

CATHOLIC CHURCH AND PEACE BUILDING IN TIMOR-LESTE

1975 – 1999

THESIS

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Master of Arts in Peace Studies**



By

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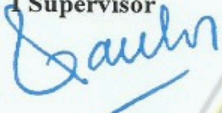
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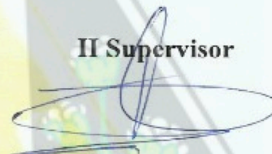
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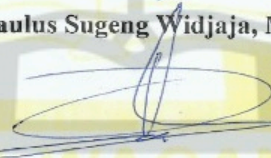


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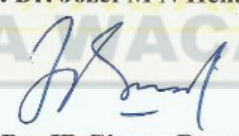
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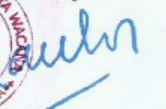


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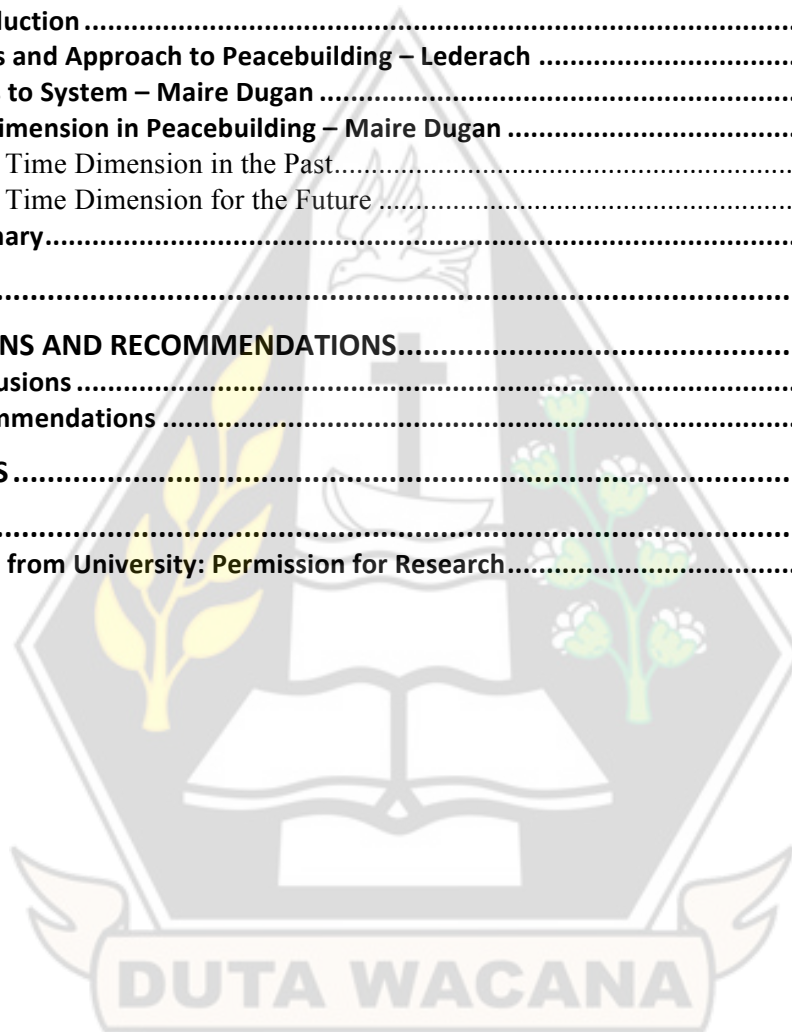
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ABSTRACT

Timor-Leste is an island nation that is geographically part of the Asia Pacific. This nation is a boundary between Indonesia and Australia. In 1515, the Portuguese came to colonize this island and introduced of the Catholic Religion to the kings of Timor and influenced them to become Christian Catholics. On November 28, 1975, FRETILIN proclaimed Unilateral Independence, however, on the 7th of December 1975, Indonesian military invaded Timor-Leste. Indonesia annexed Timor-Leste as Timor-Timur Province and became the 27th province of Indonesia for 24 years. Freedom and respect for human dignity is the key for the Timorese people to fight against occupation and/or invasion. Collaborative relations between the Catholic Church and the state in Timor-Leste have been continuous, reinforcing each other, both in colonial and postcolonial times. Since so many violations and crimes were conducted from the Indonesian militaries, the Catholic Church could not be silent watching these criminalities and abuses. During this time, the Catholic Church played an essential function in society and became one of the most prominent advocates for human rights.

