

**The Moslem as Minority Community in Democracy
Process
(an analysis of the Regional Election Dynamics in Toraja
Regions)**

Sukri Tamma
Institute of Southeast Asian Studies, Bonn University, Germany
sukripolitik@gmail.com

Ismah Tita Ruslin
State Islamic University of Alauddin, Makassar, Indonesia
tee_ruslin@yahoo.com

Abstract

This paper aims to show the inclination that occurs in the democratic process associated with the presence of democratization in the "Era Reformasi". This era began as soon as the end of the Suharto regime in 1998, which is considered to have brought Indonesia into a democratic period which also occurs at the local level. One thing that is considered an effort to achieve democracy is the implementation of decentralization via regional autonomy that was regulated through some regulations, where today the new law is Law No. 23 of 2014. This law gives more opportunity to the local people to manage their area based on their objective context. It makes some local issues, including local identity, an important aspect in the regional social and political dynamics, including in the regional election. Through the direct electoral system where people vote, it became the most important factor of the results, and some local context then becomes prominent aspects in the process. When a region is occupied by non-Muslims or Christians, like in the Toraja lands, consequently issues related to Christianity become important during the election. This condition then becomes problematic for non-Muslim people who also have the right to vote or to be voted based on democratic values and laws, with the fact that they are the minority in those regions. Pictures from the Toraja regional election then showed a tendency on how the Muslim people positioned themselves as a minority in the political dynamics of the Christian majority land and what its implication is to the social politics construction in these regions. Finally, the fact from Toraja's land will show whether a unique condition as the contextual experience of the Muslim community as a minority in a particular region while in fact they are the majority in the nation.

Keywords :Democracy, Regional Election, Minority, Moslem Community, Toraja Regions

Introduction

When Indonesia entered the reform era, there are at least two important changes have implications for the local politics dynamics in Indonesia. Those are a system of regional autonomy and changes in the local elections system. Among implications of those is strengthening the vary local values of the local communities and their desire to make it as basis for political dynamics developing in their region. The regional autonomy has facilitate issues of locality where was marginalized during the Suharto era. The regional election or “Pemilukada” for heads of regions by use direct system gives opportunity for local people to use their local values in determining that political event. These conditions make the regional election process in many parts of Indonesia basically shows crucial influence from some unique values contexts in the region.

For some regions in Indonesia, beside the custom or *adat*, other things that are also part of local community is religion. As a majority Moslem country, the Islamic influence became one of dominant aspect in various political dynamics in regions. It make issues of Islam in regional elections is present very often. It means, the issue in politics in many areas is influential due to Islam is majority religion in Indonesia. But that situation would seem contrary on phenomena occurring in the Toraja regions dynamics in regional election.

As majority of Christians and their strong social identity is make the general trends of Islam in politics, including in regional eletion seems different. It seem influences the Moslem community which majority in Indonesia, but as minority in Toraja regions have to put themselves suitability in the context of electional system which provide fortunate space for the majority in influencing the result.

Politics of Locality in Indonesia after the New Order Era

Indonesia is one of the very divers country in ethnicity

and religious. Based on data from the Indonesian Central Statistics Agency (BPS) 2010, Indonesia has around 1.300 ethnicities, sub-ethnicities and Tribals. Within that numbers, the Java ethnic group is the biggest population with around 40% of Indonesia's total population. Besides the Java ethnic group, there are around 14 ethnic groups that have around 1 million Populations (Ananta et.al 2015). That diversity lives in Indonesia's that area consists of around 17.500 islands. Actually, even Indonesia has that number of islands but the diversity does not spread equally. In most areas there are certain ethnicities becoming as majority population, while in some other regions the composition of certain communities based on ethnic identity even fairly equal (see Ananta et.al 2015). For example, most of the Javanese is lives especially in the middle and eastern part while the Sundanese is in the west part of Java Island. In the Bali Island, most of the people are the Balinese while in some parts of Sumatra island is occupy mostly by the Batakes and Minang. Nonetheless, actually there are not part in the Indonesian territory that inhabited by one particular ethnicity only. In this conditions, the territory of Indonesia, which currently consists of 34 provincial and 416 district and 98 Kota basically inhabited by people from diverse ethnic groups even as majority, minority or in sufficient quantities impartial.

