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Submission date: 19-Mar-2021 04:57AM (UTC-0700)

Submission ID: 1536978658

File name: sion_Manuscript_of_The_Deadlock_of_Humanity_Enforcement....docx (63.78K)

Word count: 6986

Character count: 37962

The Deadlock of Humanity Enforcement in Post-war Reconstruction of Aceh, Indonesia

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Abstract. This field research by means of participant observation critically analyzed the post-war reconstruction between Aceh Province and Indonesian Government. A special attention was paid on the violence tragedy in Rumoh Geudong, Krueng Arakundoe and Jambo Keupok. Besides, in-depth interview with 16 informants who were engaged directly and indirectly on the problems to collect the data, followed by employing library research to sharp the findings. The peace agreement was concluded by parties who hated each other. Contrarily, the government's function as the developer of the post-understanding process was not shown substantially. This has further enhanced the new forms of violence carried out after the previous violence. This meant nothing to the power of peace itself. The reconstruction was not substantially success, but failed. The absence of which had an impact on the existence of war victims, particularly in rebuilding their psychological conditions. Human values during the 14 years of peace were not programmed in priority at all, which generated an extensive sustainable peace. The collapse of the state's responsibility to unravel all cases of dehumanization had an impact on the increasingly dominating pragmatic value meaning that the value of the existence of war victims was minimal, even closer to nothing.

Area Studies: Social Sciences; Anthropology; History

Keywords: Post-war reconstruction; violence tragedy; Indonesia; conflicts in Aceh

Introduction

Violence happened when Aceh Province, Indonesia, was firstly determined as the Military Operation Area (MOA) and afterwards, apparently still left an unforgettable scar. The process of final conflict resolution mediated by Crisis Management Initiative (CMI) does not necessarily present improvements in the ruins of the mental and life aspect. It is very easy to do things, which are full of rudeness and humiliation for the citizens, as if they are not part of

the citizens. The state is hostile and revile with extreme brutality over the existence of the citizens themselves. Perhaps, if it still goes on, it may resemble the enmity between Arab and Israel (Lewin, 2016).

For about 20 years after the tragedy, the inner hurt that pervades the lives of Acehnese people has not yet fully recovered. The unrecovered scars, the irrelevant of whole policies done by the elite ¹ on the mandate of the 2005 Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) in Helsinki and even the moral appreciation were mistakenly used as the form of arrogance shown by the national armies and polices.

The described circumstances are continuing today through all media and material done by the political policy seeming that Aceh has long forgotten the past tragedy. The core of the resolution of the bloody tragedy is depending on the Indonesian Government and the local government of Aceh Province. There is unseen statement in the MoU underlining that Aceh Province autonomously and fully takes in charge as illiberal peacemaker to solve and rebuild the civilization post-conflict.

The devastated unfair law once again has shown a defective implementation of the MoU. Since then, the insecurity happened frequently toward aggrieved group of people. The law has not touched the victims' souls; it just touches the surface. Law is not a drama, and court is not the theatre, which can be dramatized by the policy maker for pleasure.

The thing that is commonly ignored after war is starting the reconciliation. From many conflicts happened in Aceh Province, it is not simply relieved by ordinary shake hand between people that mediate the agreement. This involves the dignity as human. Plenty tragedies often happened frequently from 1989 to 2005, taking big and small quantity of casualties, the murder is still viewed as crime even done for the sake of country. The well-known, tragic violence are the tragedy of Rumoh Geudong on August 20, 1998, Krueng Arakundoe on February 3, 1999, and Jambo Keupok on May 17, 2003.

Until now, the victims of those tragedies have not received a special attention from the Indonesian Government of which is scapegoated of these all miseries. A concrete step to initiate the effort of reconciliation seemed unrealistically happened. After the conflict was over and MoU was signed, all the plans and ideas toward reconciliation were mysteriously faded. The reasons of apologizing are not enough; it requires a high level of sincerity especially for those who triggered the conflict.

⁵ Hitman (2020) independent variables – policy; scale of policy's implementation; external occasions relevant to the protest party; and decision-making of party's leadership –

10 might contribute to the condition. The collapse of New Order in the regime of the second president of Indonesia, Soeharto, does not affect the typical repressive action done toward residents. It was proven from the series of violence done by state apparatus in several areas, for instance in the Aceh and Papua provinces. During the era of Megawati, the humanitarian disasters got worsen. Her regime established the status of 'martial law' under the Integrated Operation. The word 'integrated' refers to the involvement of not only military component, but also humanitarian program, law enforcement, and the local government (Abdulsalam, 2017).

