

Unofficial Dialogue as a Prevention of Social Conflict in Rural Multi-religious Communities

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Abstract. Increased political and economic interests become a religious problem in Indonesia. The imposition of will on religious understanding is very high in intensity. But this is not the case in the multi-religious Resapombo Village where they live in harmony and side by side without the existence of open conflict in the midst of society. Using the concept of local wisdom from various experts, the concept of local wisdom in Javanese society and the concept of harmony in Javanese society. This research uses qualitative research method with phenomenology approach. Research results show that there are three social actions, namely Layat, srawung and jagong as minimizing conflict. The core of Javanese culture that was developed was to be harmonious in religious life in the community. Layat, srawung and jagong are amongrasa forms, namely the attitude to succumb to minimizing social conflict.

Keywords— *Dialogue, Harmony, Multi-religious Community*

I. INTRODUCTION

The social conflict that is motivated by the struggle for economic and political resources, and is further exacerbated by differences in religion (or even ethnicity) today is increasingly happening in Indonesia. Beginning with the Ambon conflict, the Poso conflict, the Sampit conflict until the latest conflict was the Lampung conflict and the Sumbawa conflict. All the conflicts that have taken place have their origin in economic and political imbalances that are peppered with issues of religious difference. In East Java itself according to KBB report from The Wahid Institute in 2012 got the number two position as an intolerant society in Indonesia. By showing the data there is still a prohibition on places of worship, prohibition of religious activities, criminalization of beliefs, coercion of beliefs, terror against certain religions and intimidation both verbal and non-verbal.

Differences in faith that occur in multi-religious communities make it vulnerable to social conflict. However, this does not happen to the people in Resapombo Village, Subdistrict Doko, District Blitar. From the earliest observations of the village community living with many religious differences, there are five religions adopted by the community, namely Islam, Christianity, Catholicism,

Hinduism and Buddhism. Each religion has its own place of worship and their places of worship are not far apart and are numerous.

In a multi-religious community the mechanism of dialogue is needed, to open the tap of the deadlock that triggers social conflict. Dialogue is believed to be able to minimize the potential for existing social conflicts. Dialogue is the main key to foster inter-religious harmony. For the central level to the district / city level, inter-religious dialogue has received an official forum called the Forum for Interfaith Harmony (FKUB). This forum plays an important role in inter-religious discussion at its level. All figures exist and play an active role in them. Even inter-religious dialogue is often carried out by non-governmental organizations or even by the government. In addition to functioning interfaith dialogue, FKUB also carries out several other functions, namely: accommodating the aspirations of religious organizations and community aspirations, channeling the aspirations of religious and community organizations in the form of recommendations as policy material for regional heads, disseminating legislation and policies in related religious fields with harmony between religious communities and community empowerment, and provide written recommendations for requests for the establishment of new places of worship.

In addition to these five functions FKUB also has three other strategic tasks, namely carrying out the task of early detection and mapping inter-religious harmony disturbances, carrying out the task of reducing and finding solutions to inter-religious harmony, and carrying out the task of identifying and revitalizing local wisdom that can support inter-religious harmony religious community.

It is also hoped that there will also be horizontal dialogue, namely interaction between people based on dialogue to achieve mutual understanding, recognition of human existence, and recognition of basic human nature, by placing humans in their humanitarian positions. That is, the position of humans who are not as mechanical objects, but as human beings who are intelligent, creative and cultured.

The problem formulation raised from the background of the above problem is how do multi-religious communities use informal dialogue as a prevention technique for social conflict?

II. RESEARCH METHODS

This study uses qualitative research methods [1] - [3] with a phenomenological approach, namely research that intends to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as behavior, perception, motivation, meaning and action. The presentation of the data from this study uses a descriptive format, with the aim of describing, summarizing the sharing of conditions, various situations or various phenomena that arise in the community.