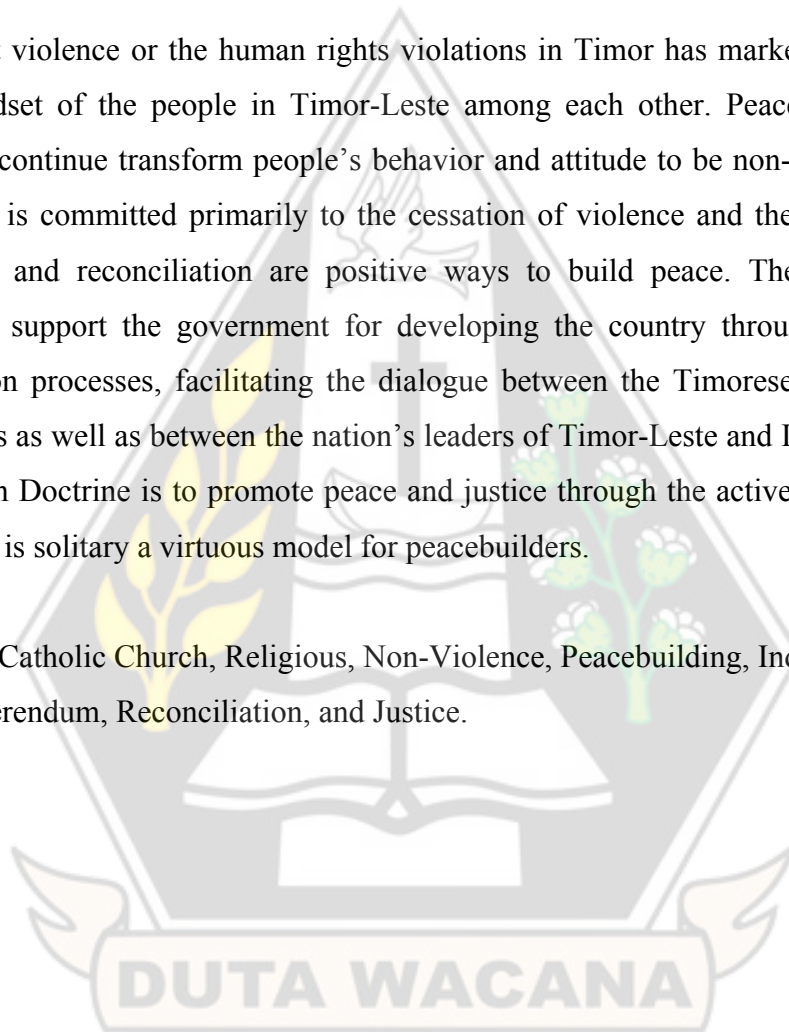
In this thesis, the researcher focuses on the Catholic Church's roles and contributions to Timor-Leste during the Indonesian occupation. The author would like to focus on this subject because there are very few writing documents about the Catholic Church's support and involvement in the liberation struggle, and also there are uncommon writing documents or undocumented about the religious victims during the internal conflict in Timor-Leste. This research also aims to find out the religious people's contributions and involvements in National Peace Plan Processes before the referendum and also distinguish the crucial activities that were conducted from the church organizations to promote peace in Timor-Leste during the occupation era. Besides the active non-violence activities, the religious organizations also contributed to humanitarian support such as food, medicines, and other basic needs when the Indonesian militaries bombed all the cities, as well as continued in the education sectors to help the Timorese people to access the education.

This research is historical research that uses a qualitative method to gather the data through the Oral History and Life History of the Key Stakeholders, Interviews, Documentary Analysis, and Participant Observation. The findings of this research show how the Catholic Church contributes to and supports for Timorese people during the struggle for independence. As a consequence of the Church's roles and contributions, some of them should be killed during the occupations; the

Churches and Chapels should be burnt, and destroyed all the necessary history documents. The Bishops in Timor-Leste at those periods were threatening and sent out from Timor-Leste. The Church was not merely focusing on the pastoral activities and humanitarian support but also became the messenger and influencer to change the political strategy from the fighting to dialogue and transforming the political structure from the Marxism-Leninism to the National Unity between the Timor-Leste people. The Church had an important role in the education sector and also the Church was a safe place for the resistance and youth in Timor-Leste.

