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The Conflict of the Kerinci Chinese Community Cemetery Complex in Sungai Penuh 1997-2010

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Abstract: This article discusses the conflict regarding burial issues that occurred among the Kerinci Chinese Community as a result of the relocation of the cemetery complex by the Kerinci Regency government. This research is qualitative research with historical research methods which are divided into four stages, namely: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography. The source of the writing of this article was obtained through the historical method using government documents, Chinese organizations, and interviews. This article shows that the relocation of the Kerinci Chinese Community cemetery caused the Kerinci Chinese Community to split into two groups, each of which formed a Foundation as a forum for managing the cemetery. The old group is part of the Budi Bakti Foundation and the younger group is the Himpunan Sehati Foundation. The conflict between the Chinese Kerinci community did not end even though the Sungai Penuh City government had set a cemetery for the Kerinci Chinese community at a kilometer 7.5 in the direction of Tapan. This can be seen from the daily activities carried out by the Kerinci Chinese community. They will not attend events organized by opposing foundations.

Keywords: ethnic chinese, conflict and displacement of cemetery complex

Introduction

In 1997, the Kerinci Regency government planned to move the Kerinci Chinese community cemetery complex from Bukit Sentiong to Kilometer 7.5 in the direction of Tapan [1]. This relocation was carried out because of the local government regulation No. 2/1997 concerning urban development. In Bukit Sentiong, an office building and a Kerinci museum building will be erected as a means of education for the people of Kerinci and as a place to store heirlooms belonging to the Kerinci Regency. The relocation of this burial complex is not as easy as one might think, because, until 2000, not a single grave on Bukit Sentiong had been moved. This is due to the absence of punctuation between the Chinese people of Kerinci in determining the new burial complex.

This incident left many problems for the Kerinci Chinese community even though the Kerinci Regency government had tried to reduce the problems they faced. How conflicts occur and how to resolve these issues will be examined in this article. Conflicts about the burial complex have often occurred, as written by Sulaiman in an article entitled Conflict over Cemetery Land: A Study in Mambulu Barat Village, Tambelangan District, Sampang Regency.

Sulaiman explained that the conflict over the burial land involved residents of Mambulu Barat village and residents of Glagas village. Meanwhile, in Kerinci, the conflict over the choice of burial location occurred between the Chinese people of Kerinci. What is the trigger so that the Chinese community is in the opposite position? To discuss this, Lewis A Coser's conflict theory is needed. Lewis' theory will help to analyze who triggers the internal conflict and how the resolution is mediated by the Kerinci Regency government.

METHODS

This article is qualitative research with historical research methods which are divided into four stages, namely: heuristics, source criticism, interpretation, and historiography [2]. Heuristics is the first stage in this research which consists of finding and collecting historical data and sources that the author considers relevant, both primary and secondary. Data were collected in two ways, firstly by archive and library studies, secondly by interview studies [3]. The archives were obtained from the archive collections of the Central Statistics Agency for the city of Sungai Penuh and the District of Kerinci. Meanwhile, interviews were conducted with several people in Sungai Penuh who were considered to be able to provide information about the funerals of the Kerinci Chinese community, including Khoe Ing Ho, Indra Kusuma who had written several articles about the Kerinci Chinese community in 1999. Pen Ipat and Martinus Ridwan as young people The Kerinci Chinese Community Healthy Foundation. Burhanuddin and Gusman worked in the government of Kerinci Regency in 1998.

The second stage in this research is source criticism. Source criticism is carried out to know the truth and authenticity of the data obtained. In this study, two methods were used to determine the level of truth and validity of the data, namely internal criticism and external criticism [3]. The third stage is an interpretation which is the stage of analyzing the data obtained in the field. The purpose of interpreting sources is to find accurate facts so that the data obtained can be trusted to be true [4]. The last step is the presentation of the research results (historiography). The data that has gone through the

three stages are then presented in the form of writing or articles [5].

