

Civil Society Engagement and Communal Violence: Reflections of Various Hypotheses in the Context of Indonesia

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This paper aims to examine various hypotheses about civil society mechanisms, at the proximate level, that can moderate communal violence in the context of Indonesian society. The mechanisms are (a) inter-communal civic engagement, (b) self (community) policing and (c) elite integration.

The presence or the absence of these mechanisms or a combination of them will determine the absence or the presence of communal violence in a society. This logic is based on the fact that inter-communal violence does not take place in all society groups in a country. Communal violence tends to be highly localized and not equally spread across the country. If communal groups in a particular area engage in violence, why such groups in other areas remain in peaceful relationship; in fact, all of them share similar characteristics such as ethnic and religious cleavages, segregated neighborhood and economic rivalry.¹

There are relatively few studies that look at the relations between ethnic conflict and civil society in Indonesia. If social science research can be grouped into three categories [See Neuman 2000], namely (a) exploratory, (b) descriptive and (c) explanatory, most of the studies on conflict and violence in Indonesia tend to be based on single case and are located within the first two categories, exploratory or descriptive.² However, this paper tends to fall within the category of explanatory research as it tries to make a reflection on several hypotheses.

The rest of the paper is organized as follows. Section II discusses the rationale for the approach and briefly elaborates the notion of communal violence and civil society. Section III examines existing hypotheses and whether they work within the context of Indonesian civil society. The last section proposes a new hypothesis namely about how the existing hypotheses can work together and produce a synergy in the context of Indonesian society.

CIVIL SOCIETY AND COMMUNAL VIOLENCE

Communal violence is defined as violence that occurs between different communal groups. Groupings in community can be based on religion, tribe, sect, race and others. The violence has marked the Indonesian transition for the past few years. Incidents of violence have spread within the country, from Ambon to Poso, from North Maluku to West Kalimantan, from Jakarta to Banyuwangi, from Mataram to Kupang, and in many other places. Communal violence is the most dominant form of social violence that has been taking place in Indonesia since the early 1990s [See Tadjoeeddin 2002].³

In a broader sense, communal violence can be called violent ethnic conflict. In this broader meaning as Horowitz argues, all conflicts that are based on *ascriptive* (birth based) group identities--race, language, religion, tribe, or caste--can be called ethnic [See Horowitz 1985 and Varshney 2002 for further discussion]. Therefore, according to this understanding ethnic conflict ranges from (a) the Protestant-Catholic conflict in Northern Ireland, Hindu-Muslim conflict in India, and Muslim-Christian conflict in Ambon and Poso to (b) Black-White conflict in the US and South Africa, and anti Chinese riot in Indonesia, (c) Tamil-Sinhala conflict in Sri Lanka and Dayak-Madurese conflict in Kalimantan and (d) Shia-Sunni troubles in Pakistan and NU-Muhammadiyah tension in Indonesia.⁴

It is important also to differentiate the notion of ethnic conflict and ethnic violence. Peace is the other side of violence. When the former increases, the latter decreases and vice-versa. Peace should be interpreted as a condition without violence, not a situation without conflict. In a plural society that allows each group to freely express their political interests and demands, different sorts of conflict are more or less inevitable. Conflict is a natural thing,⁵ but it should not always result in violence.⁶ The problem is really whether (communal) conflict is manifested in inter-group violence or institutionalized through existing political channels.⁷ In other words, ethnic conflict can be manifested in violence or managed through non-violent means. Generally, inter-communal disturbance starts from a clash at the individual level. If the inter-individual clash cannot be properly resolved, it can escalate into tensions, even social violence, at the community level.

Since conflict is a natural thing, it is not possible to completely eliminate conflict; but it is possible to prevent conflict from becoming violent or to manage the trigger factors from causing widespread inter-communal violence. This is where inter-community peace building comes in. One of the main actors which can play an important role in handling conflict is the community itself: civil society.

Besides civil society, the other main actor in peace building and in preventing violence is the state. However, the two actors, civil society and the state [particularly military and police], can also provoke or be involved in violence. To some extent, civil society might escalate communal violence,⁸ and depending on how it behaves, the state also might engage in such violence.⁹ However, the mechanisms and the dynamics of the two actors in playing their roles to create peace or escalate violence are completely different. Without ignoring those possibilities, however, this paper only focuses on the role of civil society in preventing communal violence.