12 The operation aimed to wipe out all of the rebellion movement. Both sides might trigger the no-war-no-peace situation, which should be redeemed by explicitly showing the mutual trust as suggested by Andersson and Mukherhee (2019). Whether the military operation of the Indonesian Government was to concord the country's unity or the needs to rule the province the continuous views of the Acehnese post-war victims had. In reality, the value of agreement was minimally felt for certain Acehnese people, mainly the victims, even though the reconstruction was progressed.

Materials and Methods

3 This research used qualitative methods, which aims to understand a phenomenon in a social context naturally by prioritizing the process of deep communication interaction between researchers and the studied phenomenon (Herdiansyah, 2010). Therefore, the research used 4 descriptive analysis model that focused on describing and analyzing phenomena, events, social activities, attitudes, beliefs, perceptions, thoughts of individuals or in groups (Nana, 2007).

The sample in this research was selected by using purposive sampling technique where educational, occupational and gender qualifications were taken into account. This consideration aims to produce representative research results. Therefore, the segmentation of prospective informants must be determined in advance, so that the data obtained can later represent the voice of the community.

In addition to the sources of data, the research employed snowball-sampling technique to determine key informants after deciding the location and time of the research. Then, through key informants, other key informants of the new groups' members could be found. In total, there were 16 direct victims (DV) and indirect victims (IV) were visited to share their arguments as detailed in Table 1. The data in terms books, media, documents and newspaper

clippings were also analyzed to provide theoretical power to the arguments that researchers will build in this study.

The data obtained in this study were analyzed using the grounded theory approach by juxtaposing with the hypothesis that has been made. Charmaz and Thornbeg (2020) assert that the basic theory laid between hypothesis and findings. Each finding is the form of an antithesis with a hypothesis; the theory is updated by developing new concepts from the findings. Vice versa, when the findings are synthesized with hypotheses, the theory is increasingly accurate to be used in dissecting each phenomenon.

Table 1. Details of Informants

No.	Initials	Age	Sex	Status	Place of Evidence
1	RK	65	Female	DV	
2	SA	61	Female	DV	
3	NA	57	Female	DV	Rumoh Geudong
4	UH	60	Male	DV	
5	TA	76	Male	DV	
6	RH	54	Female	IV	
7	MJ	61	Female	IV	
8	MI	59	Female	IV	Krueng Arakundoe
9	NJ	58	Female	IV	
10	MK	64	Male	IV	
11	HM	37	Female	DV	
12	JA	38	Female	IV	
13	YD	40	Female	IV	
14	JH	46	Female	IV	Jambo Keupok
15	MB	51	Female	IV	
16	ZK	55	Female	IV	

Results

There have been a number of violent tragedies occurred in Aceh Province. Presently, none of these cases has been resolved legally according to the mandate of the Helsinki MoU. Many contradictions between the theory and the data were found. Meanwhile, the hypothesis with

the findings results in a synthesis or conformity. The followings are a description of the research findings.

Rumoh Geudong: A Tragedy Exploration

Rumoh Geudong was just one of the biggest military camps in Aceh Province during MOA period. Normatively, it was a traditional Acehnese house, which was then turned into a *Pos Sattis* (the Post of Tactical Units) of *Tentara Nasional Indonesia* (abbreviated as TNI, the National Armies of Indonesia) and *Polisi Republik Indonesia* (abbreviated as POLRI, the Indonesian Republic Police). Yet, practically, Rumoh Geudong became the camp for torturing Acehnese people. They were taken and treated beyond the humanitarian limits for the unity of Indonesia. In addition, men were taken arbitrarily for torturing and women were raped where some of them were eliminated (Rahmany, 2001).

Some of torturing actions were beatings on the body, limbs and head using various tools like long wood, rattan, bottles, and iron bars. Other tortures were snatching bodies with a vehicle chain, electric cables and stingray tails; getting electric shock in various parts of the body, including the eyes and genitals. In addition, other agonies were being hanged with head down while being hit; having sexual assault (genitals entered objects, women told to shave male genitals, pubic tongs pliers) and rape (Rahmani, 2001). Those depictions were revealed by the following informants.