Besides ethnic diversity, Indonesia also divers in religions aspect. Currently, within 252.164 million population (BPS 2015 there are about 86% population are adherents of Islam while Christianity (Protestant) about 7%, almost 3% of Catholic, around 2% of Hindus, nearly 1% people are Buddhist, and about 0.05% of Confucianism (BPS 2015). These numbers represent Islam as the majority religion for Indonesian people. This condition makes the Islamic discourse in Indonesian people life has become one dominant aspect including in the political field. In this field, the objective conditions of diversity in terms of ethnicity and religion have been present as influential factor since before the Indonesia's became as independence nation. Some movement against the Dutch colonial government during the colonialism period was based on particular identity or religion (Vickers 2013). That thing is

still occurring, even after Indonesia became an independent nation in August 1945. Some movements that arose in the beginning of Indonesia's independence against the central government in Jakarta took place in various parts of Indonesia shortly after Indonesia's independence.

A series of movements on behalf of locality aspects as social identity in form of ethnicity, cultural, and other social context including religion are reasons that use public areas in addition to issues of economic inequality and the lack of resources distribution to oppose the central government authority in Jakarta (Bhakti et al 2009; Vickers 2013). Thus, the turbulence in Indonesian local people political dynamics by using some locality aspects is not a new thing in Indonesia. It indicates through size of boost to make Islam as a fundamental aspect for the newly independent state of Indonesia in 1945. It can be seen from efforts of several Muslim political leaders were to emphasize Islam in the draft of Indonesian constitution and Pancasila where subsequently known as the Jakarta Charter, in June 1945. Despite that efforts unsuccessful to integrate the phrase of "with the obligation to enforce sharia law for adherents" in to the constitution but the influence of Islam in Indonesian politics remain continues.

The first election in Indonesia in 1955 still shows the influence of Islam in Indonesian politics constellation. Although PNI be winning the most votes, but at least it can be seen from the election results that put political organizations as well as religious and individuals in the name of Islam to get sound very significant and mendudukan perwakilanya in the House of Representatives (DPR) and the Assembly (see for example Faith 1957; Ratnawati and Harris 2008).

After the successful first Indonesian election in 1955, the Indonesia political construction then entered in authoritarian leadership. In this era, political field was controlled by only some elites. The era began in Sukarno era where he was as president of the Republic of Indonesia. It started since the promulgation of Presidential decree on 5 July 1959 that essentially dissolve the Constituant which its members are elected through the general election process and change the

Provisional Constitution 1950 back to the Indonesian constituency 1945 (Feith and Castles 1970). In his "Guided Democracy" period, Sukarno was factually as the highest leader but He had shares his powers to the military (Feith 1963). Although the construction of political power was divided between that poles, but Islam was still played important role. At least it was admitted by Sukarno through the idea of "Nasakom" (Nationalist-Religious-Communist) that his proposed in the 1960s. Sukarno's obsession against religious nationalist discourse basically shows his awareness that discourse about religion remained crucial in Indonesian political context. As the majority religion, the idea was basically to recognition importance of the majority. After Sukarno fell down in 1966 which was preceded by social and political upheavals since 1965, it appears as Suharto as rulers of Indonesia. It was formally began in 1968 where considered as the New Order era.

During Suharto as the ruler for about 32 years (1966-1998) discourse of Islamism in the Indonesia politics was also experiencing pressure from the ruling regime. In this era Suharto had minimize all potential disruptions to his political system. Suharto was minimize every potential resistance including the issues of local identity including Islam as part of local community identity. In the context of the party system, one of the most fundamental policies by Suharto was the political party fusion in 1973. Through this policy, Suharto made restricted opportunity for political parties exist thru classify them in only two political parties and one faction to participate in elections (Ufen 2006). It was only the United Development Party (PPP), Indonesian Democratic Party (PDI), and the Functional Group (Golkar). Thru the policy, the Islamic parties merged into PPP while the nationalist party merged in PDI. Golkar as the regime party is build by some social organisatios. Although the policy was meant to defuse any potential opposition from diverse politcal faction in Indonesia but that policy still continue provides space for the Islam as part of political identity. It was meant that Suharto also consider that Islam is important political aspect in Indonesia.

