Social Reconciliation: Re-establish Post-conflict Social Ties in Kendeng Mountain Area

1st Hartati Sulistyo Rini
Sociology and Anthropology Department
Faculty of Social Sciences
Universitas Negeri Semarang
Semarang, Indonesia
hartatisulistyorini@mail.unnes.ac.id

2nd Ilda Ayu Maratusuhullah
Sociology and Anthropology Department
Faculty of Social Sciences
Universitas Negeri Semarang
Semarang, Indonesia
ihda.ayu5@gmail.com

Abstract—This study discusses the efforts of community reconciliation after the conflict in the plan to build a cement factory in Sukolilo District, Pati Regency, Mount Kendeng Area. The purpose of this study was to determine the background of the emergence of a conflict over the plan to build a cement factory in Sukolilo, to find-out the social conditions of post-conflict communities, and to discover post-conflict community reconciliation efforts. This research uses qualitative research method; based on observation, in-depth interview, and documentation techniques. The results show that the emergence of conflicts caused by differences of opinion related to the pros and cons over the plan of the construction of a cement factory in Sukolilo District. There are still suspicions among member of the communities and they anticipate of the conflict re-emergence. Social relations among ordinary people of this communities in the began to improve, but reconciliation was difficult to achieve among leaders of the movement groups. The top-down reconciliation efforts have been undertaken by several parties, namely communities, government, PT Semen Gresik and the mass media. Besides that, people also improving bottom-up reconciliation by using their ties in everyday life.

Keywords—cement factory, postconflict, reconciliation, social ties

I. INTRODUCTION

In 2006 the community began to be disturbed by the construction plan of a cement factory by PT Semen Indonesia (PTSI). The need for cement raw materials to meet national cement needs has prompted a policy to expand business by building a new plant in the North Kendeng Mountains area of Sukolilo District. Positive response was received by Pati Regency Government and Central Java Provincial Government. Unfortunately, this is not in line with the wishes and approval of the local community, especially the residents of Sukolilo. In the Sukolilo community itself then divided into two, there are the community groups that refused and the community groups that supported the cement factory. Rejection efforts were carried out by holding demonstrations and legal efforts with the support of the Wahana Lingkungan Hidup (WALHI) Foundation (NGO) to sue the environmental permit issued by the government[1]. Various rejections and lawsuits eventually made PTSI leave Sukolilo in 2009.

The frictions occurred between groups that refuse and groups that support cement factories are not only limited on the building plans a cement factory but extend to community life activities. Even after the verdict to thwart the construction of this cement plant, the tensions among the groups of people in Sukolilo doesn't just disappear. The efforts are made to bring peace back to the society. Based on this explanation, this study aims to find out the phenomena in Sukolilo District related to cement factory conflict, such as: the background of the emergence of the conflict; the social conditions of the community after the conflict; and reconciliation efforts after the conflict.

II. MATERIALS AND METHODS

This study used qualitative research methods. Symptoms observed in qualitative research are comprehensive so that qualitative research establishes research in the overall social situation under study which includes aspects of places, actors and activities that interact synergistically[2]. This research was carried out in two villages that became candidates for the location of cement raw material mining and the location of the construction of cement plants, namely Kedumulyo Village and Baturejo Village. These two villages are the location of the study because it have the highest intensity of conflict between their communities among other villages that are candidates for the location of the cement factory. Data is generated from primary sources (observation, interviews, and documentation) and secondary sources (mass media articles). Data analysis techniques used in this study are interactive data analysts [3].