What notion of civil society are we using here? To follow Varshney, civil society refers to an entity that (a) exists between family and the state, (b) connects individuals and family and is (c) independent from the state [See Varshney 2002].¹⁰ As a concept, it might be rather difficult to find the reality of the last criteria (c) in Indonesia, especially during the New Order. The only available sphere is a semi-autonomous space, which is not fully independent from the state [See Soetarto 1999]. This indicates that there is a competition for space between state and civil society.¹¹ I deliberately chose this soft definition of civil society since it would be more relevant for the study of ethnic conflict and more appropriate to the Indonesian situation.¹²

One should note that civil society in Indonesia has been entering a new phase of development in line with the transition from autocracy to democracy in the past five years. Under the previous military-backed repressive authoritarian ruler, it was hard to imagine the existence of a strong and developed civil society in the country. Although following *reformasi* in 1998, the development of Indonesian civil society has been very impressive, both in terms of quantity and the quality of their movements,¹³ the journey towards a strong civil society is still a long one and it is still far from the ideal condition. Putnam, more or less, refers the existence of strong or developed civil society to the terminology of 'social capital' which is an important element in developing democracy.¹⁴

EXISTING MECHANISMS IN CIVIL SOCIETY: HYPOTHESES AND REFLECTION

Preventing communal conflict from turning into communal violence is an important element of inter-community peace building.¹⁵ What mechanisms exist in civil society that may be able to contribute considerably to peace building efforts? In theoretical and empirical literature on ethnic conflict and civil society, we can find at least three mechanisms of civil society, which are hypothesized to be able to mitigate or moderate communal violence. They are (a) inter-communal civic engagement, (b) self (community) policing and (c) elite integration. These are different sorts of civil society engagements.

This section discusses the possibility of how these three mechanisms might work in the Indonesian context. They might be valid or completely irrelevant to the situation in the country. Since they are still in the form of hypotheses, they need to be examined through rigorous research based on empirical experiences of Indonesian civil society.

Inter-Communal Civic Engagement

Inter-communal civic engagement is a conceptual framework proposed by Ashutosh Varshney based on empirical findings in India [Varshney 2002]. Civic engagement, that allows individuals to interact with each other, has a wide coverage. It ranges from daily informal neighborhood interactions to, for example, modern business or professional associations.

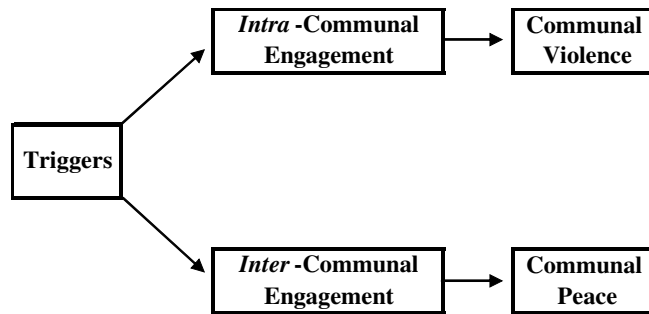
Varshney argues that there is a strong relationship between the structure of civil society within a plural society and the presence or absence of

communal violence. To explain the link in more detail, the argument can be divided into the following inter-connected parts.

First, the two forms of civic engagement, *inter* ethnic and *intra* ethnic, play different roles in ethnic conflict. Inter communal civic engagement is an agent of peace, because it builds bridges between communities and manages tensions. Meanwhile if civic engagement only existed in the intra-communal bound and the inter-community link is weak or does not even exist, the probability of communal violence would be considerably high.¹⁶

Second, civic engagement can be broken into two types: formal or associational and informal or everyday. Both types of civic engagement, if they are strong, would be instruments for peace building. However, the ability of the associational form of civic engagement to prevent communal violence is sturdier than the everyday one. Diagrammatically, Figure 1 illustrates the argument.

FIGURE 1
COMMUNAL VIOLENCE AND PEACE



Source: Varshney [2002]

It must be noted that the theory of inter communal civic engagement was developed based on empirical observations in India, and more specifically it was constructed based on the life of community in urban areas. This is because, 45 years of records (1950-95) of communal violence in India show *first* that Hindu-Muslim riots are primarily an urban phenomenon,¹⁷ and *secondly* even within urban areas, communal violence is localized and not evenly spread around the country.¹⁸

This theory has been constructed by Varshney [2002] from a seven-year in-depth study that systematically compared three cities with high intensity of Hindu-Muslim riots and other three cities where the riots are relatively absent.¹⁹ Principally, in order to understand the patterns of peace and violence, the peaceful and the violent places have to be researched simultaneously.