The conflict violence or the human rights violations in Timor has marked negative perspective on the mindset of the people in Timor-Leste among each other. Peacebuilding activities are essential to continue transform people's behavior and attitude to be non-violence. The religious peacemaker is committed primarily to the cessation of violence and the resolution of conflict. Forgiveness and reconciliation are positive ways to build peace. The religious leaders are enduring to support the government for developing the country through involvement in the reconciliation processes, facilitating the dialogue between the Timorese leaders and Timorese communities as well as between the nation's leaders of Timor-Leste and Indonesia. According to the Christian Doctrine is to promote peace and justice through the active non-violence ways, as Jesus Christ is solitary a virtuous model for peacebuilders.

Keywords: Catholic Church, Religious, Non-Violence, Peacebuilding, Independence, Human Rights, Referendum, Reconciliation, and Justice.



ABSTRAK

Timor-Leste adalah negara kepulauan yang secara geografis merupakan bagian dari Asia Pasifik. Perbatasan dari negara ini adalah antara Indonesia dan Australia. Pada 1515, Portugis menjajahi pulau ini dan memperkenalkan agama Katolik kepada raja-raja Timor dan memengaruhi mereka untuk menjadi umat Kristen Katolik. Pada tanggal 28 November 1975, FRETILIN menyatakan Kemerdekaan Unilateral, tetapi pada tanggal 7 Desember 1975, militer Indonesia menginvasi Timor-Leste. Indonesia menempati Timor-Leste sebagai provinsi Timor-Timur dan menjadi provinsi ke-27 Indonesia selama 24 tahun. Kebebasan dan rasa hormat terhadap martabat manusia adalah kunci bagi orang-orang Timor-Leste untuk berjuang melawan pendudukan dan/atau invasi. Hubungan kolaboratif antara Gereja Katolik dan Negara di Timor-Leste terus menerus, saling memperkuat, baik di zaman kolonial maupun postkolonial. Karena begitu banyak pelanggaran dan kejahatan yang dilakukan oleh militer Indonesia, Gereja Katolik tidak bisa diam menyaksikan kriminalitas dan pelanggaran ini. Selama masa ini, Gereja Katolik memainkan fungsi penting dalam masyarakat dan menjadi salah satu pendukung yang paling menonjol untuk hak asasi manusia.

Dalam tesis ini, peneliti berfokus pada peran dan kontribusi Gereja Katolik untuk Timor-Leste selama pendudukan Indonesia. Penulis ingin fokus pada hal ini karena ada sangat sedikit dokumen penulisan tentang dukungan dan keterlibatan Gereja Katolik dalam perjuangan pembebasan, dan juga ada dokumen penulisan yang tidak biasa atau tidak berdokumen tentang korban agama selama konflik internal di Timor-Leste. Penelitian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengetahui kontribusi dan keterlibatan Gereja Katolik dalam proses rencana perdamaian nasional sebelum referendum dan juga membedakan kegiatan penting yang dilakukan dari organisasi gereja untuk mempromosikan perdamaian di Timor-Leste selama era invasi. Selain kegiatan aktif non-kekerasan, organisasi keagamaan juga berkontribusi pada dukungan kemanusiaan seperti makanan, obat-obatan, dan kebutuhan dasar lainnya ketika militer Indonesia membombardir semua kota, serta dilanjutkan di sektor pendidikan untuk membantu orang-orang Timor-Leste untuk mengakses pendidikan.

Penelitian ini adalah penelitian historis yang menggunakan metode kualitatif untuk mengumpulkan data melalui Sejarah Lisan dan Sejarah Kehidupan para Pemangku Kepentingan Utama, Wawancara, Analisis Dokumenter, dan Observasi Partisipan. Temuan penelitian ini menunjukkan bagaimana Gereja Katolik berkontribusi dan dukungan untuk orang-orang Timor-

Leste selama perjuangan untuk kemerdekaan. Sebagai konsekuensi dari peran dan kontribusi Gereja, beberapa dari mereka harus dibunuh selama pekerjaan; Gereja dan kapel harus dibakar, dan menghancurkan semua dokumen sejarah yang diperlukan. Para uskup di Timor-Leste pada periode-periode itu diancam dan dikirim keluar dari Timor-Leste. Gereja tidak hanya berfokus pada kegiatan pastoral dan dukungan kemanusiaan tetapi juga menjadi utusan dan influencer untuk mengubah strategi politik dari pertempuran menjadi dialog dan mengubah struktur politik dari Marxisme-Leninisme menjadi persatuan nasional antara orang-orang Timor-Leste. Gereja memiliki peran penting di sektor pendidikan dan juga gereja adalah tempat yang aman untuk para pejuang dan pemuda di Timor-Leste.

