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Local Political Conflict and Pela Gandong Amidst the Religious Conflicts

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ABSTRACT

Pela Gandong which is believed by Ambonese for its propitiational value is in fact failed to prevent horizontal conflict that victimized a big number of life and financial damages. However, Wayame village is found to survive from those conflicts, and the community of this village, comprising of Islam and Christian religious group, succeeds to maintain harmonious relation. The research aims at, first, describing the perception of Wayamae village community to Pela Gandong in the post-conflict period; second, analyzing the cultural competence of pela Gandong in conflict resolution in the era of technology. This research employed qualitative method, involving in-field data gathering based on official report, digging out information from the resource persons who were directly witnessing the conflict when it occurred and other references obtained through Forum Group Discussion (FGD). An analysis was performed to seek answer concerning on how the community of Wayame village viewed Pela Gandong in post-conflict period, how it is – as a local wisdom – maintained in the middle of changing and how Pela Gandong was revitalized. Research showed that Pela Gandong was maintained by involving all elements such as customary community and the government. Pela Gandong grew as the icon of Ambonese society in settling conflicts by raising awareness that they are Eastern people, collectivistic in nature, and place kinship into priority.

KEYWORDS : Pela Gandong, Wayame village, Local wisdom, post-conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Ambon is wellknown for quality spices, that made European countries fought to occupy this fertile land in the past. The high quality of clove and nutmeg produced by this piece of land was unparallable. At the beginning of the imperialism era, traders coming from Middle East landed in Ambin to trade spices and disseminate Islam in order to guarantee a secured track of trading. Those who lived in coastal area commonly accepted and were then convicted to Islam while those who rejected the new religion fled to the hinterland.

In 1512 Portuguese armada landed in Hitu, Ambon island, to do trading and disseminating Catholicism, followed by Dutch in 1598, that initiated similar business while introducing Protestantism. The landing of Dutch was rather different in nature compared to the previous comers as it implemented *divide-et-impera* policy by establishing social segregation through the society settlement policy.

The ancestor of Mollucans realized the importance of peace and harmonious life and the need to collaborate, and any incident that potentially damaged their life must be avoided. A pact was then developed in the group of society, and it is named *pela*. *Pela* was aimed at helping each other in any realms of life. *Pela sirih* was established to smoothen the trade business.

It happened in the Mollucan history that people were

fighting, started from a conflict that led to war, and embarking from this point the Mollucan then developed an agreement aiming at facilitating a harmonious social life through kinship-based approach, also known as *pela gandong*.

Pela Gandong as a representative of local wisdom of Ambonese society and unifying factor among the heterogenous community in fact lost its power when religious conflict surged expansively throughout Ambon island and resulted in uncountable loss of life and materials. Local wisdom, that was promoted as the icon of peace, failed to play its role in the middle of escalating conflict, which was started with the quarrel of 2 youngsters of Islam and Christian community on January 19, 1999 (Koentjara, 2001: pp. 38-39).

Conflict that was concurrently spreading was unusual and this was beyond the ordinary. Physical fightings were commonly happened in Ambon due to the natural condition, torrid weather of tropical island, and the drinking habit of the society. Yet, severe conflict that spreaded fast and in high escalation in that it brought out an opinion that it was a religious conflict in fact had never happened in the history of Ambon. Apparently there was an unrevealed conspiracy in the process of conflict raising. Religion was not found to be the main cause of the conflict but it was deliberately inserted and the engineer knew that Mollucan youths were very sensitive concerning with religious matters (Samuel Wailerunny: p. 200).

The predecessors of Ambonese had attempted to unite the society, who were segregated from the very beginning, by establishing social value system named *Pela Gandong*. *Pela* is defined as an agreement given by society in order to actualize a common goal. *Gandong* means incestuous offspring;

thus, *pela gandong* is defined as a pact agreed by 2 groups of community which are bounded by brotherhood of blood. They are of one ancestral that might live in different territories and might be of different religions, thus religion should not become a disintegrating factor as their family are bounded with *pela gandong* values. Two or three countries/regions that are bounded by *pela gandong* had underwent a big incident in their ancestral life that the descendants should not forget. *Pela* is adopted since people of inter-regions intend to make peace.