In terms of regional concentration, the preliminary communal violence database in Indonesia that is being constructed at UNSFIR shows that Indonesia has a similar trend as what Varshney found in India. Communal violence in Indonesia is highly localized.²⁰ But contrast to the Indian experience; in Indonesia, there is a substantial proportion of violent conflicts related deaths took place in rural areas.²¹

If the mechanism of inter-communal civic engagement can work well in preventing or moderating communal violence in *urban* India, is there a possibility it will work in rural Indonesia as well? In rural areas, it is hard to envisage the existence of inter-communal civic engagement especially the associational one as argued by Varshney. Moreover, community settlements in rural Indonesia, generally, are very homogenous according to certain religious or ethnic groups. Presumably, Muslim and Christian communities existed in a village in the violent area of Maluku and Poso, but their settlements are segregated into different neighborhoods.²²

Self (Intra-Community) Policing

Theoretically, the concept of self-policing was introduced by James D. Fearon and David D. Laitin [1996]. Self-policing is a mechanism, which is more relevant for a segregated community, to promote peace building or to create harmony in inter-community relationships. This concept requires the role of leaders, elders, or a certain body within a community to control their community members, i.e. individuals who are involved as trouble makers with other community (members).

Self-policing is interpreted by Varshney as intra-communal or intra-ethnic policing. If it is exercised by elders, community organizations, or civil society in general, self-policing would very likely give a similar result as the inter-communal civic engagement that has empirically being proven to work well in India in preventing and moderating communal violence.

In order to explain what is meant by the notion of self-policing, it might be worthwhile to present the following quotation of David D. Laitin, a professor of political science at Stanford University.

I grew up in a Jewish section of Flatbush that bordered an Italian neighbourhood. Some times on our way to school, some Italian kids –nearly all of them went to parochial schools-- would hassle and even attack us. Although they lived only a few blocks away, we didn't even know their names. We just called them "the St. Brennan's kids." Our parents would see our injuries and report the incidents to our school principal, who was Jewish, but from a different neighbourhood. He contacted the relevant authorities at St. Brennan's, who would investigate the matter and punish the culprits. The funny thing was no one ever seemed to think of calling the police. They were Irish [Fearon and Laitin 1996: 715].²³

How workable is a self-policing mechanism in the highly plural Indonesian society? Such a mechanism is quite likely to work. Intuitively, this can be explained through the following two arguments, namely (1) the mechanism is appropriate for a segregated community and (2), the explosion of high intensity social violence quite frequently originates from a clash among community members at individual level.

First, as stated by Fearon and Laitin, a self-policing mechanism is highly relevant for the segregated setting of a community. Indonesian society is highly segregated. Generally speaking, the Indonesian society is segregated along religious, ethnic and racial lines. Let us take the community settlement pattern as an example. The migrant Madurese settlements in Kalimantan are clustered. Their occupations and other economic activities are typically different from the native Kalimantan ethnic groups, such as Malay and Dayak. The clustered pattern of Chinese community can be seen from the existence of Chinatown or *kampung Cina/pecinan* (Chinese neighborhood) in many places in Indonesia. The majority of villages in the Maluku islands can be classified as Muslim or Christian villages, even though some are mixed. In the old days, the migration pattern of many ethnic groups to Jakarta, capital of the country, was clustered according to their respective ethnic groups that can be witnessed from the existence of particular areas using the name of ethnic groups, such as *Kampung Ambon* (Ambonese neighborhood), *Kampung Melayu* [Malay neighborhood], *Kampung Makassar* (Makassarese neighborhood), *Kampung Bali* (Balinese neighborhood) and so on.

Even within the more educated part of the community, the segregation pattern can be easily found. The emergence of *Kafling Muslim* --settlements allocated only for Muslims-- and the existence of ethnically-based student organizations in university campuses are obvious examples. However, all those developments are basically natural, because they hold their own social functions. My personal experience at the IPB Bogor (Bogor Agricultural University)²⁴ shows that students coming from all over Indonesia tend to stay clustered with their friends or seniors from the same provinces or the same ethnic groups.²⁵ Moreover, they are generally allied according to ethnic group²⁶ or religious²⁷ based university student organizations.

However, some pluralistic-based associations also exist.²⁸ In this environment, it is frequently found that the self-policing mechanism has been already in place. For example, a clash between a *Batak* student from North Sumatra and a *Bugis* student from South Sulawesi would not be necessarily translated into student brawls among the two ethnically-based student groups. This is mainly due to the precautionary actions being taken by relevant student organizations.