DISCUSSION

The ethnic Chinese in Kerinci Regency is a minority group who have inhabited the Sungai Penuh market since 1883. At that time, Sungai Penuh was a market that became a gathering place for both indigenous and foreign traders, to trade the produce obtained by the farmers. Kerinci. The distance between Sungai Penuh and Padang via the Muaro Labuh road is about 180 Km, and approximately 227 Km if taken via the Pesisir Selatan road.

The long-distance was covered in about 5 days of travel because at that time the road was still a path. The Sungai Penuh market, which is located far in the interior of Sumatra, requires ethnic Chinese traders who come to rent houses from residents around the Sungai Penuh market. In addition, the length of the trip also caused many ethnic Chinese traders to choose to live in Kerinci.

In 1915, 80 ethnic Chinese were found living in Sungai Penuh, Kerinci Regency, this number increased in 1930, to around 974 people. This increase in the number of ethnic Chinese led to the formation of a Chinese community in Kerinci which they called the Kerinci Chinese Community. Since they arrived in Sungai Penuh they have lived side by side as traders with the indigenous people of Sungai Penuh and they have never conflicted with the indigenous people or their fellow Chinese.

The place where the people live is always equipped with general facilities and infrastructure, which support all the activities of the surrounding community, including the ethnic Chinese. The place where the ethnic Chinese live is always equipped with social facilities to support the life of the ethnic Chinese there, such as places of worship, meeting buildings, and burial sites as places to bury the dead. This is also seen in the ethnic Chinese settlement in Kerinci. The meetinghouse was built around the 1980s at the Sungai Penuh market. Apart from being a meeting place, this building is also used as a funeral home before the bodies are sent to the cemetery. This building has been renovated several times because the first building used boards as walls

and floors. There are no special places of worship as social facilities for the Kerinci Chinese community in Sungai Peuh. They worship in their respective homes.

For the burial location, the Dutch East Indies government has designated the hills on the edge of the Sungai Penuh market called Bukit Sentiong as the burial location for ethnic Chinese and Indonesian citizens of other descent. The name Bukit Sentiong as the location of the Chinese ethnic cemetery is not only found in Kerinci Regency but the name Bukit Sentiong is also used as the name of the Chinese ethnic burial location in Padang. The similarity of this name shows the relationship between the Chinese ethnicity in Padang and the Kerinci Chinese community. Bukit Sentiong as the location of the Chinese ethnic cemetery is very strategic and has Fengsui that is by the wishes of the Kerinci Chinese community. With the appropriate Fengshui, the Chinese began to fill the burial site when his brother died.

Based on interviews that the author has conducted with the Chinese community in Kerinci, it is found that in 1890 there were bodies buried at the Bukit Sentiong cemetery, although the authors did not get tombstones with 1890s figures. No tombstone found in 1890 could be because the tomb was destroyed. After all, it was too old. In addition, the author also received information that some of the old tombs buried in Bukit Sentiong had been moved by his brother to the Padang area and some had been cremated by the family. So the author only got the oldest tomb numbered in 1933 in the name of Oelek Tat as shown in Fig.1 below.



Figure 1 Estimated Oldest Tomb

As time goes by, the number of Kerinci Chinese tombs in Bukit Sentiong is increasing. This resulted in no longer available space to add a new tomb. The full size of the Kerinci Chinese cemetery in Bukit Sentiong has an impact on the rareness of the ethnic Chinese to visit the location except on certain days so that the graves are not taken care of. There was no visible effort from the Kerinci Chinese Community to clean up the grass that filled the tomb except ahead of the Cheng Beng ceremony celebrations in early April.

This funeral cleaning is usually done one month before the Cheng Beng celebration. The cost of cleaning the cemetery is usually funded by each family from the Kerinci Chinese Community. In contrast to the location of the ethnic Chinese cemetery in Jambi City, which is located on Jln. Patimura. This location always gets the attention of the Mayor of Jambi by assigning the cleaning service to clean the Jambi Chinese ethnic cemetery every time.