There are several theories used in this study, namely the perspective of Blumer symbolic interaction [4, pp. 261-266] [5, pp. 331-332] [6, p. 241] which states that interaction in society is not just acting on other actions but he interprets and defines each other's actions or in other words symbolic interactions with meaning. To see the interaction in the structure, interactionists can also see the negotiated order concept. In addition to using the symbolic interaction perspective in the conceptual framework, the concept of local wisdom [7, pp. 11-15] and finally the concept of harmony in Javanese society [8, p. 512] [9, pp. 39-60].

III. RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Dialogues that occur in the community do not need coordinated dialogue through an official forum called FKUB. Given that the FKUB was formed only at the district / city level, there was no official institution at the village level called FKUB. Resapombo Village Community has its own local wisdom to open the door to the dialogue. It does not have to be with an official dialogue that is carried out with a detailed program with a strict, detailed and complicated organizational structure. This village community has its own way to open the impasse of religious differences by means of informal dialogue through spontaneous or unplanned activities carried out by all communities with the substance of their respective talks.

Resapombo Village people always avoid inter-religious dialogue with the substance of religious teachings that he embraces. There is no compulsion of religious understanding they hold in any discussion. The imposition of distant beliefs or beliefs they leave behind even though the discussion participants are religious leaders such as priests and Father who are Protestant and Catholic Christian missionaries or clerics and clerics who are preachers for Muslims. In this case C. Geertz [8, p. 538] has explained that the characteristics of Javanese society in religious matters have a deep aversion to pushing their trust in others whose beliefs are different from themselves.

Geertz also explained that in carrying out da'wah or missionaries among clerics more directed inward, to his own people, because it is designed for the purification of religion for its adherents compared with the addition of new adherents. So the discussion of religious substance in the event of unofficial discussion never run. Even in religious discussions, even among residents, they never discuss religious substance. Indeed, Resapombo Village community classified as abangan society so that understanding of the science of religion is still considered less, which resulted in the discussion of religious substance is not interesting to talk about in the life of society.

People are more interested in talking about things that smell of humanity. This dialogue is more concrete in order to help each other between one citizen and another. This dialogue is already a habit that has gone downhill since long. Dialogue emphasizes how people can help their unfortunate neighbors. After dialogue if considered important then action will be done to help him. In addition to humanitarian dialogue there are also discussing the problem of agriculture. Agriculture is the work sector that is mostly carried out by Resapombo villagers. Agricultural problems will not be exhausted for discussion in informal dialogues.

In addition to agricultural problems, the things that are usually discussed in informal discussions are related to other work. Like discussing livestock issues, buying and selling, trade and even current political issues. Talking about work matters does not depend on their religion. The talks can be done on existing interfaiths. Such discussions are mostly carried out by Resapombo villagers as a form of tolerance among religious communities. However, when there are interreligious religious figures discussing the substance of religion, it is done in a closed manner, not open with the whole community. [10]

Unofficial discussions are usually carried out by residents in three ways, namely LSJ or *layat*, *srawung* and *jagong*. These three forms can be said to be a form of local wisdom in fostering inter-religious harmony. The existence of LSJ activities has been going on for a long time and has a long process. It is undeniable that the LSJ has a positive impact on the continuity of inter-religious harmony. LSJ as a means to form harmony can be said to be the needs of the Resapombo Village community. Javanese people who have a social harmony attitude [9, p. 69] is also a necessity for the multi-religious community of Resapombo Village.

Layat. News of death is one thing that cannot be predicted beforehand. Nobody knows when death will pick up. The families left behind certainly did not prepare for their needs at death. Left-right neighbor is a very helpful person in terms of preparing the needs. This is called as *Layat* by Resapombo Village residents. *Layat* is coming to the funeral home to help prepare for the funeral procession to carry out ceremonies and activities after the funeral.