Secondly, the illustration of the self-policing mechanism as written by Fearon and Laitin shows that often communal violence originates from a clash at individual domain level. We can easily find this in Indonesia. At proximate level, most cases of major communal violence started from clashes among individuals. The wave of communal violence in Ambon, Poso, Sambas and Sampit, obviously demonstrated this tendency.²⁹

In the Indonesian context, self-policing might be carried out by religious, traditional and customary leaders or community leaders in general. This requires every unit of the community to be able to correct their members who create trouble. Every community has to be fair, as stated in the wise Malay aphorism, "*tiba di perut, perut tidak dikempiskan; tiba di mata, mata tidak dipicingkan*". One should recognize that almost every community has individuals who are trouble makers. Within Madurese

community in Sampit, for example, there are some highly respected people like *Kyai* (Muslim preacher/teacher); many are small and medium businessmen; some are even members of local parliament. However, there are also *preman(s)* who are often become criminals. The failure of the Madurese leadership in Sampit to correct the latter has created a negative stereotype of the Madurese ethnic group as a whole in the eyes of native inhabitants. All Madurese in Sampit have suffered from the impact of the negative stereotype resulting from the behavior of a few members of their community.³⁰

Self-policing in Indonesia might be closely related to effective leadership within a community that is supposed to be associated with the role of elites. Oberg [1998] also stresses the importance of leadership factor in the mechanism. It is increasingly hard to find a respectable leader, as a role model to be followed by the ordinary people, from the small neighborhood level up to the national level. It is evident in so many bad attitudes shown by political elites, government bureaucracy, religious leaders and other components of civil society. Even though it is likely that there are still many good leaders left, they tend to be scarce, unpopular, and sometimes regarded as 'strangers'.

It is likely that the self-policing mechanism can work synergistically with elite integration, the third hypothesis that will be discussed in the next section, since the individuals who will take important roles in self-policing would be elites.

Elite Integration

The third mechanism in preventing communal violence is elite integration. It is based more on my casual observations within the Indonesian social political context, where fragmentation among elites would usually be perceived by their followers, and it can be converted into violence among members of different communities. Conflict or friction at the elite domain level should be properly settled among the elites themselves and should not be transmitted into frictions among community members. However, to some extent elites often play a role in provoking violence at a mass level instead of becoming mediators by avoiding such hostilities and locating friction just among elites.

The mechanism of elite integration is usually relevant for a highly segregated society. Elite integration is expected to bridge the gap between two or more community groups, when mass level integration is relatively difficult to develop. Elite integration is also expected to play a significant role in building a common understanding and mutual trust among conflicting parties. As the elites address the issues among members of communities, a kind of horizontal bridge can be built among them, and at the same time information flows and communication processes can be developed vertically between the elites and their followers or masses. Such mechanisms would contribute considerably to the prevention of inter-community violence.

Let us clearly define integrated elites and fragmented elites. Elites are integrated under the following circumstances: (a) where a value consensus exists within the elites and is supported by cooperation and mutual trust

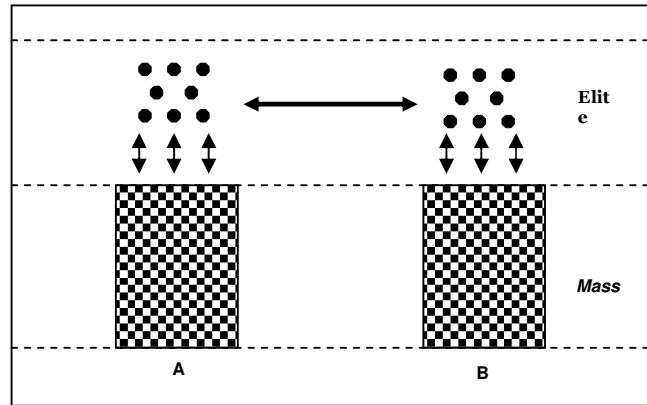
among different groups, and (b) where there is a network of inclusive and extensive personal interactions among different groups within the community. If these two elements can not be found, then it is said that the elites are fragmented [Higley and Moore 1981]. However, a question arises about how the two concepts are connected. Is the former a result of the latter? Or do both elements exist independently? Putman noted that everyday civic engagement produces consensus on norms and networks, which would lead to a form of mutual trust. The way mutual trust and value consensus is formed among the elites from various levels who have different interests needs further elaboration.

Elite integration might also be understood by the following two interpretations: elite coordination and consociational (power-sharing) polity.³¹ To some extent, elite coordination is very much related to, and an essential component of, self policing mechanism. Consociational polity might be appropriately interpreted as consensus, power sharing or compromise among elites of contesting communal groups. This is closely related to the first point on value consensus from Higley and Moore [1981]. Consociational does not only cover value consensus but also practical consensus (formally, as well as informally). It is likely that socio-political development in Maluku for the past few years indicates an increasing trend of this consociational polity.³²

The provinces of West Kalimantan and North Sulawesi also indicate this power-sharing polity. A pair of Malay and Dayak leaders is a general combination for newly elected leadership--head and deputy--of local government units (province and district/municipality) in West Kalimantan.³³ In the predominantly Christian province of North Sulawesi, given the existence of a substantial proportion of Muslims inhabitants, several top positions of provincial government units are deliberately allocated to Muslims bureaucrats. This is contended to be an important local feature as a reason for the relatively peaceful Muslims-Christians relationship in the area.³⁴