Since different interests usually exist in any activities, conflicts will also potentially take place at any place. A number of conflicts might expand and escalate in tension, resulting in disturbances. The horizontal conflict happened in Ambon was started with a fight of Nursalim, a Moslem youngman of Batumerah district, against Yopie, a Christian youngman of Mardika, which was exploited to become a widespread conflict between Moslem and Christian community. The chaos blazed over the widening area, worsened by provocative combustion of housing, shops and other public facilities, that were beyond ordinary incidents happened in Ambon.

Conflict started on January 19, 1999 expanded fast and swallowed a big number of victims. Ambonese society, who had been long known for their strong kinship and their *pela gandong* tradition, failed to avoid the conflict, except Wayane village community. These people survived from the conflict and maintained harmonious and peaceful life in the heterogenous community. The researcher is interested to conduct a research entitled: *A Study on the Wisdom of Local People of Wayame Village in Post-Conflict Period*.

To explain the problem of Pela and Gandong as the reference of Wayame community in sustaining their conflict-free life, this research adopted theoretical framework which was based on theoretical perspective of Social Capital as proposed by Robert Putnam in his *Social Capital* (1974). Robert Putnam states that there is something that become a shared treasure in each community. One of them is local wisdom, that might manifest in various forms.

Local wisdom might be long-evolved in community culture so that it is believed as a social treasure. It might also manifest in various forms of social bond such as honesty and mutual collaboration that is enlivened in the community. Local wisdom operates without any enforcement, but upon voluntary basis and mutual understanding as a valued treasure to commit to relationship and social solidarity.

Robert Putnam (1974) argues that local treasure always exist in any society and it could be utilized as a media or tool to strive together for life. This is called local wisdom or social capital. The manifestation of social capital includes mutual respect, mutual trust, cooperation, and social tennet in the society. Another sociologist that introduced social capital theory is Francis Fukuyama (1992) that states in a society it is always found a distinct characteristic that build their sense of belonging, understanding and cooperating. Those are the social capital that could be placed as the basis of community development based on local culture.

A well-known France sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1986) also introduced Social Capital theory to public, as he witnessed the damages happened in a society. The society could be rebuilt or reconstructed through the social power, named social

capital. This term could be used to explain about local wisdom of Pela Gandong in the peace-making process in Ambon.

To explain how society figures, traditional leaders and religious leaders in Wayame secured their place in the heart of the society so that the people dutifully listened to them, the researcher employed theoretical analysis of Max Weber on charismatic leaders (1957). According to Max Weber, as quoted by Sartono Kartodirjo and Taufik Abdullah (1987), charismatic leadership is a model that frequently operates in religious leadership. It is embodied on the figures, on the power or leadership that reign or hold the authority to command or give order; and leaders that people refer to due to their attitude, behaviour or utterances in addition to their benevolence as seen by the society; and then the people feel like to follow their well-doings.

In a charismatic leadership, one to highlight is the loyalty shown by the followers (society) upon the command given by a leader. Charisma might shine out because the leader possesses something distinctive and rare, and becomes the reference for other people in the society. He or she must be honest and fair, wise and respectful to other people so that the others respect him in return. Respecting and rendering a personnel a leader is not easy because there are a lot of disagreements existing in deciding who should become the role model and honor him/her as a leader.

The discussion of leadership becomes interesting in a society that has been transforming from agrarian to industrial, that is more familiar with mechanical-like social system rather than the familial social system, with its modest definition. In agrarian society, social system and social institution

is modest in nature, manually done, and does not rely on mechanical system or use machine as a basis of life and social work. The most distinct difference between agrarian and industrial community lies in the pattern of the social life and the job seeking that becomes the foundation of life and forming interaction.

As quoted by Sartono, Max Weber thoroughly explains charismatic leadership in chaotic and transitional society so that a figure that could oversee the change needed. A charismatic leader should be 'enlightening' and flapping the flag in chaotic situation.

