of Mosque and Islamic Center around Manokwari in September 2005 proposed by one of the candidates for Deputy Governor to gain the sympathy of Muslim voters in West Papua.



According to the ICG report on 19<sup>th</sup> October, the leaders of the Church, through the Agency of Cooperation between the Churches District of Manokwari (BKAG), issued a joint statement of a “deep concern” over the establishment of governments that “discriminatory and unjust” to the development of Christianity in Indonesia. They cited 991 attacks on churches across Indonesia since Indonesia’s independence in 1949 until today; the pattern of intimidation against Christians and attacks on pastors and churches; material losses experienced by churches and Christian schools; the trauma suffered by Christians in the area of conflict such as in Ambon and Poso; and discrimination law through the “Joint Decree of Two Ministers.” The arrival of the Gospel on 5 February 1855 in Mansinam Island, said the joint statement, was «a milestone to the start of a new civilization on the land of Papua, opened a” dark curtain” and instill confidence through sacrifice and martyrdom of the missionaries.

### **THE CHURCH AND HOME-BASED RELIGIOUS INSTRUCTION**

In brief, from the ICG report, it is found that what happened in Jayapura with a proliferation of home churches, was an influence from the influx of Pentecostal charismatic groups churches, also known as the neo-Pentecost. The Churches and the group are known for controversy, not only because they claim to attempt to convert the Muslims, so as to cause conflict with the Muslim community, but also because sometimes they receive the material and moral support from the Government or military, so it keeps them away from local church groups. Not only Muslims, devotees of other church denominations are also threatened and this would jeopardize the their financial donations. Active in several cities in Papua, in terms of doctrine and practice of religion, the charismatic and Pentecostal movements are almost identical, and they practice “a quality way of worship is a dynamic and expressive way which is physically demonstrative» and therefore their devotion in small houses and village halls often causes noise to the neighbors nearby.

The small home church is characteristic of the activity of those who are likely to meet in cells or prayer groups who move from one place to another. These cells are used for recruiting new members, just like radical Muslim groups that rely on a small study group to identify members that might be recruited. When it reaches a sufficient number of members, they could set up a particular church or a study group. This is the factor that makes the church quickly mushroom in the villages of Jayapura. Most Charismatic Churches consider themselves to be between denominations. So, they want more formal organization.

The Charismatic Church emphasizes on the Holy Spirit and divine healing. They believe the Holy Spirit enters the people after they are baptized and give the gift of speaking in tongues, where a person is suddenly pulled out foreign words or language which has never been learned before. This is one of their methods because of its apolitical and taught “the theology of success”, by linking belief, wealth, and success. Believers are the ones who are rich; poverty, sickness or sufferings are a sign of lack of faith. As depicted by a priest, “If sinners have a Toyota, then the pious will certainly get a BMW”. This doctrine is become popular in Papua as it is so intertwined with the religion of Melanesian people of Papuan native, i.e. *cargo cult*: “cult of object”, which connects the arrival of foreigners in hopes to gain access to the merchandise and spiritual salvation. Its apolitical nature, is similar to the *salafi*, that also tend to be aggressive and provocative in the expression of proselytization.

The rumor about and the promise of aid to the Church by the local government after the victory of the Governor and the Mayor of Jayapura in Papua, as reported by the informants (and members of the Papua task force and DPRP, interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013) appeared to be a hot issue among the churches particularly regarding the internal distribution. The case became complicated concerning the distribution of aid because of the mushrooming neo-Pentecostal and Charismatic churches. To date, the Church (Protestant) is dependent on donations from its followers.

### **TOA (LOUD SPEAKERS), ADZAN, AND TALBLIGH AKBAR**

In reality, the TOA (loud speakers) also have long been used by several churches in Jayapura, for example in areas such as Hamadi as reported by the Papuan task force and youth members of the DPRP interviewed on 3<sup>rd</sup> June 2013 and also shared by Amirullah, a research colleague from the State College of Islamic Studies (STAIN) who spent quite a while in the region. However, from the experience of an informant who had lived in Jayapura for decades, it was revealed that before the year 2000 no churches used a loudspeaker (TOA) with the sound that could be heard from outside.

These issues are now brought to discussion by KH Masdar Farid Masudi (Indonesia Mosque Council) in the event of a *Talbligh Akbar* (huge gathering of people listening to a sermon) themed *Khawarij dan Dajjal Salafi, Wahabi-Amalan Sunnah yang dianggap Bid'ah* (Sunnah which is considered heresy) at Al Ikhlas Mosque Mekarsari, Eastern Bekasi, on Sunday May 26, 2013. He said, “If a person is interested in listening to a sermon or recital of the verses of the Holy Qur’an, then they should go into the mosque. In addition to disturb-

ing peaceful of surrounding, the sermon, according to Masdar, contains information that will open the secret and the rules of Islam. It's like we are stripped in public. So people know all the good and bad about us".