Diagrammatically, Figure 2 illustrates (a) the existence of elite integration in the form of a horizontal bridge that connects two groups of elite and (b) the presence of vertical links between elites and their respective masses. Elite integration is represented by the horizontal line between elite in community A and B, while the vertical lines between elites and their masses are more appropriate in referring to the mechanism of self-policing. The horizontal elite integration cannot possibly operate on its own. It must be supported by an extensive pattern of communication and interaction between elites and their followers. Therefore, this kind of interaction requires elites who have the capacity to communicate with the masses from a grass roots level. Elite here is defined as those at national and local level, for instance the elite of provincial level organizations, small institutions at the lower level, and down to residential areas (neighbourhood).

FIGURE 2
ELITE INTEGRATION



How can we make a reflective observation on how the mechanism of elite integration will work in Indonesia? Elite integration can be expected to work well here due to the dominance of the following two trends within Indonesian society. They are (a) the highly segregated nature of Indonesian community, and (b) the dominance of paternalistic culture in the society.

The following empirical evidence can be used as a starting point for further discussions.

(1) The Malino I Peace Agreement that is aimed to resolve the Poso inter-religious conflict and the Malino II Peace Accord and the *Baku Bae* initiative to settle conflicts in Ambon and Maluku can be seen as examples of how a mechanism of elite integration is used to arbitrate violent communal conflict.³⁵ These efforts have created room to build a value consensus and provide an opportunity for personal interactions among elites of conflicting parties.

(2) Another notable example of elite integration is the establishment of *Forum Komunikasi Persaudaraan Masyarakat Kalimantan Timur* (FKPMKT – The Communication Forum for East Kalimantan Community Brotherhood). The forum was formed in early 1998 by several ethnic associations in the province in response to an increase in national political tension before the fall of Suharto. The associations met regularly and the meetings were chaired by representatives of the four largest ethnic groups in the province namely, Bugis, Banjar, Jawa and Dayak. Every ethnic group had equal opportunity to chair the forum every three months. The presence of such a forum is considered by many observers as one of the important factors in preventing ethnic violence in the region. It has been a surprise that such violence did not erupt in East Kalimantan particularly considering the fact that Dayak–Madurese ethnic violence indeed took place in Central Kalimantan in early 2001, and at that time observers felt that similar violence would spread to this resource-rich province [See van Klinken 2002].³⁶

(3) While after the Dayak–Madurese ethnic conflict erupted in Sampit, Mering Ngo, an anthropologist from the Dayak ethnic group, proposed the establishment of an interethnic consortium accommodating participants from various ethnic groups to manage the roots of ethnic conflicts [Ngo 2001]. This proposal can basically be categorized as a practical form of what is meant by the concept of elite integration. Other notable examples are various kinds of interfaith dialogue, a forum to develop value consensus and civic links among elites from different religions.

Contrary to the above examples, fragmentation between the elites of NU–*Nahdatul Ulama* and *Muhammadiyah* during the last days of Abdurrahman Wahid presidency in June 2001 caused violent conflict at the grass roots level between the two largest Islamic mass-based organizations. Responding to endless attempts to topple Abdurrahman Wahid from his presidency, a large number of NU constituents in East Java became angry. They cut down trees along main roads and attacked properties belonging to *Muhammadiyah* in some parts of this provinces.

Furthermore, elite integration must be understood in term of substantive engagement, instead of merely a physical engagement. Sometimes it seems that social interactions among elites through intimate informal gatherings are not necessarily mirrored at the grass root level. Even while the elites gathered ‘peacefully’, the grass roots continued to fight.

Several critical questions have emerged. Under what circumstances do elites integrate and under what circumstances are they fractionalized? How does the nature of the elite accelerate the process of building consensus? Carefully designed research is needed to study the extent to which elite integration mechanism plays a significant role in containing communal violence.

It is worth noting that Varshney’s study in India concludes that elite integration itself is less powerful in preventing communal violence, unless it is followed by integration at mass level. In other words, mass level integration tends to become a more effective instrument to restore peace rather than elite integration. Varshney came to the conclusion after comparing inter-ethnic relations in Lucknow and Hyderabad of India. In peaceful Lucknow, integration is maintained effectively among elites and masses from both Hindu–Muslim communities. Meanwhile in Hyderabad, one of eight cities where intense Hindu-Muslim conflict has been taking place over the last century, integration can be seen only among the elites.