I never expected that it happened like this. I was forcedly taken from my home to the Rumoh Geudong. Few weeks later, I was tortured insistently. I was also pregnant at that time, until they put the tip of their weapon into my vagina. They terrorized me to reveal where my husband was, but I really did not know where he was (RK).

I was stripped naked, so was my husband. I witnessed TNI tortured my husband by clipping a pliers flowed electricity to his sexual organ and clipped it on my nipples, and that was not all. Eventually I was released, yet my husband still stayed there and became the target of violation. They should feel the pain of being shocked by the electricity on their sexual organs and suddenly talked about reconciliation. Should they be forgiven? (SA).

I was treated as if I committed a very chaotic mistake to this country, and they kept asking and forcing me to answer of what they wanted. I was shocked with the electricity, groped and abused. I did not know what to do because there were many of them, treating everyone as they liked. Until today, I never felt the result of the peace (NA).

After the 2005 MoU, I could not take anything from the peace agreement. There was no recovery or restoration for both moral and formal aids. The politicians simply only wanted to talk without trying to actualize them truly. The peace was worth nothing if the efforts came for nothing (UH).

I never expected that I survived after series of tortured I experienced in that house. As I recall, the militaries were barbaric, torturing without showing the mercy. My sexual organ was shocked with the electricity for many times and they smiled while doing it. The result of reconciliation might be tasted for the elite group only. How about us, the common people? What was the role of government? Where was the peace? (TA).

Based on the avowal of the victims, most of them still did not accept the reality that there was no power of justice to punish the armies committing the violence within that housebuilding. The violence indeed was reported in the Pro Justitia documents to the ⁷ *Komisi Nasional Hak Asasi Manusia* (abbreviated as Komnas HAM, the National Commision of Human Rights). However, due to the large number of cases, approximately 3.504, the arrangement of which was sluggish, not to mention the factors of integrating political interest or paying the cautiousness upon the cases (Razali, 2019).

Krueng Arakundoe: A Midnight Terror

The Krueng Arakundoe tragedy was executed after the revoke of status of Aceh as MOA on August 7, 1998. The revoke of DOM, people became the objects of the violence on behalf of the country. This tragedy happened on Wednesday, February 3, 1999, exactly in front of the *Markas Komando Rayon Militer* (abbreviated as Koramil, the Headquarter of Military Regional Command) and the local office of *Kepolisian Sektor* (abbreviated as Polsek, the

Sectorial Police Office). The followings are the excerpts conveyed by the library research and selected informants.

On that day, there was rapid shooting toward people that stopped on their way home from the location of meeting of preach with the preacher from as *Gerakan Aceh Merdeka* (abbreviated as GAM, Free Aceh Movement) activist. The dead bodies were collected, put into an empty sack, carried by truck to the Arakundoe riverside, and later were thrown after being given the weight. This tragedy shocked every people and gave the signal that MOA was back in Aceh. My brother became one of the dead victims of the tragedy. He left his wife and a child. For about 14 years of peace agreement, our family did not get the compensation and care from the government in any form for his heir (Kartika, 2001).

Since being left by my husband who died by the army, I had to work extra to support my family. In fact, I really expected that government could help and accommodate all my needs and education for my children. I sometimes regret with this life condition being ignored by the government. GAM activists now deliberately forget what they could do for their responsibility. I hated to be deceived in such condition repeatedly (RH).

Until today, the death of my child seemed to be easily ignored, without any fair legal proceeding toward the victims and perpetrators. Now, everything is the same, those who claimed themselves, as warriors had nothing to do with us, common people to fight for justice. (MJ).

I barely reckon if the independence of Indonesia was really existed. I also witnessed the life of other common people when they became the victims of the politics. In fact, we had nothing to do with politics, so why we always received all the impacts. The war became the peak of prove of people became treated miserably. So did after the war, without our own efforts, we were dead already. There was no responsibility from country toward me for the death of my child in. (MI).

The end of horrifying war would also never be the easiness for us. There were no help and support from the government. What we had fought, if their belly was already full, they would forget about us. Only when the National Election Day came, the candidates promised 'heavens' to us. (NJ).

The apology was delivered simply during the ceremony, just like playing around. Fake war, but truly died, including my son. I wanted the government sent their apology personally and directly, adjudicated the perpetrators, both the soldiers and the generals involved in (MK).