The condition of the cemetery complex that is not maintained and overgrown by weeds causes damage to the city's spatial landscape. So that in 1997 the government of Kerinci Regency planned to develop the city by building office buildings and museums that were directed to hilly areas so that Bukit Sentiong became the main target for building museums and other office buildings.

Bukit Sentiong is a beautiful place to look at, especially in the afternoon and evening. The distance which is not far from the city center makes Bukit Sentiong crowded to be visited by local and foreign tourists so it has the potential to be developed. This prompted the Kerinci Regency government to beautify and maintain Bukit Sentiong by establishing office buildings and museums at the top of Bukit Sentiong. The museum can be used as an educational facility and a place to store heirlooms belonging to the Kerinci Regency. In addition, the museum can also be used as a center for cultural studies and a tourist attraction for foreign tourists. With the existence of the Kerinci museum, it is expected to be able to increase the regional income of the Kerinci Regency for the development of Kerinci in other sectors.

In addition to its strategic location close to the city center, this is also due to the prohibition from the regent Bambang Sukowinarno to build buildings in the rice fields because this will result in the narrowing of the rice fields and will also have an impact on the economy of the surrounding community. The Kerinci Regency government plan is contained in the Kerinci Regency regional regulation No. 2/1997 concerning the detailed Kerinci Regency urban spatial plan. This requires the Kerinci Chinese community to move the tombs that have been buried for a long time in the Bukit Sentiong cemetery complex. In 1997, the Regent, Bambang Sukowinarno, ordered the tomb of the Chinese Kerinci community buried in Bukit Sentiong to be immediately dismantled and moved to a new place, namely land located at kilometer 7.5 in the direction of Tapan, West Sumatra province. This location is a location that has been purchased by the Bhudi Bakti Foundation and designated as a new ethnic Chinese burial site by the Kerinci Regency government on March 26, 1998. However, this location is still temporary because it is considered not to meet the requirements to be used as a burial area by some Chinese people. Kerinci.

This incident resulted in a split between the Kerinci Chinese Community, each of which formed a new Foundation as a forum to manage the cemetery. They were divided into two groups that formed a new

cemetery according to their respective beliefs. The Bhudi Bakti Foundation chose a location at kilometer 7.5 towards Tapan as the burial location and the Himpunan Sehati Foundation chose a location at kilometer 7 towards Tapan as the burial location. These two foundations are still under the umbrella of the Kerinci Chinese community, but they move in their way. They have a different point of view in determining the burial location.

The establishment of two new burial sites for the Kerinci Chinese community has deepened the gulf between them. This is not only seen in determining the location of the cemetery but has extended to the problems of everyday life. So it does not appear that the activities are usually carried out together by the Chinese community of Kerinci such as the Lion Dance at Chinese New Year celebrations. Among the two locations that have been chosen by each foundation, the Kerinci Regency government prefers the location at kilometer 7.5 towards Tapan as the burial site for the Kerinci Chinese Community because this location was the first purchased by the Kerinci Chinese Community. It is estimated that 500 skeletons buried in Bukit Sentiong will be dismantled and moved to a designated place.

The plan of the Kerinci Regency government is not as easy as imagined. Several tombs have been moved according to orders from the Kerinci Regency government, but there are still many tombs that remain in Bukit Sentiong because some of the Kerinci Chinese Community do not approve of the location being used as a new burial location, especially the Kerinci Chinese Community who are members of the Foundation. Healthy Association.

There are still many graves of the Kerinci Chinese community buried in Bukit Sentiong, which made Fauzi Ziin who replaced Bambang Sukowinarno as regent of Kerinci in 2000 take a firm stance. He warned the Kerinci Chinese community to move the tomb on Bukit Sentiong to a predetermined location. The attitude taken by Fauzi Ziin is indeed threatening because there will be forced demolition of the Kerinci Chinese tomb in Bukit Sentiong if the tomb has not been moved until the appointed time.