However, in contrast to the above case, the area of Poso in Central Sulawesi shows that the lower type of integration (at mass level) was not strong enough to maintain peace when elites are fractionalized and when communities have to cope with triggering factors from outside. Therefore, when the violence erupted, even though Muslims and Christians came from the same village, they fought each other. Similar circumstances can be found in Ambon with the collapse of the Maluku’s *pela–gandong* relationship, the traditional inter-religious norm of peace accord. Even though its social setting of the community is relatively segregated, however, for a very long period Poso used to enjoy inter-communal engagement, particularly in the form of daily and informal engagement. Each group admitted that

historically the relationship between Muslims and Christians in Poso used to be fairly harmonious. For instance, Muslim families felt free to invite their fellow Christians to their family party or social event and vice-versa. They even helped each other in building or renovating mosques and churches.³⁷

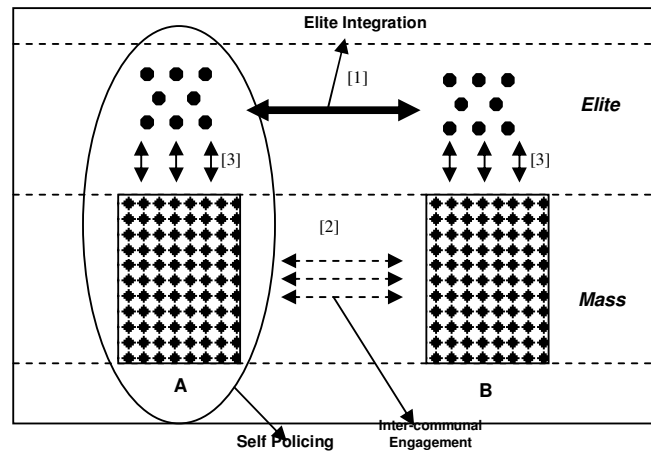
However, in the absence of elite integration, mass level integration could not function to avoid violence.

COMBINING THE THREE MECHANISMS: HYPOTHESIS ON HYPOTHESES

After discussing the possibility of whether the above three hypotheses can work in the context of Indonesian civil society, I would like to propose a new hypothesis combining the three. In the previous section, I have reflectively discussed the possibility of those three mechanisms functioning in Indonesia, but they are separately examined one by one. In this new proposed hypothesis, I want to combine the three. This is expected to make them more operational and more appropriate for the social setting in Indonesia.

This new hypothesis is built after considering the nature of the Indonesian civil society in the context of communal conflict, namely (a) the highly segregated setting of the society, (b) the paternalistic structure of the society, and (c) the fact that communal violence is usually triggered by a clash at the individual level. Those three have been briefly discussed in the previous section.

FIGURE 3
HYPOTHESIS ON HYPOTHESES



Let us use the illustration in Figure 3 –basically modified from Figure 2-- to explain the new hypothesis. To some extent, it shows that the inter-

communal civic engagement, self-policing and elite integration can be combined. This figure also implicitly presents the segregated and paternalistic pattern of the Indonesian society. The two kinds of horizontal lines, line (1) and line (2), represent what Varshney calls ‘inter-communal civic engagement’. However, given the highly segregated setting of the Indonesian society, it has to be broken down into, *first*, engagement at elite level, represented by line (1) and *second*, engagement at mass level, illustrated by line (2). The engagement at elite level would be more appropriately termed as *elite integration*, while that at mass level can still be referred to *inter-communal engagement*. Elite integration is likely to play a very critical role in preventing communal violence, but it has to be supported by the internal mechanism within each community group. The intra-community mechanism is the *self-policing* mechanism, as theoretically argued by Fearon and Laitin. Line (3) that vertically connects the elites and their masses would be an important element of this mechanism where effective and strong leadership play critical roles.

Therefore, the three mechanisms have to work together in a more integrated way, not separately, in order to create a society immune to being infected, to borrow a medical term, by the virus of communal violence.

NOTES

1. This argument is strongly argued by Varshney [2002]. He also asserts that the existing traditions of inquiry into ethnic conflict –essentialism, instrumentalism, constructivism, and institutionalism— fail to explain the differences between the violent and peaceful areas.
2. For studies on conflict in Ambon and Maluku, ICG [2000, 2002] Trijono [2001], and Ecip [2002b]; for the case of Poso, see Aragon [2001], HRW [2002], Ecip [2002a]; for Dayak–Madurese conflict in Sampit, see HRW [2002], van Klinken [2002]; for the case of Sambas, see HRW [1997]. LIPI also did several conflict studies, for example Sihbudi and Nurhasim [2001] for the riot in Kupang, Mataram and Sambas; Firdausy *et. al.* [1998] for the riot in Situbondo, Pekalongan and Tasikmalaya; and Sihbudi *et. al.* [2000] for the conflict in Maluku.
3. See Tadjoeeddin [2002]. The rest of the paper uses the phrases of *communal violence* and *ethnic violence* inter-changeably however both phrases refer to the same meaning.
4. For practical purposes in Indonesia, however, this broader meaning of ethnic conflict might be less useful. In public speaking, the term of ethnic violence is clearly used to term Dayak-Madurese and Malay-Madurese hostilities in Kalimantan, while Muslims-Christians troubles in Maluku and Poso are regarded as religious violence.
5. This understanding put conflict more on its positive perspectives. Without ignoring the possible destructive dimensions of conflict, Coser [1956] examines the positives values of conflict for all societies, in which social conflict may contribute to the maintenance, adjustment or adaptation of social relationships and social structures.
6. Conflict will tend to be more open in a democracy, compared to an authoritarian system which tends to stifle conflict. The probability of violent conflict is higher in a