Kekerasan konflik atau pelanggaran hak asasi manusia di Timor-Leste telah menandai perspektif negatif tentang pola pikir orang-orang di Timor-Leste di antara satu sama lain. Kegiatan pembangunan perdamaian sangat penting untuk terus mengubah perilaku dan sikap orang menjadi tanpa kekerasan. Peacemaker agama berkomitmen terutama untuk penghentian kekerasan dan penyelesaian konflik. Pengampunan dan rekonsiliasi adalah cara positif untuk membangun kedamaian. Para pemimpin agama bertahan untuk mendukung pemerintah untuk mengembangkan negara melalui keterlibatan dalam proses rekonsiliasi, memfasilitasi dialog antara para pemimpin Timor-Leste dan komunitas Timor-Leste serta antara para pemimpin negara Timor-Leste dan Indonesia. Menurut Doktrin Kristen adalah untuk mempromosikan perdamaian dan keadilan melalui cara-cara yang aktif tanpa kekerasan, karena Yesus Kristus adalah model unik yang berbudi luhur bagi para pembangun perdamaian.

Kata Kunci: Gereja Katolik, agamawi, tanpa kekerasan, pembangunan perdamaian, kemerdekaan, hak asasi manusia, referendum, rekonsiliasi, dan keadilan.

CHAPTER I

CONTEXT

1. Introduction

Indonesia invaded Timor-Leste nine days after Timor-Leste declared independence from Portugal. The main reason that spread to the public at that time because based on the Indonesian government, Timor-Leste was said to be one of the emerging communist countries in Asia. Therefore, Indonesia occupied Timor-Leste with the backup from the United States of America (USA). Portugal has colonized Timor-Leste and firstly used the Catholic Religion to influence the kingdoms, the kings in Timor-Leste were baptized and oriented every Timorese to be Christian Catholic. It can be said that, before the Indonesian Army invaded Timor-Leste Island on the 7th of December 1974, the Timor-Leste populations are predominantly Catholic.

Geographically, Timor-Leste and Indonesia are very close and these two nations are divided with land borders. It means that it could take several minutes only to cross the borders between these nations. Mainly for the militaries, it is an extremely easy task while they are doing the duty. It is true that, when the Portuguese left Timor-Leste after Timor-Leste proclaim independence on the 28th of November 1975, identically Timor-Leste has limited war resources as well as the ability to involve in a war. Therefore, when the Indonesian armies occupied the Timor-Leste's territory, many populations lost their life, and became refugees, and also the national territory was full of ashes or dust.

After the Indonesian Armies destroyed and bombed Timor-Leste, the priests or the Catholic Organizations continued to do their mission such as charity, education, religious activities, and others. Besides this, because of the perspective that Timor-Leste is communist, the priests tried very hard to baptize all the Timorese including those resistance people to avoid the Islamization in Timor-Leste. Furthermore, the Catholic Organization was nonstop establishing the schools and seminaries for the Timorese to study mainly for those against the Indonesian regime at that time. The majority of the resistance people or the youth of resistance in Indonesian periods graduated from the Catholic schools and seminaries because at those schools or seminaries they could freely continue to do the resistance work against the

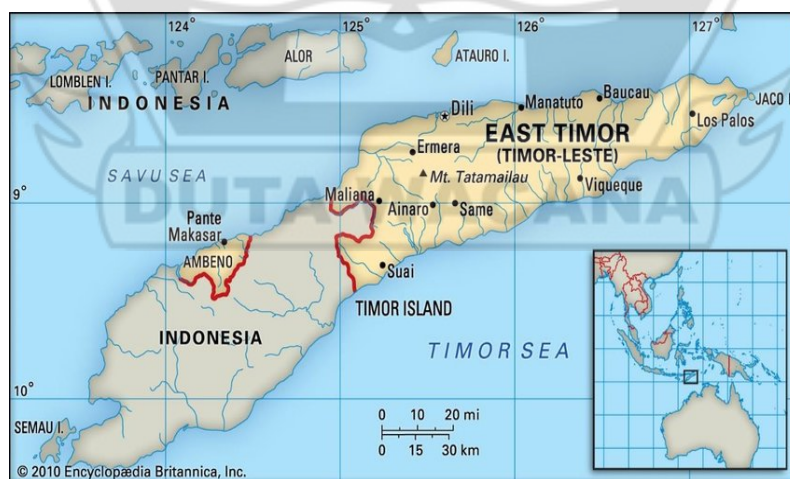
Indonesian occupation. The churches and the chapels became the resistance or the fighters' place to meet and discuss the resistance plan to struggle for independence and also the priests or the nuns' residences were the securest home for the youth and resistance people when hiding from the Indonesian militaries.