Similar with the findings in the first location, the informants interviewed revealed that they would not forget the gloomy, gory moment. Yet, they just asked for one thoughtfulness, a sincere confession from the Indonesian Government accompanied with the deserved punishment for the offenders, as they also did not want the dead end path found in seeking for the peace.

Jambo Keupok: An Arrogant Sketch

Jambo Keupok is a village located in South Aceh Regency and surrounded by the mountains. With an area of two square kilometers, it has four hamlets – Keude Tuha, Hilir, Seuneubok Pareh, and Dusun Tengah. On Saturday morning, May 17, 2003, dozens of TNI from *Para Komando* (the Special Force Units) and *Satuan Gabungan Intelijen* (the Merger Intelligence Units) that settled at a post visiting each resident's house. They stood guard at the front and back. A moment later, they entered the houses for checking and forcing the occupants to leave, including old and young peoples. They were then collected into a place. Group of men was separated from women and children. They were placed in a house made of wood, and they were beaten up (Marzuki & Warsidi, 2011). On that day, there had been tortures, murders and burnings toward sixteen villagers of Jambo Keupok done by the armies. Until today, this case was investigated by the Commission of National Human Rights of Indonesia and the investigated files were taken up to the Attorney's General Office (Kontras, 2016), yet none of good news is appeared. The tragedy in the village was portrayed by the following informants.

There were many people wearing a typical military uniform with a set of weapons, destroying our houses and neighbors'. All was forced to leave out the houses rudely. Then we were locked up in the school building. A moment later, we just heard the gunfire. My father's dead body was also burned after getting headshot along with other eleven victims. Until today, my family and others never get any compensation from the government (HM).

It has been seventeen years since that tragedy, and no one came for us giving the compensation, even from the government. The more I expected, the more I got my heart hurts. All was the same, either GAM or central government. Although many former members of GAM are in the governmental position now, yet their roles meant nothing to us. They are liars (JA).

There was no one responsible for the murders that we had been through. Was this kind of law really existed? After all this, only ⁶ Commission for Missing Persons and Victims of Violence, known as KontraS, that always came to see us, giving help and aids. Yet, there was no helps coming from the government or country that did this to us (YD).

My husband was innocent since he was not involved in GAM. I never expected that morning became my last day to see him. Until now, people were busy talking about peace, what was peace? I never felt that even though it was declared in 2005 as reconciliation for conflict happened in Aceh. There was no responsibility seriously or sincerely done by the government (JH).

I hugged my young brother very tightly, but the soldiers kept taking him by force from my hug. They shot him while running on the head that spilled out the brains on the house wall. I saw it very clearly and real. They did it without guilt, were the soldiers educated? We were seen as individuals who did not deserved for helps after this war. There was no help and support. There was no responsibility at all from them (MB).

They shot my husband right on his head, on the left eye, until it broke and his brains spilled out to the ground. My husband worked as farmer, he had nothing to do with GAM. There was no responsibility from the government. Until today, I worked as usual, earned a living for my children, for their education. There was no one came in for delivering helps (ZK, 55, F, IV).

The findings obtained from the informants for the third location were almost the same with previous ones. Their voices were muted to transmit the truth to the outer world, specifically from the Indonesian Government. The armies had no intention to verify the civilians in the first place, not mention to burning down all their properties.

Discussion

The rebellion of Aceh Province in fact had initiated by Daud Beureueh with his Indonesian Islamic Army. The movement was triggered with the mismatch of political promises made by the first president of Indonesia, Soekarno, at the start until the end of the turmoil (Damanto, 2014). In contrast to previous movement, Hasan Tiro, the governmental representative of GAM, used a more global echo in voicing the rights of Aceh Province, which had long been taken away by Indonesia. His movement was termed the Aceh Sumatra National Liberation Front (ASNLF) at first, and then it was changed for several times until GAM became the last rebellion title.

The year 1976 was the beginning of Hasan Tiro's declaration of GAM, continuing the fights from the movement of Daud Beureueh. The history of the reason why Hasan Tiro wanted to fight Indonesia was because he considered that Indonesia under Soeharto's control had exploited the natural resources owned by Aceh Province very massively without giving any positive effect from this exploitation. His assumption relatively rejected the authority to govern own region as the Indonesian Government firstly gifted to Aceh in 1959. The echoed jargon of decentralization initiated in 2001 was on the contrary since the inequalities in terms of economic development within the community ensued in outer islands of Indonesia (Diprose, 2009). It was no wonder that the reform had minimal contribution to develop regional areas of Indonesia (Hill & Vidyattama, 2016).