This is still not a deterrent for the Chinese community of Kerinci.

Although a firm stance has been taken by Fuzi Ziin, there has been no attempt to relocate the Kerinci Chinese community because the new burial location is still a matter for them to debate. However, the Kerinci Chinese community no longer filled the Bukit Sentiong cemetery with new graves. They chose their respective Foundation burial locations and cremated their deceased relatives as a middle ground they took in dealing with the problems that were happening in the Kerinci Chinese community. According to Lewis Alfred Coser, conflict does not only have a negative face but also has a positive face towards society through the social changes it causes. As long as the conflict does not touch or is not related to the core of a system, then this conflict is functional, but if a conflict that occurs later undermines the existence of the core of a system, then the conflict is dysfunctional.

Coser distinguishes conflict into two, namely realistic and non-realistic conflicts. The realistic conflict stems from disillusionment with the particular demands placed on the relationship and from participants' estimates of possible benefits and is directed at objects that are perceived as disappointing. Meanwhile, non-realistic conflict is a conflict that does not originate from antagonistic goals, but from the need to relieve tension, at least from one of the parties.

Non-realistic conflicts can be assumed as disappointments or demands from one party only. Non-realistic conflicts are driven by irrational desires and tend to be ideological, these conflicts such as conflicts between religions, conflicts between beliefs, and conflicts between ethnicities such as what happened between the Kerinci Chinese Community in determining the new burial location.

Furthermore, Coser stated clear sentiments between the two outgroups in the conflict over the choice of burial site as part of the conflict function, which can strengthen internal cohesiveness and increase group morale. So groups (or group leaders) can provoke antagonism with outside groups, or create enemies with outsiders to maintain or increase in-group

solidarity. Two external conflicting groups experience a strengthening of the identity of group members from the internal self so that conflict groups can define regional boundaries.

At a glance, it will not appear the form of the problems faced by the Kerinci Chinese community, but if explored more deeply it will be clear that the complexity of the problems that occur between the Kerinci Chinese Community will be clear. The ego possessed by each of them brought them to the brink of separation. This is still visible today.

Any activities organized by the Himpunan Sehati Foundation, the Bhudi Bakti Foundation will not be included. Likewise, with activities organized by the Bhudi Bakti Foundation, they will not include people who are members of the Sehati Himpunan Foundation. This further strained the relationship between the two foundations. None of them are willing to succumb to the differences of opinion they have experienced so far.

In 2008 the city of Sungai Penuh, which is where the Kerinci Chinese community resides, was designated as a Madya city in Jambi province. This is by the provisions of the Indonesian government with the legal basis of UURI Number 25 of 2008. Since then, problems related to the determination of the location of the Kerinci Chinese Community cemetery that has occurred since 1997 have been handled by the Sungai Penuh city government. It is no longer the responsibility of the Kerinci Regency government.

In 2010 through Kerinci Chinese community leaders, he asked the Mayor of Sungai Penuh to issue a decree confirming the decree on the permit to determine the location of the Kerinci Chinese community cemetery by what had been previously determined. The request regarding the determination of the burial location was granted by the Sungai Penuh city government in the decision of the Sungai Penuh mayor No. 469/Kep.298/2010 with the determination of the location of the burials of the Himpunan Sehati Foundation residents at Kilometer 7 in the direction of Tapan and the Bhudi Bakti Foundation at Kilometer 7.5 in the direction of Tapan. The ratification of this location is not considered a solution to the problems faced but has

further sharpened the gap between the Kerinci Chinese people, they are no longer united to choose the burial location and even expand to other matters because the government made an open and closed system for the two locations.