Historian Sartono Kartodirjo in his explanation about commanding leadership concludes that in agrarian (farmer) society a commanding leader becomes the reference for people so that whatever the leader says, does or thinks may come true because the people follow the command. The society put high respect on him or her, and from that point the society embark together. In short, charismatic leader always understands and executes the aspiration of the society he or she leads.

Charismatic leader is able to mobilize changing in a society, including negative change such as the rebellion of Banten in the 16th and 17th century when Dutch imperialist took over the people's farm. The context of Banten farmers is the presence of influential religious leader at the time. In many places, a charismatic leader presents in various forms due to their commanding capabilities in tradition or in other aspects.

Applicative explanation on Max Weber's framework on the presence of charismatic leader found its context in Bawean, East Java. There were several charismatic leaders with various background such as ulema, Qur'an-reading teacher,

religious teacher (ustadz), and even shaman with mysticism, because the society is worried if they got the 'spell' from the shaman. While ulemas and ustadz were placed in first rank of respected profiles, shaman was at the bottom of the list. After all, they gained all the respects due to the commanding power and the distinctive inner qualities they possess. This is the reason why charismatic personnels are social capital, and social capital is an essential part in charismatic leadership. Based on the argument of Robert Putnam, Francis Fukuyama and Pere Bourdieu, it could be concluded that social capital is fused to charismatic leadership.

A charismatic leader is born because of a person's broad knowledge that others do not have. The gap is not necessarily wide, but people commonly places the difference as a cause to respect and to refer to in their social life. Charismatic leader is a "manifestation" of examples born from the knowledge possession, that also becomes a social capital of the person in the society. Hence, social capital owned by a person is indirectly becoming a capital for him or her to be a leader, although it does not necessarily mean that he become a charismatic leader.

RESEARCH METHOD

This research employed qualitative method and data were gathered through official report, digging out information from the resource persons when the conflict occurred and other resource persons and conducting Forum Group Discussion (FGD). The analysis is done to seek answer on how the society of Wayame perceive *pela gandong* in post-conflict period, how *pela gandong* as a local wisdom is maintained among the growing situation

and condition and the influence of internal and external challenge and how *pela gandong* is revitalized.

Research concludes that Wayame society still hold their belief that local wisdom of *pela gandong* should be maintained and utilized as a means of maintaining the harmony of kinship although it is limited to physical aspect. *Pela gandong* should be developed through the involvement of all elements, and this does not only carried out by the traditional society due to the changing of governmental system, from country to village in comply with Act No. 5 Year 1974 on Guidelines of Regional Authority and considering the circumstances as a result of the advancement of IT, communication and transportation system.

People of Wayame settle conflict through iconic *Pela Gandong* system, which is believed to unite the heterogenous society. This means that the society's perception has transcended from positioning *pela gandong* as a problem-solving approach through tradition and custom-based process to an icon of Ambonese in establishing unity. As a local wisdom, *Pela gandong* could be shifted to national level as a means to elaborate humanistic values among Indonesian's heterogenous and collectivistic society.

People of Wayame fully realize that tolerance is pre-requisite to establish harmonious life and *pela gandong* is developed as an icon inherited by the predecessors. This system has been widely accepted so that they share common agreement that any kind of conflict should be resolved in peaceful way. *Pela gandong* is not only held by a community but also adhered by anyone or any organization that aspires to live in peace.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. AMBON DAN DESA WAYAME.

Ambon is wellknown for quality spices, that made European countries fought to occupy this fertile land in the past. The high quality of clove and nutmeg produced by this piece of land was unparallable. Many people came and settled in both Ambon city and island, who then made Ambon rich of various ethnicity. In addition to little ethnic of Java, Ambon city was dominated by ethnics of Saparua, Seram, Haruku, Kei and Jazirah Leihitu. Based on census in 1980, Ambon was reported to have 207.702 people, excluding the non-permanent residence (homeless, shipboard crew and boat man, a total of 1,196 people). The population growth from 1971 to 1980 was 4.45% per year (BPS, 1999: 47).