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

1. Mount Kendeng and Karst in Socio-economics and Environmental issues

Sukolilo District located at the southern of Pati Regency which is 27 kilometers from downtown Pati. From all villages in Sukolilo District, there are 7 villages which are planned to be used as the location for construction of cement processing plants and mining of PTSI cement raw materials, namely Kedumulyo, Gadudero, Sukolilo, Baturejo, Sumberseko, Tompegunung, and Kasiyan. The location of Kedumulyo Village is on the southern path of Pati-Grobogan which lies extending along the slope of the Kendeng Mountains with an area of 2,323 ha. Whereas Baturejo Village is 4 kilometers away with Kedumulyo Village. Kedumulyo Village is a village that will be used as a cement raw material mining location and PTSI factory construction. While Baturejo Village is used as a raw
material mining site. As part of the Kendeng mountain area, this region has unique natural appearance characteristics, namely as a karst region. [4] Karst area has a function as a reservoir of ground water in large quantities and as a habitat for various types of flora and fauna, so that if there is mining activity causes damage / loss of river hydrological functions which include underground rivers and springs, caves and flora-fauna found in and around the karst area. Fig.1. shows the appearance of the Kendeng mountains and surrounding paddy fields as a candidate for the built location of the cement factory.

Fig. 1. Site location of cement factory in Sukolilo

2. Sukolilo’s cement conflict

Infrastructure development always carried out an impact on the high demand for materials in building construction. One important element is the availability of cement. This reasoning to be the factors behind the effort to build a cement factory in a considered potential region. In this case, certain areas identified as a wealth of natural resources that are used as raw material for making cement. Karst natural wealth owned by North Kendeng Mountains attracts PTSI to invest.

Initially, the community did not know about the building plan of a cement factory in Sukolilo. The community only often hears that a lot of land in Gunung Kendeng is bought by land brokers who are building a company to plant castor trees (tamananjarak). The castor tree was used to make bio-diesel as alternative fuels, because there was a scarcity of oil-fuel. After intense socialization from the company to the village community, especially for landowners, the community had realized that a cement processing factory and cement raw material mining activities would be built in the Sukolilo District.

The presence of PTSI in Pati Regency was also welcomed by the governor of Central Java, who at that time was held by Bibit Waluyo. He stated that the construction of a cement plant would have a positive impact on the local community. The positive response from the government turned out to be inversely proportional with the response of the local community. The Sukolilo community is split into two groups, there are the group that agrees and the group that does not agree with the plan to build a cement factory.

In accordance with the procedure to every business activity that have a significant impact on the environment, it must have an environmental impact analysis (AMDAL). PTSI as a state-owned enterprise also conducts environmental research to prepare an AMDAL. In connection with the emergence of some people's rejection of the construction of the factory, the results of the AMDAL analysis were used as arguments by : the company, the government and those who supported the construction of a cement factory. PT Semen Gresik appointed the UNDIP Environmental Research Center (PPLH UNDIP) to conduct research related to mining materials exploration and the feasibility of building a cement factory.

This study states that the Kendeng Mountains are suitable for mining. The team recommended the construction of a cement plant as a conditional[5]. Furthermore, it was stated that in the seven villages planned to be used as mining areas there were only six water springs and two dry caves.

The people who reject the construction of a cement plant in this case do not agree with the results of the PPLH UNDIP research team appointed by PTSI. The community then conducted their own research in Kendeng Mountains to examine the number of water springs stored in there. The study was also conducted by UGM, UPN and ASC (Acintyacunyata Speleogical Club) UPN. The contradictory results stated that in this region there are 79 active water springs, and there are 39 springs that have been measured to have a water discharge of 1,009.36 liters per second and 24 caves, 15 caves of the number of caves those found to have water sources and 12 of them are in exploitation areas[6]. Based on that research, UGM and UPN rejecting the construction of a cement factory in Sukolilo District. If exploitation is still carried out, it will threaten the availability of water in Sukolilo District because the water discharge will decrease every year and the water will be cloudy during the rainy season.