This chapter discussed the history of the Catholic Church or the organization's involvement in the peace building in Timor-Leste during the occupation periods as well as the background of this thesis including the building of peace through the local wisdom before the Catholic Religion's influences in Timor-Leste. Hence this chapter consisted of the introduction to the chapter, Pre-Historic of Timor-Leste, Peace Building in Local Wisdom, Church or Religious Involvement in the history of Timor-Leste, Catholic Church in Timor-Leste, Research Questions, Research Objectives, Research Limitations, Outline of the Thesis, and Summary of this chapter.

2. Pre-Historic

Timor-Leste is an island nation that is geographically part of the Asia Pacific. Located on the island of Timor, this country is a boundary between Indonesia and Australia. Timor-Leste consists of the eastern half of Timor Island, which is located in the Sumba archipelago, between the Indian and Pacific Oceans. Timor-Leste's

Map of Timor-Leste (Map 1)



national borders are a product of disputes and negotiations between local elites and Portuguese and Dutch colonial endeavors. In modern times Indonesia and Australia have also been involved in

disputes about Timor-Leste's frontiers. Timor-Leste has its own language, culture, and identity before the Portuguese colonization. Every clan in Timor-Leste has its languages and the total number of languages or currently called mother tongue is 36,

and there is one commonly spoken language "*Tetun*" to communicate with each other. This language could unify all of the Timorese people from diverse kinfolks. Previously in ancestor times, Timor-Leste has no religion however they have faith in the Creator or God. The ancestor worships God through the big stones and big trees, as well as grateful to God to have day and night. Besides this, the ancestor also adores the "*Uma Lulik*" or traditional house, inside this house; there are the materials from the relatives that had passed away and the legacies resources from the kingship. Twice every year, especially in harvest periods for maize and rice, the ancestor will offer it first to the souls through the *Uma Lulik* before the whole family could consume it. This is to show their thanks and respect to the souls, which had died. A too-small island with 3.1 square meters (as shown on the map¹) and with a very small population however with 36 languages, these people also have the natural resources that at that time they do not even know how to generate because they are purely traditional people, no schools, no hospitals, and no churches at that period. However, the *Liurai*, which means, "Kings", existed and governed their people including their land through a monarchy system.

In 1515, the Portuguese came to colonize this island because they found that this island has rich in sandalwoods, coffees, and minerals. Portuguese colonized Timor-Leste through introducing the Catholic Religion to the kings and influencing them to become Christian Catholics. Firstly, the missionaries that arrived on Timor Island baptized the kings and automatically the king will require his people to be baptized and become Christian. Most of the Timorese people were baptized and became Christian Catholic during the Portuguese colonization. The missionaries did their mission to expand the Catholic Religion and established schools across this Island. On the other hand, those politicians were occupied to export the Timorese natural resources and forced some ordinary women, which were not from the *Liurai* family to work for them as unpaid laborers. These were continuing during the 450 years Portuguese colonized Timor Island and during that period this Island was named Timor Portugal.

On the 25th of April 1974, there was the Carnation Revolution (*Revolução dos Cravos*) "in Portugal opened the way for decolonization in Timor-Leste and other

¹ Map of Timor-Leste, at www.theasian.asia, retrieved from 10 February 2022.

Portuguese colonies creating the necessary space for the establishment of political parties and the definition of ideas for post-colonial governance arrangements.”² Immediately after the revolution occurred, acting in response to the new reports about what had happened, the vice-chairman of the Indonesian Parliament, John Naro, the Development Unity Party an amalgamated Muslim Party (*Partai Persatuan Pembangunan*, the *PPP*), who was closely associated with Ali Murtopo, recommended that “the Indonesian Government takes preliminary steps and finds a special policy on Portuguese Timor so that finally that area will once again return to Indonesian control.”³ Since the *Revolução dos Cravos*, Ali Murtopo had tried to win the Portuguese Government’s support for the generals’ strong opposition to the independence option.⁴ “In September 1975, FRETILIN (*Frente Revolucionário do Timor-Leste Independente*) initially known as ASDT (*Associação Social Democrata Timorese*) emerged as the only political party defending immediate independence from Portuguese colonial rule.”⁵ Then, “the Timor Democratic Union (*UDT*) called for the continuation of links with Portugal, and other smaller political parties (*KOTA* and *TRABALHISTA*) campaigned for various transitional arrangements, whilst others promoted the strengthening of links between Timor-Leste and Indonesia, reunite East and West Timor (*APODETI*) or favored ties between Timor-Leste and Australia (*ADITLA*).”⁶ There were very limited resources when established FRETILIN because limited of the knowledge related to the global issues mainly in the political concerns as well as with small number of leaders in this political movement. At that time FRETILIN did not even ready for the Indonesian military invasion to their land, as they did not anticipate that this would happen.