If from January to June the Bhudi Bakti Foundation burial site is opened, the Himpunan Sehati Foundation burial site will be closed. And vice versa. From July to December the government opened the burial site for the Sehati Association Foundation, so the Bhudi Bakti Foundation burial site will be closed. If between January and June there is a death in the community of the Himpunan Sehati Foundation, they will not be willing to bury their brother's body at the Bhudi Bakti burial site. This is the opposite. So they chose to cremate his brother's body. Scenes like this are still visible today. Some unscrupulous individuals are responsible for pulling this issue into the problem of egoism and prestige so that it creates a difficult problem to solve. It is feared that this will roll like a snowball which in the future will disturb the peace in the life of the Kerinci Chinese community.

The division that some of the Kerinci Chinese people are worried about is happening at this time. This can be seen from every activity organized by the Himpunan Sehati Foundation, the Bhudi Bakti Foundation will not be included. Likewise, with activities organized by the Bhudi Bakti Foundation, they will not include people who are members of the Sehati Himpunan Foundation. This further strained the relationship between the two foundations. None of them are willing to give in to the differences of opinion they have experienced so far even though a middle ground regarding the burial location has been determined by the Sungai Penuh city government.

Finally, in 2010 the Sungai Penuh City government suggested to the Kerinci Chinese community to buy a new burial site to reduce the disputes that occurred among the Kerinci Chinese community. The location at kilometer 7 in the direction of Tapan which is adjacent to the burial site of the Himpunan Sehati Foundation is a solution for the Kerinci Chinese community. This location was purchased by the Bhudi Bakti Foundation. The location is strategic, not in a protected forest area, far from residential

areas, and not as a water source area for the surrounding community. This location is very suitable to be used as a burial area for the Kerinci Chinese community. At this location, the Kerinci Chinese Community Cemetery was formed, both from the Bhudi Bakti Foundation and the Himpunan Sehati Foundation. The government requested that the Kerinci Chinese community no longer bury their relatives' bodies at the previous burial location, considering that the location did not meet the requirements as a burial area. (see Fig 2).



Fig 2. Kerinci Chinese Community Cemetery Location (Source: Yana Liza's Personal Document, January 2020)

After this location was designated as the burial location of the Kerinci Chinese community by the Sungai Penuh city government, the government reaffirmed to the Kerinci Chinese community to move the tomb located at the Bukit Sentiong cemetery, the burial location for the Himpunan Sehati Foundation (kilometer 7 in the direction of Tapan) and the burial location for the Bhudi Foundation Bakti (kilometer 7.5 tapan direction) to a predetermined place. Even so, until now the graves of the Kerinci Chinese community are still buried in Bukit Sentiong, kilometer 7 in the direction of tapan and even at kilometer 7.5 in the direction of tapan. Based on the data that the author has collected, it is known that there are elements involved so that the Chinese Kerinci community does not move the graves, especially the tombs buried in Bukit Sentiong. In addition, the development of the city

and the construction of museums and office buildings planned by the Kerinci Regency government has not yet been realized.

CONCLUSIONS

The plan to relocate the Kerinci Chinese cemetery complex since 1997 has not been fully successful. Some of the Chinese community in Kerinci did not approve of the location at kilometer 7.5 towards Tapan as a new burial complex. Some of the Chinese people of Kerinci consider that the location is not suitable as a burial location because it is located in the hills which are the TNKS area and a water source area for the surrounding community. None of them were willing to give in to the division of the Kerinci Chinese community by choosing the path of establishing two different foundations to manage the Kerinci Chinese funeral in Sungai Penuh. Differences of opinion in determining the location of the new burial led to a prolonged conflict among the Chinese Kerinci community. Until now, any activities organized by the Himpunan Sehati Foundation, the Bhudi Bakti Foundation will not be included. Likewise with the activities organized by the Bhudi Bakti Foundation, they will not include

people who are members of the Sehati Himpunan Foundation. This further strained the relationship between the two foundations. None of them are willing to give in to the differences of opinion they have experienced so far even though a middle ground regarding the burial location has been determined by the Sungai Penuh City government.

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