Under strong control and intervention by the regime, all election ever held during New Order era always won by Golkar. It was made Islamic elements through PPP in the elections was not able to mobilize maximum vote from most Indonesian people even though the party represent Islam as majority religion in Indonesia.

The Indonesian political history noted that is the religion belief by most people in Indonesia but it never truly became the fundamental basis of the political system. Although some radical Islamic groups who want Islam were force to turn Indonesia into an Islamic state, but in fact Indonesian political system is never became an Islamic political system. There is a tendency that the majority of the Muslim community in Indonesia is viewed Islam as a religion and identity of individuals in Indonesia, but does not make it as the true fundamental pattern of their political behavior (Hadiz 2010: 19). When the Suharto regime fell in 1998, political reform and democratization in Indonesia then make some strong control of the government against the political dynamics, including in the local area becomes loose.

The reform era that occurring after the fall of Suharto has given great freedom to the whole people to participate actively in the political fields. The condition also takes place on the political dynamics in the region. Presence of the regional autonomy as principle of decentralization implementation which considered as more democratic that previously has encourage emergence of variety movements and issues in local people. It then pushes the presence of various aspects of the local in the local political dynamics (Holtzappel and Ramstedt; 2009).

In that context, local people then receives more opportunity involving in various political dynamics in their region. Some turmoil and conflict in Indonesia regions were related to social, cultural, and religious especially at the beginning of the reform era became common phenomena (Crouch, 2010; Wilson, 2008). Basically, that condition indicates a swithcing in Indonesian political dynamics from the national level to the local communities (Hadiz 2011). As result of locality

strengthening in many regions, the chance of local people to interpret some of their local values believes as important aspect in political field such as the regional election to chose the head of regional government. As a political arena regional election becomes a new arena for the local people to involve directly as the prominent factor in decide who will be the regional head. After previously the process was only involves a few political elites and political parties that have representation in regional parliament (DPRD), the direct mechanism makes people involving as the most prominent factor.

Importance of the head position to manage all community lives in the region then make people who have rights to ensure based on their preferences of some values for the most appropriate candidate to be the leader. It means, the regional election has provide an openly space for all people to refer their common perspectives to vote for the most appropriate one. In these conditions, besides the candidates offering programs, then their social background, culture, and religion also potentially becomes important aspect based on objectives context that relevant to the community. Such conditions then that can bring unique dynamic in the political process in the region.

The Toraja as the Christian Majority land

“Toraja” actually is a word referred two meanings. First, it is the name an area located about more than 300 km north of Makassar, the capital city of South Sulawesi Province, Indonesia. Secondly, the word also as name of the ethnic group which most of them lives in the toraja area and believe that the land is their sacred land as their ancestors heritage. Currently, there are around 1 million population of the toraja ethnic group that lives not only in some parts of Indonesia region but also abroad. Within that numbers, more than 500.000 people are still lives in the toraja area. The toraja ethnic group is the majority community with more than 80% of the all population in toraja. In the provincial level, the torajas ethnic group is in the third place of the biggest ethnic group population with around 9.02% in the province. They are behind the Bugisness (41,90%) and the

Makassarese (25,43%) (Suryadinata et.al 2003).

Since beginning of Indonesia independence day, this area was under one regencial administratif area, the Tana Toraja regency. However, after some socio-political dynamics in this area, in 2008 this regency then seperates in two regencies thru the Law No. 28 year 2008. The Tana Toraja itself where its capital is in Makale, and the North Toraja as the new district and its capital is in Rantepao. Although this area is divided into two districts, but related to their socio-cultural context there is no significant different of both places.

Historically, the Toraja ethnic group initially was divided into some small units that structured hierarchical society and led by a handful elite from the noble caste through a traditional council (Waterson 2009: 17). They lives in area where most of this regionsis mountainous area. It causes the area was relatively isolated from the outside until it became one of the areas controlled by the Dutch East Indies government in 1906 (Yamashita 1994: 70).