The peak of the suffering felt by Acehnese people in this rebellious war occurred from 1989 to the present. Positively, the successor of Soeharto, Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibi, pioneered a slight paradigm shift. However, the commander of Indonesian armed forces,

General Wiranto, was trying to regain public trust by revoking the status of MOA in Aceh Province on August 7, 1998. In addition to the revocation of the MOA, both of them went to the province on March 1999 to apologize for the behavior of the security forces (Djumala, 2013). In fact, the violent methods used by the Indonesian government to crush GAM during the MOA period put the success of security operations into a big question since what happened was that the civilians became victims while GAM was getting bigger.

On May 2003 under the new president, Megawati, martial law was declared in the Aceh Province. In this state of emergency, the civil administration was suspended and a massive operation to quell the rebellion was launched against the pro-independence armed group, GAM. It was the bloodiest year in the 28-year conflict in the province. On May 2004, the status was downgraded to civil emergency. Although indeed the Indonesian government was returned to the hands of the civilian authorities, military operations were still being carried out and human rights violations were still being reported (Siregar, 2012). Therefore, in a chronological order, MOA period in Aceh occurred for 9 years (1989-1998) and reported 128 rape cases. Then, a humanitarian break and cessation of hostilities took place in 1999 to 2003, followed by the status of Military Emergency (2004-2005), the status of Civil Emergency (2004-2005), the Helsinki MoU (August 15, 2005), and finally now the period of implementation of Islamic law.

As has been mentioned earlier, Acehnese women faced various violence, discrimination and restrictions related to policies that emerged during those periods. From May 19, 2003 to November 19, 2003, the First Military Emergency was imposed based on the Presidential Decree No. 28 of 2003. It was then extended to the Second Military Emergency from November 19, 2003 to November 19, 2004, based on the Presidential Decree No. 97 of 2003. Consequently, those decrees restricted the civil liberties and made the Acehnese women vulnerable to human rights violations (Komnas Perempuan, 2009).

In the context of peacebuilding between Aceh Province and Indonesian Government, the former became the illiberal peacemaker, while the later was liberal peacemaker. The condition after 2005 MoU made a mediator of reconciliation pioneered by CMI centered the peace development to both governments. This focus considered the position of Aceh Province having the special regulations after the negotiation; thus, the province had a greater autonomy to create peace based on the culture of its people.

There was such sustainable fallacy in the implementation of reconstruction post-war in Aceh Province. The return of rights supported by the mediator was the potential way for the

province to rise from the ruins of destruction. Yet, the illiberal peacemaker did not take the advantage from the opportunity that had been legalized to do the best in giving the best contribution for the people. As the result, nowadays, it can be observed many social cases occur due to incompetent ways in overcoming the reconstruction process after local war in Aceh. One notable case was a rebel act committed by a former combatant of GAM, Din Minimi, in East Aceh (Utama, 2015). This act was triggered by the injustice and unfair treats done by the ⁸ Government of Indonesia and the Government of Aceh in establishing the welfare of former combatants of GAM.

Similar cases have possibilities to occur due to the recent economic condition of Aceh. The public relation of the local government of Aceh still reported that the province was in the seventh rank of the poorest province in Indonesia (Humas, 2020). Such condition was a paradox considering Aceh was a province receiving *Otonomi Khusus* (Special Autonomy Status). As reported, Aceh had received IDR 56,67 trillion as specific budget due to the Special Autonomy Status on this province since 2008 (Dani, 2008).

In terms of human rights, the post-war reconstruction had not yet overcome the issue upon the victims. This was proven with many victims that were interviewed by the researchers that implied the desperation toward the government. This was caused by the excess conflict that they experienced would never be comparable of what the government had given. In this case, indeed, the government did not totally care toward the victims, but their rights had never been fulfilled maximally.