Prior to conflict, as an administrative City and now Capital city and the city of Molluca island, Ambon was named as Stability City. After the conflict of 1999, however, Ambon was not anymore politically stable. The demographic change was very sharp since many people left Ambon while new ethnic group entered the city. Statistical data showed that Ambon had 265.830 inhabitant, decreasing by 5.49% compared to that of previous year. In 2000, another sharp decline in term of occupancy, 16.4%, happened. Yet this was followed by a rise through to 2006, when the population was recorded to 263,146 people (BPS, 2007).

Based on data issued by National Bureau of Statistics, the population of Ambon City is 248,809 inhabitants, increasing 1.25% from 2008. The highest increase of population is in Teluk Ambon Baguala district, which average density rate of 1.252 inhabitants per kilometer square and the district of Sirimau, while the lowest is in South

Leitimur with 217 inhabitants per kilometer square (BPS, 2009).

Temporary data show that from 2005 to 2009 the number of underprivileged population in Ambon decreased. The Bureau of Statistics reported that in 2005 the number of underprivileged reached 15,400 (6.56%) people, and in 2006, it increased to 18,100 (7.43%), and 16,800 (7.61%) in 2007 (Ambon Dalam angka, 2009). In 2009 the underprivileged in Ambon reached 638,000 inhabitants, of which 44.55% were males and 55.49% females. Meanwhile, the number of young brats reached 2,863 inhabitants, 99.23% of which were boys. The number of homeless children in Ambon City was reaching 20,974, of which were 53.14% boys and 46.86% girls.

Ambon is inhabited by various ethnicity. Beside long-time residents of Saparua, Seram, Lehitu, Kei and other local ethnics, Chinese, Bugis people, Butonese, Javanese and Batakese are other ethnics living in Ambon (BPS, 2008). Based on religious affiliation, Ambon is a home for 303,937 religious adherers comprised of Islam (40.20%), Protestant (52.99%), Catholic (6.15%), Hindu (0.14%) and Buddhist (0.11%) (BPS, 2009). These data show that Ambon is highly heterogeneous in terms of ethnicity, religious affiliation, and its historical background. Hence, the government should adopt a particular perspective in governing the system and manage the social affairs, based on plural society order. As stated by sociologist Tony Pariela, the management of plural community should be executed based on plural society perspective and not homogenous-based perspective like that of implemented in New Order era for years (Pariela, 2008).

Different ethnic also indicates different choice of occupation. The middle to upper level of economic system is occupied by Chinese ethnic, that run business in trading, hotelier and shopping places. Moslem Ambonese run informal sector business together with groups of Bugis and Buton ethnics; hence, horizontal conflict started from business competition potentially occurred here. Meanwhile, most of native Ambonese work as government officers (civil servant). This relates to the Dutch colonialism and New Order era that offered privilege to the Ambonese to become government officers, beside of some other positions like army and police officers.

As a matter of fact, there are quite many people of Java, Sumatra, and Bugis ethnics apply for being army and police officers, registered as of Ambon inhabitants; thus, people of Ambon ethnicity were set aside from the competition. This is due to the lower quality of Ambonese educational institutions, wherein these young Ambonese accomplished their Junior/Senior High School, compared to those of in Java or Sulawesi. This might lead to another social problem as Ambonese would feel discriminated and driven out by the coming of external people, that dominate the positions in army/police department in Ambon island. The government in both central and regional level should pay attention to this matter. They should develop certain policy such as improving the quality of education and giving privilege or priority to local people in officials recruitment so that Ambonese will have equal chance. This is in line with the statement of Indonesian Army Officer of Ambon, and The Commander of Intelligence of Ambon (Interview, 1/8/2011).

The demographic composition in Ambon has

shifted in that Ambonese at present have various occupations, not only being civil servants as what they have been long known before, but also being taxi-motor driver, public transport helper, street vendors, handyman and other blue collar work. When we traverse from Ambon city to Wayame, we would find that the taxi-motor drivers are mostly native Ambonese. Hanafie, a prominent figure of Wayame village, said that the drivers are Ambon natives, Islam or Christian (Interview, 1/8/2011).