Before the 20th century, the torajas still lives in small groups in rural areas that relativily independent. At that time, the torajas still as animist and still untouched by the outsiders. They were not have awareness as one identity as shared sense of community. Their identity as the Toraja ethnic group was actually derived from the identification made by the outsiders (Waterson 2009; Buijs, 2009; Bigalke 2005; Tangdilintin 1980). It thicken their consciousness as community identity associated with their interaction to the outsiders communities such as Bugisness, Makassarese in the south part, the people Luwu in eastern part, the Dutchland regime and others (Bararuallo 2010: Waterson 2009; Buijs, 2009; Bigalke 2005).

Currently, as an ethnic group in South Sulawesi region, the toraja ethnic group existence is a uniqueness phenomena. There are at least two their uniqueness in compare to the others community surround. The two things are the custom or *adat* and Christianity. Those two aspects are their part of existence. The custom and the torajas majority religon actually as the part of diffrent aspect to the others commnunities where most of them are moslem majority and posses different kind of custom.

For the Toraja, *adat* or in torajas languages as *ada* is strongly associated with a belief system that has been inherited from their ancestors. It is called as “*aluk to dolo*” (the ancestor legacy) or *aluk*. *Aluk* is also as customary law that rules various aspects of their lives (Waterson, 2009; Adams 1997; Kobong et.al 1992). *Aluk* is often depicted through number 7777777, or in another version 7777. That is why it is called as “*aluk sanda pitunna*” or the guidance paced seven (Kobong et.al 1992). Rows of the lift in confidence Toraja people regarded as the epitome of perfection. That is, *aluk* is considered as a perfect guidance for Toraja people toward goodness. In general, aspects that are covered in *aluk* such as; *Aluk Mellolo* (concerning to human birth and adulthood), *Aluk Rambu Tuka* (concerning to the marriage party), *Aluk Rambu Solo* (concerning to the death, burial party), *Aluk Bua* (concerning to the joy party), *Aluk Tunanan Pasa* (involving market), *Aluk Tedong* (concerning to Buffalo), *Aluk Pare* (concerning to Rice), *Alukna Banua* (concerning to the construction of the house), and *Aluk Padang* (concerning to land) are the things that set it on basically showing all aspects of human life (Kobong et.al, 1992). *Aluk* actually represents all aspects of the lives of the Toraja ethnic group. Therefore, obedience to *aluk* is one important part of the Toraja people's living systems. The strong bonds of the Torajas especially through their kinship can be seen in some social activities and *adat* rituals (De Jong 2013). Another thing as a uniqueness aspect of this ethnic group is related to the religion majority. Currently, most of the Toraja people are adherents of Christianity. It is about 87 percent of the total area of Toraja's population (77 percent are Protestant and 10 percent are Catholic) and only about 10 percent are Muslim, and only about 3 percent consist of the other official religions (the North Toraja Government, 2010). That condition is inversely proportional to other communities in South Sulawesi which the majority religion is Islam.

Based on the South Sulawesi government data, the province population in 2015 are 8,520,304. Among them, Islam adherents are 7,416,488 (87%), Protestant 681,002 (12.5%), Catholic 188,513 (2.2%), Hindu 85,361 (1%), Buddha 21,106

(0.24%) and Confucianism 3.336 (0.04%). That composition shows opposite condition in to the Toraja region. When moslem people is majority in provincial level, they are as minority in the Toraja regions. the moslem community in Toraja actually including the Toraja ethnic group but their number is limited.

After more than 100 years of Christianity came to the Toraja land, it succed became the majority religion in this area. Succesful of Christianity into this situation actually was also influence by some unfortunate events and interaction of the Toraja ethnic group with the outsiders where most of them indicated as moslem. It then makes Christianity becomes one of theirselves part of identity to diffrentiate with the outsiders. One of fundamnetal indication of the influence of Christianity, especially Protestant as part of the existence of the Toraja people even in and outside of Toraja regions can be seen thru spread of Protestant churches called the Toraja Church. Currently comprised of 1,084 Toraja Church congregation (church) divided into 90 Klasis and scattered in 17 provinces throughout Indonesia (BPS GT 2016). Those are under coordination of the Toraja Church Synod Central Agency (BPS GT). As a basic identity, those are crucial reference and generally in nature as well as being the main framework for the existence of this ethnic groups including in their social interactions even in social and politically events.