There were also victims who experienced physical violence from the forces. They did not receive anything from the government either from local or national one. The victims should be consoled through the helps or at least be provided with certain workshop and training related to the life skills. Furthermore, the victims, particularly women and children required special treatment to recover from the local conflict. Yet, their right to get psychological reparation was not fulfilled. Putri and Permatasari (2018) noted this case as the fulfillment of reparation right toward female victims of Aceh conflict did not implemented in accordance to international law of human right. In this case, the rehabilitation merely focused on the providing of financial compensation. In fact, the need of psychological rehabilitation was urgent for the susceptible parties as women and children.

Ironically, many evidences committed were not only by TNI, but also by GAM. Those authentic evidences could be the countless number of people that were defective and wounded

due to the violence that had not been handled until today. Moreover, there were also many carelessly abandoned graves located in remote areas of the conflict.

Moreover, the evidences of locations where the violence done had long disappeared. After the war ended, people flocked to destroy the buildings due to overcoming trauma. For instance, Rumoh Geudong is now just the yard with few lower parts of the walls remained. In fact, many graves dug up to bury the people, either already dead or alive, both inside or outside of the building. Unfortunately, when people passed by the location, there was no evidence of history of violence at Rumoh Geudong that could be witnessed since the evidence and remains of violence had been long buried by ages. The building should be preserved and be kept as what was left by the soldiers; hence, all the evidence would remain factual and could convince the arguments for further discussion about the disclosure of the truth. This phenomenon also occurs around Krueng Arakundoe and Jambo Keupok. Fortunately, there was a monument built to remember the victims at the last mentioned place, although it was built by local people, not the government. The community became another victim, who were being detached with the valid law enforcement, which possibly resulted continuous trauma (Gittner, 2016).

When the reconciliation was declared, all parties – armies and governmental officials of GAM and Indonesia – were asked to tell the truth to gain certain interests from the compensation. This also involved the real and fake victims. Even the former members of GAM and government kept providing the information emphasizing that what had been done by them was for the sake of national security. The statement on behalf of the country' turned into their jargon when being asked about the tragedy of violence happened in Aceh Province. Nevertheless, voices about the disclosure of truth and reconciliation must be forwarded. Yet, the factual disclosure and some concrete steps had not been realized until today. When the war was over, the guilty ones did not want to be guiled, and kept roaring to hide their faults. Hence, the process to achieve the social truth still did not perform a development.

Still, all this time, the victims of conflict in Aceh Province done self-reconciliation with their own should fight for the healing of all wounds. If either with minimal or maximal reconciliation is implemented, the reconciliation context for Aceh Province was still vague, after either minimal or maximal reconciliation is implemented. However, the authorities always said that, "We are fighting for it". Fourteen years ahead, after the signing of MoU, the matter of reconciliation was still in discussion. The struggle that was stagnant toward a

possible reconciliation was caused by the actors who did not want a confession, admission and apologies.

The society truly understood the past events to establish the responsibility and to refuse the impunity continuously; surely, the truth could not simply reconcile the ex-enemies. The survived victims in Aceh Province need more ears to be listened. They looked for the improvement of justice for the guilt. Besides, they looked for the guarantee that they would be protected in the future.

Indeed, it looked difficult for the Indonesian Government to admit what they have done in the past toward Aceh Province, specifically the violation toward human rights in committed by the army military units. This case obviously emerged when a commitment to clean up the history started to sound on. The voices of victims that had been muted for long time should be resounded, so the Indonesian Government could reform the institutions involved as the agent of violence. However, whatever the reasons, this path was essential for a potion, confession and reconciliation.

The confession toward the victims would be based on the model of dialogic interaction. An individual saw one another as the equally respected creatures in reciprocal. Human becomes a complete individual through confession and admission, which emphasizes the identity formation of inter-subjectivity. Many literatures describing confession assert that it needs an ethical condition of complete self-realization from the society (Taylor, 1994). Therefore, the confession upon the victims should cover the material and symbolic components with the purposes of securing the status of equality. Related to the symbolic confession, the confession must highlight the omission of cultural views that prevent the individual to recognize one another as the same people to reach what is called as the inter-subjectivity condition of participation parity (Fraser & Honneth, 2003).

Reconciliation as the sense of respect is to respect the tolerance and to carry the peace of political contestation would never develop when the past was examined truthfully or when the horrifying violence was not justified. An honest and sincere understanding about past was necessarily morally needed, even though this thing could hurt the victims and unsettling them who were pros with the perpetrators. The accountability is also needed for impunity culture, language superiority and humiliation that were deep for rights of individuals. Thus, the importance of admitting and confessing the victims as citizens has an equal moral for all people.