Sociologist Tony Pariela, Vice Director of Post Graduate study of Pattimura university in Ambon, who was living in Wayame from 1994 to 2002 and moved out after the bleeding conflict, states that the position of Wayame, that is is perceived as being in *petuanan* of Rumah Tiga village, is historically a logical consequence of having it as the center of village government which was formerly located in Rumah Tiga territory. Currently, another discourse is growing, that the personnel who own the authority (being the bapa raja - main leader) in Rumah Tiga is 'mata rumah' Hanihua. Although Wayame village and Rumah Tiga village have been administratively separated, they are of one unity in terms of customary tradition (Pariela, 2008: 125).

In the development program implementation of ambon city, Wayame and its surrounding area are placed in one Spatial Plan area (RTRW) of ambon City as Development Area Unit 2 (SWPP 2), and this places Wayame as an ideal area for settlement development. The development of Wayame Area and its surroundings was rapidly running when Bank BTN initiated the development of National Housing program in early 1990s. After Wayame was officially stated as an independent area in administrative management, based

on Decree of Ministry of Internal Affairs No 14.2569.PUOD dated 3 July 1993, the official name used is Wayame Village, and this is legalized by the decree of Provincial Governor 1 of Molluca No. 146.1.SK/710/93 dated 7 October 1993.

2. HETEROGENITY IN WAYAME

After obtaining its definitive status as an Independent Village, Wayame was led by Head of village named Daniel Hunihua of House of Hunihua for 14 years. Since 2006, the leadership was handed over to the temporary/ad-interim Official, Kannes Amanupunjo, to prepare the new head. However, the new head was not assigned until 2011, that made various tribes sent their representatives to question the process. Representatives of Wakal and Hitumeseng village were sent to help settling the case of Wayame village that have been remained unsettled since 2006 (Hanafi, Interview 2/8/2011).

Wayame society is pluralistic yet live peacefully amidst conflict. They remain united even though various ethnics live in the same area, with Ambonese in majority, Javanese, Bugis people and Butonese. This last ethnic, coming from South East Sulawesi, inhabit 2 locations of settlement ground, namely Keranjang Village and Waringin Cap village. The area along the coast is occupied by another tribe of Ambon ethnic. Butonese have been in Wayame for over one century, but the big flow of Butonese immigrant happened in 1970s (Pariela, 2008: 124).

Based on statistical data of Desa Wayame, the number of Wayame population reaches 4,853 persons, of which 2,388 are male and 2,465 are female (Kecamatan Teluk Ambon dalam Angka, BPS, 2010). Wayame could be categorized as a

heterogeneous community yet it could survive its collectivistic spirit that other regions failed to do. Even, Wayame village is lead by a figure that was not a native of Wayame; this might contribute to the peaceful atmosphere among the catastrophe.

In terms of religious affiliation, Wayame comprised of 70% Christian majority (when the conflict burst out) and 30% Islam in between 1999 to 2001. However, this composition is now changing as number of Christian believers declines while Islam increases by 10%, thus Christians reaches 60% and Islam, 40%. Immigrants from Java, Butonm Bugis and other regions take parts in this process. Most of Moslems coming to Wayame work as street food sellers, civil servants and also Police Officers and Army officers.

From the sociological perspective, the changing numbers of believers is known to be the change of social map. The district of Teluk Ambon reported that in 2008 the number of Christians was 54,958 persons, and Moslems, 43,137 persons, while Catholic 8,525, Hindu 51 persons, and Budhist 175 persons. Total reported was 106,846 persons. Data on population in 2009 reported that number of Moslems is 32,680 persons, Protestants 55,991, Catholics 9,438 persons and there was no data found on Hindus. These made 98,109 people (Kecamatan Teluk Ambon, 2010). Meanwhile the number of mosque in 2008 was not reported (as a matter of fact there were quite many), but there were 32 churches in 2008 and 28 in 2009. (Kantor Urusan Agama, Teluk Ambon District, 2010).

Religious matter is very susceptible to conflict and negative sentiments, thus the Central Bureau of Statistics in level of city, Regency and district/sub regency should improve the record of religion data and houses of worship. If there were a lot of

believers while the place was not provided, a problem might rise. Another critical problem dealing with the house of whorship and the freedom to perform prayings was related to the appropriate usage of the place.