When the era of reform came with to encourage the regional autonomy direct local election system then the locality of the Toraja then react by using those. It then makes to interpret the regional election related to who will be the suitable to be vote and appropriate to lead their sacred land.

Christian's Discourse in the Toraja's Regional Election

One of Indonesian democratization effect in the reform era is the emergence of the local people locality issues. In the toraja ethnic context, the locality is closely to their existence as an ethnic group that has uniquely social identity. As the community where Christian is the majority and seems as part of their existence, it then influencing also in the regional election process. It makes interpretation of democracy as "the people

rules" tend to be attached to their preferences as the majority in the region. Facts that the election will ultimately result in an elected leader through popular vote then make the majority influence the democratic process. The context of majority formed by the similarity and the solid identification of togetherness has made it work. For the Torajas, it meant not only *adat* but also Christianity as an important locality in the process.

Based on the *adat*, a leader in Toraja should be of noble descent based on their caste system. The leader must have three aspects which are capability, wisdom, and wealth. These things make the leader appropriate to the *adat's* guideline (Sukri; 2016). Besides the three aspects, the leader also should be appropriate to the Christian community as the majority that is mostly asked for the Christian candidates. While in many parts of Indonesia, a Muslim leader seems dominant associated with the majority religion, for the Toraja context, the same issue occurs related to Christianity.

For many of the Torajas, that issue seems also related to memory of their history in interacting with some Islam symbols represented by the community surrounding especially the Bugis and Makassar. Various negative experiences endured by the Toraja in the past where outsiders did not respect their existence (see Roth 2005). One example was the DI/III movement led by Kahar Muzakkar who is a descendant of Luwu. This movement demolished many of the Torajas' artefacts that are considered as part of their identity. It makes Christians conscious of their difference with outsiders as part of their existence. Thus, although there are some Torajas who are Muslim but due to historical experience and facts that the majority of the Muslim population in Toraja are migrants then it tends to be considered as an outsider discourse. In this condition, the Muslim community tends to be dominated by the Christian majority in regional election issues. The issue of Muslim leaders in the regions is never surfaced massively. Although there is a desire to encourage a Muslim leader but the discourse was never become an important and challenging issue for the Torajas' Christian existence.

The robust of Christian leaders in the regional election was also came into consideration of the political party in Toraja. Although there were not obligation to nominate Christian candidates, but most political parties seem agree that the candidates should be the Christian candidates. They were believe that the Christian candidate has better opportunity to wins the democratic events candidates from other religions (Anonymous:2015). That assumption was proved during the regional election 2015 in both Toraja areas, the Tana Toraja and the North Toraja Regency. From both regencies regional election, there was not Moslem candidates. From three pairs candidates in the Tana Toraja and two pairs in the North Toraja more of them are Christian. Besides the Islamic party was not appropriate with the rules to nominate candidate due to their lack votes from the legislatigve election, others parties would like to nominate the Christian candidates.

However, even formally all Islamic parties were not involving in nominatee process but they are still involve to mobilize voters including the moslem community (anonymous:2015). In that context, both political parties and moslem community involved in the election process although all candidates were Christian. By looking at participation rates was about 72% of the total 167.765 voters in the Tana Toraja regency and approximately 74% of the 178.172 registered voters in the North Toraja, there was including moslem voters.

The moslem community desires to use their rights to votes appears seems was driven by moderate tendency in voting behaviour. It was needed to response absence of to moslem candidates. The moslem community voters seem were ignore the religious backgrounds and more puts their reasons ground on personal aspect for example wheter they are good people and had good relationship with the moslem community. That facts basically indicates that this community seeks to adapt theirselves in to specific context in Toraja. It also was as moslem community accepts Christian domintaion in the toraja regions context.