These conditions divide the community into two parties that are conflicting, there are the pros and cons parties[7]. Each party has a reason to strengthen their opinion. The pro-cement factory is those who have bought the land of the farmers in the site of the factory construction with a very large amount and low prices; assumption of socio-economic improvement of citizens after a cement factory; and prosperity issues (infrastructure will improve and migrants will return to work in a cement factory). While the counter parties to the cement plant are those who live from agriculture and are worried about lack of water as bad impact of cement factory; people who do not believe in government promises because they are always used as an objects; distrust of economic improvement that promising in a cement factory because they have not had the skills to work in the industrial sector and local residents will be replace by the stranger.
Each of the pros and cons parties is gathering support and lobbying with agencies or institutions to participate in their struggle. In general, [8] the cement conflict in the Kendeng Mountains divided the group into two camps, namely supporters (PT Semen Indonesia, the Government, supporting communities) and rejecters (WALHI, LBHI, JMPPK, community rejecters). The counter party in its action formed a post and a house of struggle.

Conflict plans for the construction of a cement factory in Sukolilo Sub district are divided into vertical conflict and horizontal conflict. Vertical conflicts occur between the people who reject the cement factory facing the government and PT S. Vertical conflict between the community and the government was triggered by people's disappointment at the attitude of the Pati Regency government that fully supported the mining plan and the construction of the PT Semen Gresik cement plant by issuing a Regional Mining Permit (SIPD). The protest action was also directed at the village government that would be used as a factory location because the village government was involved in the process of land acquisition and the socialization of the plan to build a cement factory. Protests by the community also often end in violence.

As a result of vertical conflict horizontal conflicts arise. Horizontal conflicts occur as a result of opposition between the people who refuse and the people who support the presence of PT S. Community groups who refuse of cement factory concerns about environmental impacts caused by the mining process and construction of this factory. In the other side, community groups that support cement plants tend to have a positive economic impact on PT S's presence. Horizontal conflict was characterized by the destroyed of people social relations. Meanwhile, the growth of solidarity among groups who have similar opinions are enhancing.

The contradiction regarding the agreement and disagreement of the community encourage the planned construction of the PT S factory continues to a higher level, that is the court level. The community alliance which rejected the cement factory was represented by WALHI in its lawsuit against the licensing office of Pati Regency and PT S. In filing this lawsuit, WALHI authorized the Environmental Care Advocacy Team consisting of YLBHI-LBH Semarang and LPH YAPHI[9]. The escalation of the conflict between the pro and contra parties of the construction of the cement factory is also a sign of the strengthening of social ties within each faction involved in this conflict. The identity of the in group and out group is also increasingly visible in this situation, as a result the consolidation in the group also increases. Thus, conflict without group will increase internal cohesion within the group[10].

Various processes are passed by the conflicting parties. Residents who refused through the Kendeng Mountain Community Care Network (JMPPK) then filed a lawsuit with the Semarang State Administrative Court to revoke this exploration study and win, then PT S appealed to the Surabaya State High Court and won, until JMPPK appealed again to the Supreme Court (MA) in the middle 2009 and won, while PT S had decided to leaveSukolilo before an MA decision [11].

3. Social condition of the Post-conflict community

Based on the results of the study, after conflict, community social condition in Sukolilo Sub district shows that social ties cannot return to normal. This can be seen in the public relations that began to blend in but still insisted on their opinions, and still held suspicion. Post-conflictSociety is characterized by multiple transition processes from war to peace [12]. The transformation of war-torn societies into peaceful, stable and more prosperous ones is an immensely complex task, often susceptible to contradictory pressures and concomitant risks of a relapse into violence [13].

The social relations of the post-conflict community are gradually improving. The community has been able to adjust and accept the decision regarding the withdrawal of PT S from Sukolilo. After PT S officially pulled out from Sukolilo, both the people who supported it and those who refused began to stop the tensions. As time went on, the dividing divides between the pro and the people who opposed the cement factory also began to melt. There is no more tense village atmosphere like it ever happened when the conflict explode.