When they came to the family of mourning, the people came not empty-handed, they helped as much as they could,

like women carrying a bucket of rice or a few pounds of sugar and also some other food such as eggs and noodles. Rice, eggs and noodles are immediately to be cooked which will be used as a material *selamatan buceng unkur unkur* after the funeral. As usual the event *selamatan buceng unku-ungkurr* is a *selamatan* event that people who have *mungkur* (died) can *selamet* in life after death. *Selamatan buceng unkur-ungkurr* is mostly done by Muslims, Catholics, Hindus and Buddhists. Protestant Christians have never run this *selamatan*.

This discussion in *layatan* was carried out by people who were interfaith. The arrival of the residents despite not doing anything has been considered as a final tribute to the deceased. Discussions among them mourners often talk about issues of contemporary issues such as economic, social and political. When this research was carried out exactly one month there would be a selection of village heads, so that many mourners discussed the election of village heads including discussing candidates who would advance. Speaking of such things is certainly better than talking about bad things that have been done by the deceased.

When *selamatan* all residents in their neighborhood will be invited both the same and different religions. Inviting neighbors with different religions is not without reason. *Selamatan*, besides the relationship activities with God, more than that is a social activity involving good relations between neighbors. Thinking about the importance of neighboring relationships and acting well with neighbors can be done by inviting each other when *selamatan*. Of course the arrival of neighbors who were invited were of different interests, for those of the same interest the interest was to pray for the deceased while the different religions were to respect the inviting family.

The idea of *layat* until the next process, namely *selamatan* death brings logical consequences as a form of social interaction. Communication in the form of informal discussions is not necessarily in the form of verbal communication, but also in non-verbal relationships as well. Coming to help, inviting *selamatan* and attending *selamatan* is a form of communication that always rewards others in a non-verbal form. [11, pp. 160-177]

Srawung. Javanese rural communities are accustomed to *srawung* or greet each other to neighbors. This attitude is an open attitude for the community and even can be called as tolerant attitude among religious people. *Srawung* attitude is considered important because with this attitude people can enter and integrate into people's lives. *Srawung* as a small action will have a big effect on inter-religious harmony. *Srawung* can be done by greeting first to those who are found, both those who are religious and different religions. Including for older and younger ones. The first rebuke action is the act of making people happy. But this action is rarely thought of by others, especially those who live rich.

Another *srawung* action is to attend a celebration of his neighbor who is holding his son's wedding. The term often

used for this *srawung* by the general public is *mbecek*. *Mbecek* as another form of *srawung* is also a good action to foster inter-religious harmony. *Mbecek* is not just coming and helping people who are holding a celebration but more than that, that the assistance provided will be recorded as a reminder to be returned a number of times when the person who checks is holding a celebration.

There are also several other forms of *srawung*, namely activities to visit each other during holidays. There were two holidays at that time, it was very crowded, people visited each other's houses even though they were different in religion, namely during *Idhul Fitri* and Christmas. At the time of *Idhul Fitri* or *Resapombo* Village people call it the term *bodo*. When visiting residents who are celebrating the *Idhul Fitri* holiday, it is called *bakdan*. All Muslims visit each other's parents, teachers, relatives and community leaders. Likewise many other religious people visited the homes of religious leaders and community leaders who were Muslim.

The next holiday that is much celebrated is Christmas. Christmas is celebrated as the birth of Jesus Christ became the feast of Catholics and Protestant Christians. At this time many people from outside the village who came to the house of religious leaders and community leaders who are Catholic and Christian. So at Christmas time the *Resapombo* Village looks very crowded. Like when the *bodo*, Christmas was also celebrated by all villagers, many villagers who wandered out the village who returned to the village to celebrate the *bodo* and Christmas.

Religious holidays in the form of *srawung* described above, that according to [8, p. 546] the religious aspect of the ceremony of visiting each other in the feast is nominal, more emphasized on relationships with fellow human beings. This visitation ceremony is a ceremony that is not strictly religious. Even according to Geertz [8, p. 548] *bodo* is the most common, most lively and most collective celebration. Harmony between religious people occurs during the celebration of the feast.