Experience of the moslem community in toraja regions, regional election was showed tendency of different reasons

between the torajas moslem and the migrants. For the Torajas moslem, the elections were not present difficulty to found reasons to vote. The primordial reasons such as the similar identity or kinship relationships was be more compelling. Strong social ties such as kinship that symbolize thru *tongkonan* (the traditional house) among the Toraja was as the main source of support beyond religiosity reason. Furthermore, due to all of candidates were the Torajas then whoever will wins the revalry, the toraja land will still leads by the torajas leader. Thus, based on the context of the appropriateness aspects of Toraja still be fulfilled whoever is elected. Different things was experienced by the migrants moslem community.

Limitations of choice based on same religion then was made the migrants moslem community to had the other rational reasons beyond the religion reason. They were vote under individually and socially attitudes and who can work with the moslem community in the Toraja. It was made, some suggestion form the thrusted Moslem were important and influenced among this community. Therefore, even those elites were not proposed particular candidate but they were usually promote some criterias such as the capability, track record, and the candidate behavior. That reasons to votes was as the more rational way that they might get leader who meet to most of their criterias that still reasonable. With those options, the moslem community, especially the migrants attempt to ensure their presence in the regions as migrants and minority. Phenomenon from the toraja regional election 2015 basically shows that moslem community have not enough space to negotiate the moslem-based candidates. Facts as the minority within existence social identity that closed to the majority community then made them to adjust themselves in that context.

Pictures from Toraja was also showing the logical consequence of democracy implementation through the direct electoral system. As the majority community, the Toraja ethnic group seem has privelege to set a standard for the appropriate leader for their land not only for their community but also other communities. It meant, even the regional election is

regulate thru formal laws that provides equality but the Toraja regional election was presenting others pattern due to their locality influence thru adat and Christianity. Thus, the attitude taken by the moslem community was basically a choice to made because the context is almost no room for them to bring conflicting discourses. As implication, the election has give the formal justification for the Torajas to assure their people will always win the democratic process.

In the end, phenomenon of moslem people as minority community in the Torajas regional election basically shows how operationalization of democracy strongly influnced by some unique context of this region. Although the majority of Indonesia's population is Moslem and Indonesia national politics can not be separated from the influence of these conditions, but the objective context of Toraja has put Moslem community to adapt it.

Summary

The issue of religion in Indonesia political fields not a novelty things. Historically, since Indonesia became an independent nation in August 1945 until today, the issue of religion has always been as one of the influencing factors. As the moslem majority, the issue of Islam usually became one of the influential factors including in the dynamics of regional elections in various regions in Indonesia.

In the context of the elections in the Toraja regions, the influence of religion aspect is also as important part of that democratic process. But unlike the general tendency in most Indonesia regions, the dominant discourse of religion in politics dominated by the Christian issue. The dominance issue caused by fact that most of the majority ethnic group in this regions are Christians. The strong Christian identity is build closed to their ethnic group identity. It makes Christians tend to be identified as part of the identity of the Toraja. Although this new religion just came in about 100 years, but their history has given reasons to the Torajas receives Christianity as their majority religion. In this conditions, existence of the moslem community became minority where made difficult to develop discourses related to

Islam in the regional election dynamics. Absence moslem candidate in the 2015 regional elections in two of the Toraja regions was made them had only two options wheter they would not use their rights to vote or still use it and ignoring the fact that all candidates were Christian

The electoral process that governed formally thru formal regulations that consist with equal rights principle for all people was lack in provide same opportunities for minority communities to wins election even the chance is equal. The majority logics that builds in the direct election system has become the opportunity for issue of Christianity as the important issues in the political dynamics. Thus, the principle of democracy on the importance of people rules interpreted by the majority of the people in Toraja region thru a leader who represents the objective context of their social identity.

Finally, phenomenon of the Toraja elections in 2015 was not a perversion of the idea of democracy and marginalization existence of moslem people and others non-Christian community as well as the non-Torajas people. it was just shows how the logic of majority which is formed in a societal context as well as the implication of the direct election system in within the rise of regionality.

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