Village leaders also provide a role in efforts to restore the condition of the community. Although village leaders also have divided in to different sides, they also give an understanding to the community. The understandings were given to the community not to reopen the conflict of the cement factory in overt way. Relations between communities gradually returned to peace even though it was difficult to eliminate feelings of hatred in the hearts of the community towards other groups. Conflicting communities begin to blend in and interact well, but these two groups are still unable to unite opinions. The people who reject the cement plant remain adamant in their opinion regarding the rejection of the construction of the cement plant, and vice versa.

In addition to the negative effects felt by the community, the conflict also had a positive impact on the local community. As a result of the conflict caused by the arrival of PT S the community became more aware of the legal process and the growing awareness to protect the environment.

In terms of understanding the legal process, the community becomes more aware of how the law works along with the stages. The opening of public knowledge about the crucial legal decisions that have binding and formal legal powers is also being understood by the public. This then made the participation of the community strong in guarding the dispute trial process with PT S which at that time was running. They are not reluctant to take to the streets and provide support for the proceedings that are in the court.

The awareness aspect of preserving the environment also began to be felt by citizens in relation to this conflict.
Incessant environmental issues are always voiced by community groups who reject cement factories to encourage public awareness to preserve the natural environment of the Kendeng Mountains. This makes people see the importance of planting culture, and the culture of caring for plants. Without the availability of water, surely this will be difficult to materialize. As a result, there will be a threat to the decline in food availability for residents and the increasingly difficult life in the village. The threat of reduced water supply that residents can enjoy is also a serious problem if the cement development project is continued. These environmental and water issues also have an impact on awareness of timber theft behavior. That the preservation of forests, flora and fauna in them is an important part that supports people’s lives.

Leaders in the mass of rejecters and those who support cement factories are the key figures in the society's opposition. Communities that only become mass movements will be easier in the stage of conflict recovery. The community has begun to make peace and can interact with each other intensively, the community also no longer identifies themselves as members of one group. Different conditions are shown by figures who are the motor of movement. The figure who had been the leader of the community movement in an effort to refuse or support the cement factory was still in a good distance with fellow figures and the general public. For example, people who only become a mass of repulsive cement movements have been able to blend in and have a good relationship with the mass movement of supporters of the cement factory, but this cannot be fully done with the figure who is the motor of movement to support the cement factory. There are still boundary dividers between the general public and movement figures in the cement problem, even though they have interacted like mutual greetings, people who reject cement factories still limit themselves and are suspicious of the activities of cement supporting figures. Likewise, the community that supports the cement factory is still limiting themselves to the figure who is the motor of the movement to reject the cement factory.

4. Conflict reconciliation efforts

The period after the verdict is an important period of society because it is in the initial condition towards the direction of reconciliation. Awareness of improving social ties is very important for each community group. Both community groups must agree to close the conflict and restore peace. Communities who are pro-cement must accept the fact that PTSI is not feasible to establish a factory in Sukolilo District. Likewise, the people who are counter-cement must accept the pro-cement community in their social relations.

The social conditions of the post-conflict community have not been able to fully recover as it was before the emergence of the cement factory issue. Therefore, post-conflict reconciliation efforts continue to be carried out in order to achieve peace in the community. Reconciliation is a process of mutual acknowledgment of past suffering and changing of destructive attitudes and behavior into constructive relationships toward sustainable peace[14]. Reconciliation is a long-term process to overcome hostility and mutual distrust between the two conflicting groups[15]. Reconciliation was taken to restore the harmonious condition of the community as usual. Reconciliation is a process through which a society moves from a divided past to a shared future and is more useful, as a process that redesigns the relationship[16].