However, after a long period and distanced between the war and the agreement of not involving in war, every victim requested the Indonesian Government to confess. Principally, victims asking requests for remedying their wounds were awkward considering their status as the victims. In fact, they should be treated at very first time. Hence, those unnecessary, undelivered requests are deserved to have access by the Indonesian Government because it might become the commencement of framing the reconciliation process.

Healing the past wounds that had been long ignored would never be handled only with the psychological and physical treatment by presenting doctors and medical practitioners. There was wound that could be healed by the treatment of honest confession, and that was an exceptional elixir for certain post-war in every country, including Aceh Province. The confession from the conflict perpetrators – Indonesian Government and GAM – would share the priceless value of kindness.

Reconciliation in fact is meant to restore, although it could not be fixed just like before. As the main responsible element for its people, the government at least must try an effort of reconciliation through its confession, revealing the truth and begging for forgiveness to them. This is an unpretentious request but influential toward the condition post-war in Aceh Province or other countries' conflicts. Admitting and confessing the bloody history would generate the frame of reconciliation gradually as if a shadow having a real face. Reconciliation becomes the peace path to break the chain of conflict in the post-conflict era. It is not to overlook the past, but to convert the heart-rending experience into a forgiveness.

Sujatmiko (2012) noted the complex condition of Aceh due to reconciliation after the local conflict. At least, three parties' interests were intertwined in this process. The first was the former combatants of GAM, who urged to politico-economic redistribution.⁹ Then, the Islamic community demanded the implementation of sharia. The last was the government of Indonesia, which determined to preserve the territory. Since 2009, many policies and efforts had been taken to accommodate their interests: the implementation of sharia in Aceh, Special Autonomy Status, and the establishment of *Undang-undang Pemerintahan Aceh* (Aceh Governing Law) as the foundation of shared authority between the local government of Aceh and the government of Indonesia.¹⁰ However, with regret, the policies had triggered more complex issues. As Ismail and Manan (2014) reported, several points in the sharia implemented in Aceh were unfair for women. The establishment of Aceh Governing Law also left problems for Aceh. The case of local flag, as a point in that law, remained a problem, even after 15 years of peace reconciliation in Aceh (Maharani, 2020).

The existing problems around the process of reconciliation in Aceh left the urgent issues untouched. The physiological condition of victims remains neglected by the governments, both local government and Indonesia government. The uncertain condition of Aceh political atmosphere as well as security still became challenges in providing the mental health care for victims of war in this area (Marthoennis et.al, 2016). In adjacent of this notion, many areas in Acehnese life were still uncertain. Such condition becomes challenges for every relating parties in Aceh in near future.

One notably party in Aceh is the Islamic scholars. The role of contemporary Islamic scholars (*Ulama*) within the reconciliation process in Aceh was noted by Sahlan et.al. (2019). This party actually had a great role due to the people reliance toward them. Hence, the *ulama* have to be more ¹actively involved in the reconciliation process in Aceh. Their role in socio-religio-cultural aspects cannot be denied as the people Aceh put them in special position among societies; their words are references in all aspects of life of Acehnese people.

Conclusion

Post-war victims in Aceh Province slowly begin to realize that they would continue to be victims. There is no peace between them in the 'marriage contract' between GAM and the Indonesian Government. When they quarrel and flare up, it is the beginning of the innocent humans to become victims. However, when the two of them are married, they promise to live together in goodness, both joy and sorrow, nor does it change the status of the victims. Indeed, there is peace, but it is only limited to those who declare it. The peace does not reach the community members who are swallowed up by violence.

Those who are disappointed then come with a certainty, it turns out that it is a shadow of unreal peace. The disappointment is irreplaceable but sits down and unites with the previous disappointment. They struggle to unite to create new sadness in a new era. Peace is not a simple thing, and it is not achieved and will never be achieved by simple means either. Obstacles and obstacles are a unity that will be faced for a peace. The price of a peace will not be paid simply by improving the present to shape the future. Past destruction is a priority that must be fixed in order to be able to repair the present and then create the future.

Funding

²This work was supported by the Universitas Islam Negeri Ar-Raniry Banda Aceh, Indonesia [201110000035768]

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