Data reported by Central Bureau of Statistics (BPS) City of Teluk Ambon district would potentially trigger the stigma that Moslems do not receive attention in Wayame village, or Ambon in general, due to the absence of data on their number and the praying centers; while in fact, there are several units of mosque and mushalla in Wayame village. Aggregating to 7000 peoples or 1400 households, the occupant of Wayame, who are heterogenous in terms of ethnicity, race and religion, are of various occupational background, such as being farmers, traders, state oficers, army, fishermen and labour with farming population in highest number (9.9%) followed by traders. They live in Keranjang and Waringin Cap village. Wayame is currently being the entrance door of economic activity in Ambon that supply the vegetables and other farming products to Ambon city. They grew short-lived staple such as cassava, sweet potatoes, peanuts and corn; and long-lived plants such as coconut trees and cloves. Meanwhile, other professions reported includes public servants (6.6%), private workers (6.1%), entrepreneur (5.2%), army and police officers (4.0%) and others like lecturers, traders, fishermen, teachers and part time teachers. The number of unpemplment is reaching up to 60%, a big number compared to the population density, that is 550 persons per kilometer square (Wayame in Numbers, 2010).

The people's awareness toward the importance of education is quite high. In 2010 it was reported that 5.9% of population attended doctoral degree,

and 41.3% accomplished Junior and Senior High Schools. The number of uneducated was 4.2% and those who have not started school reached 6.4% (Data of Wayame Village, 2010). Data above display that Wayame village is not only heterogeneous but also dynamic and show a more homogeneous sub-culture of Ambon.

Located along the main road to Pattimura airport in Laha, Wayame village is more densely populated than other areas. This village is divided into 2 settlements: old coastal area and inhabited by people coming from Tiga Soa and Rumah Tiga. They live near Al Huda Mosque and Piniel Church, both of which are historically related to the fatal conflict in Ambon Island. These two places became the home for refugees from the conflicting regions.

Started with the landing of Arabian traders on the coast of Ambon island to trade spices while disseminating Islam religion, the people aimed to establish a community to secure their business and trade. Those who accepted and then were converted to Islam were mostly living on the coasts while those who rejected the religion fled to the hinterland.

The journey of European people to obtain spices continued and in 1512 Portuguese landed in Hitu island of Ambon for trading activity and disseminating Catholicism. In 1598 Dutch also did the same expansion and spread Protestantism. Dutch started the social segregation of *divide-et-impera* through the allocation of settlement.

3. PELA GANDONG.

Pela, a familiar term to Ambonese, is a tradition developed by Ambonese as a means to improve the welfare and keep the peace by mutual helping to

those who are bounded. Pela has been done by Mollucans far before the European landed in the island of spices.

Basically pela or pact could be defined into 3 types: *pela keras* (hard pela), *pela gandong* or *pela bungso* and *pela tempat sirih*.

Hard pela (*Pela Keras*) is established when there is a fatal conflict and the win or lose is uncertain. *Pela keras* could also be used to help each other if there is an external invasion from those who were not bounded to pela. Meanwhile, *Pela gandong* or *pela bungso* is based on heritage. The countries bounded in pela considered themselves as of one descendant, one predecessor, thus they are brothers and sisters. Hence, inter-marriage between the members of countries bounded in *pela gandong* was not permitted as they are considered as siblings. Finally, *pela tempat sirih* is basically aimed at having a smooth trading business. In business there might be some problems happened and these need a resolution so that trade and business kept running in ease.

In sealing the agreement of *pela keras* and *pela gandong*, people drink traditional alcoholic liquid mixed with blood of the parties in pela. This relates with sanction and curse for any of violation. It is believed that anyone who breaks the commitment would be cursed by their predecessors and their life will be in misery for the rest of their life. While *pela tempat sirih* (betel place) is a kind of 'soft pela' in that people bounded to pela only need to exchange the betel place, and no need to accompany with blood and sanction of the predecessor. *Pela tempat sirih* is commonly used in social matters, helping each others, and based on voluntary.