Reconciliation was taken by various parties including the government, community, PTSI and the mass media. The mediation are taken by the government in conflict reconciliation efforts. Mediation was carried out by the local government of Pati Regency by bringing together supported and opposed groups in the cement factory building plan. Reconciliation was also carried out by cooperating with security forces. Security forces, both the police and the TNI, were deployed to maintain the peace of actions carried out by the villagers, for example during demonstrations by both the people who refused and supported the cement factory. The security apparatus is also assigned to maintain the conduciveness of the village community and prevent violence between conflicting parties. Reconciliation carried out by certain institutions or the government is a reconciliation approach that is carried out by a top down system[16] and usually a stronger party will resolve the conflict politically[17]. Reconciliation with a top-down approach results only in the surface layer and does not touch all levels of society. This reconciliation approach by the government only focuses on negotiations between the conflicting parties and not trying to improve social relations in the community. The top-down tendency of reconciliation to conflict puts the community in the position of being an object without being able to build awareness of reconciliation originating from the potential of the community itself[18].

Reconciliation was also carried out by PTSI by creating a community peace institution. The job of this institution was to facilitate the meeting of the two conflicting groups in joint deliberations. This mediation activity was carried out by the company as a form of corporate responsibility towards the Sukolilo community.

The mass media as parties outside the conflict were also involved in reconciliation efforts during the conflict over the construction of a cement plant such as mediation carried out by Kompas. Unfortunately this mediation and communication effort finally failed because between groups of people could not find a solution to the problem. The involvement of the mass media in several cases in African countries has had a significant influence[19]. Through the television program, that recognition of the other was an important part of the conflict resolution process as workshop members recognized their “enemies” and Kenyans from disparate parts of the country as similar to themselves in their experience of the violence. But apparently the use of mass media was not quite successful in the Kendeng case.
In other ways, the community also takes part in the reconciliation process. Reconciliation carried out by the community through the economic and social fields. In the economic field, reconciliation is held in agricultural and trade activities. After the conflict in the construction of a cement factory, cooperation between the community, especially in agriculture, no longer links individual alignments in the conflict of the cement factory. Farmers from the pros and cons parties are willing to work with people who are in need of their skill. They are no longer consider about the partisanships of landowners in past conflicts. Whereas in trade activities, reconciliation was carried out by the community by removing the shop label for pro people and shops for those who refused cement. Reconciliation in trade activities aims to increase community interaction as a seller and buyer.

Reconciliation carried out by the community also took place in the community social field. Some of these activities are patrol (ronda/siskamling), RT meetings, mutual cooperation, and daily interactions in coffee shops. The patrol itself is carried out per dukuh in Kedumulyo which is held regularly every night. Each RT also held a meeting to minimize the impact of the conflict on the community. This activity aims to build a sense of togetherness and harmony in the community. The activities carried out by the community as a media for reconciliation involve the principle of mutual cooperation among residents, such as sambatan and rewang. Sambatan is mutual cooperation carried out in the construction of houses. Rewang is cooperating in preparing individual important events, such as: marriage party, circumcision party, funeral. Interaction in the coffee shop is also quite important, considering that this place which used by the community to talk about daily life, on the sidelines of farming. Fig. 2. shows how the everyday life’s interaction and conversation was tied in the coffee shop.

![Fig. 2. Interaction in coffee shop](image)

The people who originally felt awkward and distant, gradually dissolved in quite intense conversation. To reduce tension, the conversation starts with light things and is related to everyday life. Each party in this condition refrained from discussing matters related to prior bias. Reconciliation by the community is included in a bottom-up approach model[16]. The bottom-up approach is more to take advantage of cross-community improvement relationships for conflict healing. From this approach it is expected that the parties to the conflict have the space to be together and communicate so that solidarity is expected to be created in the community. Reconciliation efforts that arise from the community itself tend to be more effective if both parties are voluntarily conflicting and agree to resolve the conflicts that have occurred and restore the harmony of society as before.