In Jayapura, the TOA at mosques can also be regarded as intolerant especially when the *adzan* is called with loud sound, and before the *adzan* (call of prayer) is called, long *tahrim* is read out. The problem with the noise from the view of the Church is the reality that exists outside of Papua, especially in Java, where TOA loud speakers from the mosque have dominated the sound and without pauses except from sunrise to noon. There is a habit now before the *adzan* is called five times a day, not only loud *tahrim* can be heard but recorded recital of the Qur'an, praise to god, can also be heard out loud. The voice of children learning the Qur'an and sermons (Friday or other day), always comes out of mosque when the time has come to do so. Obviously this is very disturbing not only to people of other faiths, but also to the Muslims themselves.

In addition, Muslims also do the same thing through the activities of *Talbligh Akbar* with a variety of themes. Such activities are held almost every month, organized by religious organizations in Jayapura. The *Talbligh Akbar* is carried out with almost the same pattern with the Christian mass. The organizers usually invited speakers from outside Papua particularly a preacher from Java. Muslims flock to the event venue on the transport that is also prepared by the organizers. The deployment of large-scale mass is possible due to the wide range of facilities prepared by the organizing committee. The activities are often held in public places such as the Trikora square, Mandala square, PTC Entrop, and other public places. *Ustadz* Fadlan is one of the most popular among the Muslims that frequently comes to Papua to give a *Talbligh Akbar*. *Ustadz* Fadlan is a native of Papua (Fak Fak), where its Muslim population is nearly the same as Christians.

### **CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL MASS VS TALBLIGH AKBAR ISLAM**

After the Reform, religious activities that involve a lot of people kept increasing and in the midst of the highs and lows of Christian-Islamic relations in Jayapura. The Christian Spiritual activities, for example, are always held each month. This has become a regular agenda in addition to worship services and is also interspersed with free medical treatment. Christians flock from all corners of the city. Transportation is prepared; banners can be seen almost in every part of the city; pamphlets and information are disseminated through the mass media. This activity is highly anticipated by people because it is held openly in a public place such as the Mandala square, PTC Entrop, Trikora square,

and other public places by inviting speakers from Java, even from overseas.

The Christians in Papua until now have yet to have a Bishop of native Papuan origin. This also indicates a ‹pressure› or the watchful eye of the Government. This led to a prolonged situation of sentiment full of bias in the mind of the Church. The church have to adapt as they are working under the government of Indonesia that sympathize with the Muslims more than they do with the Christians (Mujiburrahman, 2006). As much as 80% of the religious aid from the Government went to the Muslims, even though the Muslims are the minority. The Government Transmigration Program has made it possible for the Muslim high ranking senior official to enter the local administration. In addition the iron fist approach on the side of the military and the police toward the opposition and even innocent Papuans has also worsened the situation. Anyone trying to show their Papuan identity is oppressed and sometimes punished.

Jayapura in the wake of various religious phenomena that occurred lately showed a correlation between the Muslim reaction in Jayapura with the events that occurred outside of the city, particularly the enactment of Perda Evangelical Perda (Regional law) in Manokwari. Muslims in Jayapura did not address the matter quietly. Some of the Muslim leaders held a meeting sponsored by Indonesia Muslim Intellectuals (ICMI) Papua to prepare for possible strategy should the law be actually passed. This shows that the role of religion is very significant because it is always positioned as an encouragement among believers. Description in this chapter is focused on how religion emerges as a shared entity based on the Papuan identity. It is based on the condition that the praxis of religious harmony in Jayapura is in contrast to the discourse of peace stated by elite theologians.

## CONCLUSION

Based on the study that has been conducted, it can be concluded that the reality between religion and public (political) space in the context of Jayapura is indispensable to each other. What's happening in religious circles also occurs in politics. In terms of social life, it indicates that both religion and politics, in the social life of the community come together to meet. Religion becomes very sacred, but at the same time very easy to 'sell'.

The permissive culture of the society provides a space for people to take a variety of forms of culture that come from the outside. People welcome new ideas as a result of the emergence of a new culture, copying everything that fits their way of life and later acknowledging as their own. This excessive claims turn out to be an arena to show influence and power that gives rise to conflict among

the people in Jayapura. This situation is worsened by migrants coming from Papua bringing their own culture which is different from the local culture.

Public space for religious struggle in Jayapura occurs in various forms of symbolic nature. It even takes form as practical politics such as competition for local government offices in the region between Christians and Muslims. The public space is a religious arena to present religion in the society so that the adherents can show their belief in the middle of a pluralistic community.

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