At the beginning of 16th century, pela has been

conducted among the predecessors of Mollucans. Villages like Tamuloi, Hutumuri and Sirisori established *pela gandong* tradition to help each other to fight against Portuguese imperialist. Those three villages preserve *pela gandong* until today, and they consider themselves as of one family, of one predecessor *berpela*.¹

Pela gandong tradition is a particular culture of Ambonese that depicts a familial relationship or kinship without seeing the ethnical or religious difference. *Pela Gandong* in Ambonese social context could be perceived in what Pier Bourdieu called as a *habitus arena* or *habit domain* that has deeply rooted in field tradition. Bourdieu explains *Habitus* and *field* as following :

“*Habitus* underlies a domain that extends an inter-relational network among objective positions in a social order that exists separately from individual awareness. Domain is not an intersubjective bound among individuals, yet a relation that is structured and unconsciously controlling position of individuals and group in social order that is spontaneously established. *Habitus* enables people to live spontaneously and builds relationship with external parties. In the process of interaction with the outsiders, a domain, a relational network of objective positions is established (Bourdieu, 1976).”

At the same time, *habitus* and *domain* also become product of power terrain existing in the society. In a domain there is a bet, power bargain and people of big capital and those without capital. Capital is a power concentration, a specific power that operates in a domain. Each domain requires individual to possess a particular social capital to be able to live well and sustain in it (Bourdieu, 1976).

Explanation on the social capital as constructed by this French sociologist is used to explain *pela*

gandong as a local wisdom that become a social capital in Wayame Village, Ambon, Molluca. According to Bourdieu, specific situation perceived by local community in a situation and norm institutionalized is an integral part of a *habitus actor* whose capacity could be used and developed to access problems related to the other local wealth, in this case, as a social capital of a society.

Therefore individual action that is moved and supported with the availability of social norms, network, and trust is necessary. While social norms locating outside him, representing a guideline on how someone have to behave or state that his or her belief could be accepted under certain condition. Such definition of situation could be perceived by anyone (*actor0*), and in this case, an individual, group, and institution in different way depending on the values held, life trajectory and needs or interest and subjective meaning based on what a person has experienced in the past.

Based on Bourdieu’s conceptual explanation, social capital named *Pela Gandong* should be defined as a glue of cohesiveness or social bridging in a community that is facing a conflict. Whether the social capital of *Pela gandong* is effective or not; and what is meant by social cohesion and social bridging, George Ritzer explains his theory as follows:

“Based on subjective point of view, social cohesion is the function of a group member’s feeling that equate themselves with their group, particularly on the feeling that their individual interest could be related with the group interest... while the objective point of view perceives that social cohesion or solidarity could be viewed as an objective, as a process that could be observed free from individual feeling” (Ritzer, 2005:385).

It is now clear that what this chapter attempts to explain is related with local culture that is understood by society in individual and group way, and is believed as a part of life order and a shared social norms so that it could become a common guideline for people of Wayame village. This chapter also explain and specifically analyze how the community is empowered based on the commonly accepted *pela gandong*. The predecessors of Mollucan had realized the importance of live in peace, in harmony and mutually helping each other so that any conflict could be avoided. The agreement among group of community is made using the term 'pela', depending on the purpose of making it.

Pela Gandong, known as a local wisdom of Ambonese and an adhesive agent among the pluralistic society was at stake when the religious conflict hit and spreaded all over Ambon island and caused unparallable devastation. Local wisdom that was long respected as the icon of peace did not anymore had its place among the conflict that was started with a fighting between a Moslem and a Christian youngster on 19 Januari 1999 (Koentjara, 2001: pp 38-39).

3. RELIGIOUS CONFLICT

Conflicts that exploded at same time was an incident that Ambonese perceived as unusual and never happened before. Fighting is commonly happened due to the harsh land and alcohol drinks traditionally consummed by its people. However, such violent conflict that destroyed houses, stores and public facilities and spreaded fast in very short time and in high escalation and even it was then perceived as a religious conflict indicated that it was engineered. Religion was not the main cause

of the conflict but it was inserted and the engineers knew that young Mollucan was very sensitive with religious matter (Semuel Waileruny: p. 200).