This reconciliation effort carried out by citizens is also related to the forgiveness model[20], which is in the redefinition phase of social identity and the phase of willingness to build new relationships. In this phase of redefinition of social identity, the community is willing to not identify too much into a particular community group. Reconciliation in this phase is carried out with communities who begin to change their point of view towards other groups and try to accept the presence of community members from opposing groups in their social life. This phase is characterized by the absence of debates that cause friction between groups of people who reject and who support the cement factory. Members of community groups have received and are aware of the conflicts that occur by removing sentiments towards other groups. Kedumulyo and Baturejo villagers actively engage in intensive interaction even though social ties have not returned as closely as before. This community reconciliation process is also based on forgiveness efforts from both parties.

In the phase of willingness to build a new relationship, reconciliation is marked by community efforts to build more intense relationships or social contacts between groups. People in this case must be open to each other and offer new life that is more harmonious, or at least live side by side, mutual respect and tolerance. The return of cooperation and mutual cooperation to the villagers of Kedumulyo and Baturejo indicates that there is a desire from the community to improve relations after the conflict. Especially supported by the social conditions of the people who share the Javanese culture so that it is easier to unite the community.

Facilitating post-conflict dynamics of forgiveness and reconciliation may be helpful for promoting sustainable peace, restoring human relationships, and bringing to an end the spiral of violence [21].

The reconciliation process in this community also faces obstacles that are reflected in various forms of social vulnerability. The first forms of community vulnerability is the anticipation of the community against the return of the cement factory. Anticipation is still being carried out by community groups that reject cement factories because of the natural resource wealth possessed by the Kendeng Mountains region. There is still the potential for other threats to the sustainability of Kendeng Mountains. This form of anticipation is carried out while maintaining the vigilance of the community groups who are members of the JMPPK while still carrying out routine meetings or they called it Selapanan.
The second form of vulnerability is the existence of suspicious among the people. For example: pro-cement activities are also considered to be still funded by the company. These suspicions remaining the hampered in reconciliation process among community groups. Rebuilding peace in post-conflict community held through strengthening social capital could starts with a trust contextualization between communities[18]. Therefore trust is an important factor for the process of reconciliation. The third form of vulnerability is the many problems that are always associated with the conflict. Many moments in the community are then always associated with the pros and cons of the cement factory. One of them was during the election of the village head in Kedumulyo Village to the election of the regional head of Pati Regency. The election of village head is also separate based on each candidate's partiality in the cement factory.

The social relations which had been destroyed by the factory construction have yet to be fully recovered. Improvement of post-conflict social relations can be done gradually with the commitment of both parties to the conflict to work together so that social harmony can be achieved. Reconciliation is more about improving the quality of communication and trust among group members. So there needs to be a special effort continuously which is aimed at improving communication and understanding between identity groups [22].

It can be argued that reconciliation, at least in its full form, presupposes conflict resolution: a long-term, cooperative relationship, based on mutual acceptance and respect, is not likely to take hold without a peace agreement that addresses the fundamental needs and sense of justice of both sides [22]. For this reason, a consistent peace effort is needed to maintain a conducive situation in the community. Because reconciliation is not only limited to the elite or community leaders, it requires a comprehensive commitment from all elements of society, in this case the general public also plays an important role in reconciliation efforts to restore peace and maintain social harmony. In the technical context of implementing reconciliation, at least it contains elements of change such as: long, deep, and broad [16]. As a long-term process, there is no quick fix to reconciliation, and society needs time. A deep process demands changes in our aspirations, our emotions and feelings, perhaps even our beliefs. It also a very broad process, applies to everyone, to community.

IV. CONCLUSION

Through various reconciliation processes, initiated by the government; PTSI factories and the community itself; a bottom-up reconciliation process was considered as most improving people’s interaction. Significant results can be achieved by reconciliation with a bottom up approach because there is active participation from the community. The characteristics of rural communities based on mutual cooperation and kinship are also things that are able to encourage the reconciliation process. The challenge that must be faced by the community at this time is there is still a social distance between villagers, especially occurring among the figures of the movement of each community group. This community reconciliation process still faces vulnerability, given the dynamics of the conflict regarding the establishment of this cement can still continue.

REFERENCES