country that is experiencing transition to democracy compared to a mature democracy or to a strong authoritarian polity [Hegre, *et. al.*, 2001].

7. The channels might take form in parliamentary debates, elite negotiation, through bureaucratic corridors, or in form of non violent demonstrations. For further discussion on conflict institutionalization in Indonesia, see Tadjoeeddin [2003].

8. In Indonesia, the rise of ethnically and religiously affiliated civil society organizations in several areas where communal violence took place had generally, if not all, contributed to the increase of violence. Every ethnic or religious group involved in violence typically form their own militia groups, which are part of civil society. For example see Sholeh [2003] on Islamic forces in Maluku.

9. Azca [2003] shows the involvement and partisan role played by the security forces in Muslim-Christian violence in Ambon. Davidson and Kammen [2002] conclude that the state incited the Dayak against the rural Chinese in order to quash the PKI-Indonesian Communist Party guerrilla movement in West Kalimantan in late 1960s. Violence during New Order Indonesia is frequently associated with state sponsored violence, for example see Anderson [2001].

10. For other definition and discussion on *civil society* see Hadenius and Ugglå [1996].

11. See Hadenius and Ugglå [1996] for a discussion on several variants of state-civil society relations, starting from the ideal condition where civil society is facing a benevolent state, on the one hand, up to the worst situation on the other hand where civil society has to confront an authoriter and hostile state.

12. The more rigid definition of *civil society* adds the two following criteria, (1) it has to be plural or free from the '*ascriptive*' attributes and (2) it has to be modern (organization). If these two additional conditions are applied to Indonesian civil society, therefore, Muhammadiyah and NU, the two largest grass root Muslim organizations, and other religion and ethnic based political parties and organizations, would not be categorized as civil society, because they are related to the '*ascriptive*' dimensions. Similarly the cases of traditional neighbourhood '*arisan*' and '*gotong royong*' activities could not be called civil society.

13. See Feulner [2002] for a discussion on the development of civil society in Indonesia after *reformasi*. However, his analysis only covers the period up to the Abdurrahman Wahid's presidency, who was known to favor civil society development, while many observers claim that the Megawati government tends to narrow the space for the role of civil society. See Harney and Olivia [2003] for a more recent description of the work of a number of civil society organizations in the country.

14. Putnam defines social capital as "norms of reciprocity and networks of civic engagement which are created by participation in civil organizations". In the other part he writes, "Social capital refers to features of social organization, such as trust, norms, and networks that can improve the efficiency of society by facilitating coordinated actions". Moreover, Putnam presents the following two main arguments, (a) social capital is a potential factor for good governance and economic development and (b) social capital is not an instant thing but is a result of long historical legacy [Putnam, 1993].

15. Conflict should be transformed and it can be a positive energy for social change, therefore it has to be institutionalized. Conflict should not be stifled or just put under

the carpets. See Tadjoeeddin [2003] for a discussion on conflict transformation in Indonesia. The notion of *conflict transformation* is the latest development in *peace building* discourse, it is more advance compare with the concepts of *conflict management* and *conflict resolution*, see Lederach [1995, 1997] and Miall [2001].

16. Varshney's emphasize on the importance of inter-communal engagement is basically in line with the concept of weak ties a la Fukuyama and bridging social capital from Putnam. Fukuyama [2001] says that there are certain actors within a certain social capital link that are also acceptable in other links, and they act as the bridge between one civil society and another. Putnam [2000] differentiates between bonding social capital that is more on binding its member, and bridging social capital that connects one civil society and another. However, Varshney clearly differentiates between intra and inter-communal engagement in its relation to ethnic conflict.

17. A number of 96% deaths of communal violence in India occurred in urban areas, and only 4% in rural areas where around two-third Indian population still live [Varshney, 2002].

18. Eight cities account for close to a half of total deaths in communal violence [Varshney, 2002].

19. Those three pairs of cities are Aligarh (violent) compared with Calicut (peaceful), Hyderabad compared with Lucknow, and Ahmedabad compared with Surat [Varshney, 2002].