Wayame village was able to stay away from conflict, and this rose a question on how Wayame people perceived *pela gandong* after conflict, how *pela gandong* as local wisdom is maintained over the growing situation and under the challenge of both internal and external side and how *pela gandong* is revitalized.

The role of *Pela Gandong* amidst the conflict. Ambon society that from very early had been segregated made the predecessors of Ambon establish a social network to unite the people through *pela gandong*. *Pela* is an agreement among the society in their effort to realize mutual interest. *Gandong* means incestuous offsprings. Thus *pela gandong* is an agreement made by 2 groups of community that establish incestuous offsprings relation. They are of one predecessor although they might live in different territorial and embrace different religions. Religion should not lead to disintegration since they were culturally bounded to *pela gandong*. Two or three villages (*negeri*) bound in *pela gandong* had in the past been through a large-scale incident that the descendants might not forget. *Pela gandong* is a way out, a goodwill, for villages that aspires to settle down any conflict and live peacefully.

Conflict of interest would always happen; thus physical conflict is potentially taking place any where. Some of those conflicts excalate out of control and were quite intrusive to the area's stability, like the one in Ambon.

The conflict, burst out firstly on 19 January 1999, was started by a physical fighting between a Moslem and a Christian youngster, which then

spreaded over Ambon and caused a devastating loss. Ambonese society, long known for their strong bound of familial relationship and a home for *pela gandong* tradition, was unable to avoid the conflict. Yet, an exception is what happened at Wayame village, the only one that survive from the conflict and maintain the harmonious relationship among pluralistic society. The researcher was embarking from this point and conducted a research entitled: A Study on the Local Wisdom of Wayame After the Conflict.

CONCLUSION

Research showed that community of Wayame believed that local wisdom of *pela gandong* could be maintained and employed as a means to keep harmonious life in kinship although it is on physical level. *Pela gandong* could mantained and developed as a local wisdom by involving all elements and not only done by the customary community due to the transition of governmental system, from country (*negeri*) to village or *kelurahan* according to Act No. 5 Year 1974 regarding with the Guidelines of Regional Government and the deveopment of situation and condition as a result of advancement in IT, communication and transportation.

Community of Wayame settled the conflict by placing *Pela Gandong* as an icon which is believed to be able to unite the plural condition of the community. The society's enhanced perception toward *pela gandong*, which once was merely viewed as a physical ritual carried out continuously through customary tradition now transcend to become an icon to weave unity and togetherness. As a local wisdom, *pela gandong* is potential to be shifted to national level, particularly regarding with

the philosophical values and the background, as an effort to elaborate the humanistic values of helping each other. Furthermore, Indonesian people are collectivistic in nature, thus neighbouring community and environment play important role in daily life despite its heterogeneous society.

Community of Wayame realized that tolerance is prerequisite to create a peaceful life in a heterogeneous society. *Pela gandong* was established as an icon that originated from the predecessors and has been socialized and implemented in the society's daily life. It also promoted the perception that conflict must be prevented in order to realize a conducive and secured condition so that the development programs could run well. Maintaining *pela gandong* should not be done by the customary community only but also every person and organization that have a good will to create peace in life.

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(FOOTNOTES)

- ¹ At the beginning of sixteenth century, a spouse lived in Gunung Batu in Hatumenten village (southern part of Serang island). They had three sons, namely Temallone, Simallone and Silaoi. They also had three daughters named Nyai Intan and Nyai Mas. The family was heathen at

the time. When the children grew up, a war happened and the news was heard in Hatumenten. The three children Temanole, Simanole and Silaloi secretly held a meeting at night (without the knowing of their parents and sisters) and finally the three brothers went to the coast using a traditional boat. They sailed to Hote Banggoi to defeat Portugeese. They started with a 1A. Sopaheluwakan, A Story on an Agreement of Brotherhood of Pela (Bongso-Bongso), among the Countries of Tamilou, Hutumuri and Sirisori, printed in Netherland in August 1962 and October 1980 and translated by F.L.J Tutuhaturunewa, p. 4.1.