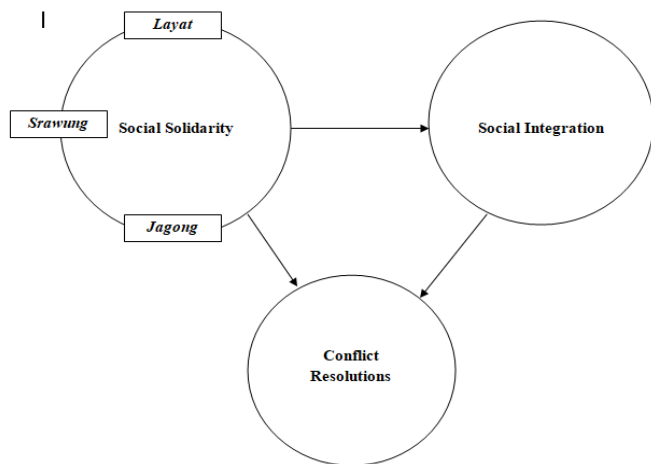
Jagong. Visiting a neighbor's house to talk is an act of slaughter. *Jagong* can be done when the baby's *jagong* is attending and enlivening the birth of the baby. The birth of a baby is not only as a celebration with the same trick. More than that baby *jagong* brings consequences as a means for gathering citizens with a long discussion. Not just going to eat and then going home like *mbecek manten* (wedding reseption), baby's *jagong* takes a long time. Inside there is a long discussion even until midnight. In the baby's *jagong* is also often interspersed with gambling games for residents who are *jagong*. Gambling games are often done because to keep from getting sleepy.

In the long *jagong* discussion, there are no gambling games at this time because they have been banned by the government and there are also frequent operations by the police. Baby's *jagong* event is currently filled with recitation

activities for Muslims and other religious activities for non-Muslims. This activity shows there is social change in baby's *jagong* activity. The process of religious awareness has occurred in the life of religious people in Resapombo Village, whether Islamic or non-Muslim. This is a small form of religious purification but does not leave a tolerant Javanese culture.

Even in baby *jagong* discussions are often held between religious leaders, if those who accept the child are religious leaders. In the discussion between religious leaders, many discussed the problems that occur in the community, such as economic, social, political and even culture and what is often discussed in the baby *jagong* program is agricultural problems. In addition, many religious leaders also discussed the development of religious activities, including coordination, discussing if there is a new understanding of certain religions that are not in accordance with the culture of the tolerant Resapombo Village community.

Collins [6, pp. 164-165] argues that the relationship between age groups, especially between young and old, is the arena of conflict. This relationship is what happened in Resapombo Village between religious leaders. But this need not be feared as a conflict land because with Javanese culture, religious leaders can have a Javanese principle which Willner [9, pp. 60-61] is called by the principle of respect that all relationships in society are organized hierarchically, that hierarchical order is of value to itself and therefore one is obliged to defend it and to bring oneself accordingly.



IV. CONCLUSION

The informal dialogue described above has at least three activities: *Layat*, *srawung* and *jagong*. These informal

dialogues can be used as a deterrent to social conflict in communities. This is because the dialogues that are implemented are related to social issues of society. The problems discussed in the dialogue are part of the early detection and mapping of inter-religious harmony disturbances, carrying out the task of reducing and finding solutions to inter-religious harmony, and carrying out the task of identifying and revitalizing local wisdom that can support inter-religious harmony.

In fostering inter-religious harmony there is a long social process and becomes entrenched at this time and interpreted or interpreted by the perpetrators themselves and it can be referred to as their own local wisdom. The social process can be in the form of mutual activities and consensus. *Layat*, *srawung* and *jagong* are amongrasa forms, namely the attitude to succumb to minimizing social conflict.

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