20. According to the recently developed UNSFIR database on non-separatist collective violence in Indonesia, fifteen districts (*kabupaten and kota*), in which a mere 6.5 per cent of the country's population lived in 2000, account for as much as 85.5 per cent of all deaths in group violence. While ethno-communal violence accounts for around 90% of all deaths in non-separatist violence in Indonesia during 1990-2003 [Varshney, Panggabean and Tadjoeeddin , 2004]. Regional concentration of communal violence is not unique to India and Indonesia. Similar trends can be found in other countries, such as Northern Ireland and the US. The Catholic-Protestant troubles in Northern Ireland, between 1960s and mid 1980s, were concentrated in the areas of Belfast and Londonderry. Black and White riots in the US in 1960s were concentrated in Newark, Detroit and Los Angeles [Poole 1990] and Lieberman and Silverman [1965] as quoted in Varshney [2002].

21. Around 60% of deaths in communal violence took place in rural areas of Indonesia [Varshney, Panggabean and Tadjoeeddin, 2004].

22. This can be observed from the destroyed villages in Ambon and its surrounding areas due to communal violence. The minority Muslim neighbourhood in the majority Christian village would be ruined, and vice-versa.

23. However, Oberg [1998] provide critics to this Fearon and Laitin's argument on self policing. He contends that the model is suffered from a lack of realism, which was seemed to stem from a set of fairly heroic assumptions and mechanisms, and a lack of any rational explanations. Furthermore he suggests including the leadership factor in the model.

24. IPB might be the most heterogeneous university campus in Indonesia. It is due to their relatively unique recruitment system that allows them to have good senior high school graduates from all over the country.

25. This might not be the case for other university campuses in Indonesia.

26. Examples are *Ikatan Mahasiswa Tapanuli Selatan* (Tapanuli Selatan Student Association), *Keluarga Mahasiswa Sulawesi Selatan* (South Sulawesi Student Family), *Ikatan Pelajar Mahasiswa Minang* (Minangkabau Student Association), etc. Generally these organizations are formal in nature with their internal standard operating procedure and have periodically elected a committee.

27. For examples: *Himpunan Mahasiswa Islam* (HMI - Muslim Student Association) and *Persekutuan Mahasiswa Kristen* (PMK - Christian Student Associations).

28. Like professional associations and environmental groups, etc.

29. The riot in Ambon in January 1999 was triggered by a clash between a public transport driver and a youth from different religions. The Poso riot phase I in December 1998 was sparked by a clash between two drunken youths. The Sampit Dayak–Madurese violence in February 2001 was started from a student fight, the same violence in Sambas was triggered by a criminal act at a traditional *dangdut* music show.

30. The importance for Madurese leaders to recognize this condition was emphasized by Hamid Syarif, one of Madurese prominent figures, who is now the vice chancellor of the University of Sunan Giri and Deputy Vice Chancellor of the Islamic University of IAIN Sunan Ampel. He wrote that if there are members of Madurese community in Sampit where they are clearly guilty, Madurese leaders need to be brave to ask for an apology from Dayak leaders [Syarif, 2001].

31. *Consociationalism* is a famous idea in political science. Arend Lijphart's long standing academic work is strongly associated with this, see Lijphart [1999]. He argues that democracy in plural society that is highly divided along religious or ethnic lines requires elite compromise in order to be successful and to reduce ethnic conflict. Elite compromise can best be guaranteed by a political system that works on inter-group consensus, not inter-group competition. According to Lijphart [1996], India, a multiethnic country, is a confirming case for consociational democracy.

32. For example, the issue of balancing power of Muslims and Christians in Ambon (Maluku in general) has been a popular public concern. A combination of a Muslim and a Christian as the head and the deputy (or vice-versa) that lead a particular public institution has been a new (informal) norm there.

33. As reflected in local newspapers and through author's conversations with several NGO activists in Pontianak (September 2003).

34. Author's conversation with Lucky Sondakh (Jakarta, June 2002), at that time he was the head of North Sulawesi Provincial Development Planning Board (Bappeda), currently professor of economics and rector of Sam Ratulangi University, Manado, North Sulawesi.

35. See Ecip [2002a] for a detailed account on Malino I Peace Agreement for Poso, Ecip [2002b] for a summary of Malino II Peace Accord for Ambon, and Malik [2003] for the Baku Bae initiative in Maluku. The above literatures complement the author's field observations from a number of short visits to Palu, Poso and Ambon during July–September 2003.

36. Even though a new forum, *Forum Komunikasi Antar Etnis* [FORKAS – Inter-ethnic Communication Forum], was established in East Kalimantan soon after the Sampit ethnic violence, but the existence of the old one, FKPMKT, is more influential.

37. Author's interview with Muslims and Christians in Poso, August 2003.

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