On November 28, 1975, FRETILIN proclaimed the Unilateral Independence, however, one week after, exactly on the 7th of December 1975, Indonesian militaries entered Timor Island for invasion. In those periods, the Indonesian military was assaulted from the western part of Timor because it is land border between Indonesia and Timor. Timorese people never anticipated that this would happen after the independence proclamation. Since at that time, the FRETILIN people started to

² Hamish. McDonald, *Suharto’s Indonesia*, (Australia: Blackburn, Victoria, The Dominion Press and Fontana/Collins, 1981).

³ Ibid.

⁴ David. Hicks, *Rhetoric and the Decolonization and Recolonization of East Timor*, (New York: Routledge, 2015).

⁵ CAVR, *The Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation Timor-Leste*, (Dili: CAVR, 2005).

⁶ CAVR, *The Report of the Commission for Reception, Truth, and Reconciliation Timor-Leste*, (Dili: CAVR, 2005).

establish the three fronts such as army fronts called FALINTIL, diplomatic front, and clandestine front. The FALINTIL was evacuated to the mountain together with the population and the structure of FRETILIN, then the diplomatic front the Timorese leaders that worked from the external countries and also some FRETILIN members that went out to do the advocacy and negotiation with the other countries to get their support to free Timor-Leste from invasion. Then clandestine front those were leaving in the urban areas to support both fronts army and diplomat. Then the Catholic religious or church was also did the clandestine and diplomatic works to support the resistance or army front in the mountain. The clandestine front was working secretly in Timor-Leste during 24 years of the Indonesia occupation.

Timor Island is a nation with a diverse name. Timor-Leste was known as a Timor-Portuguese during the Portuguese colonization periods since that time Timor-Leste was under the Portuguese Government administration. Then throughout the Indonesian occupations named Timor-Timur or *Propinsi 27* of Indonesia. Furthermore, the name of Timor Lorosa'e is known in the Tetum Language, which literally translates into 'the rising sun'. Likewise, when the United Nations took over the administration between the after referendum from 1999 and before the May 20, 2002 they called it East-Timor. However, from day of the Restoration of the Independence on the 20th of May 2002, the official name of this nation is Timor-Leste. Timor-Leste has several languages and Tetum is the most widely used language as everyone could communicate to each other through using Tetum and also one of the national official languages apart from Portuguese, and then either English or Indonesian (Bahasa) are using in the working place and English mainly using in NGOs, Agencies, and Embassies. Timor-Leste has the long history of occupation or colonization from Portuguese, Japanese, and Indonesian. The longest periods were during the Portuguese colonization and only some people could access to education, then within the Portuguese's authority the Japanese military invaded to use Timor's land to fight with Australia during the World War II. Then during the 24 years of Indonesian occupation several human rights abuses happened and mostly women and young people were suffering under the military abuses. The Portuguese colonized the country from 1556 to 1975 and Timor-Leste proclaimed its independence on the 28th of November 1975, then with the withdrawal of the Portuguese, the Indonesian military came to occupy again the country on December

7, 1975, until Referendum on August 1999. Afterward, Timor-Leste celebrated the restoration of its independence in the 20th of May 2002, after two years under the UN administration.

3. Peace Building in Local Wisdom

Traditionally, before the Portuguese occupied Timor's Island and brought the Catholic Religion to Timor-Leste, their ancestor promoted the cultural mechanism to resolve violence-conflict in their era. Although at that time, the majority they have no access to formal education, and conventionally they just believed and adored their traditional house including worshipped the stones and trees, however, they had their own methods to resolve the conflict and/or violence when it happened. The cultural mechanisms of conflict resolution were not merely used for solving the internal conflict or violence between the Timorese but through this, they were able to understand that, the colonization is something that need to be fight/resist against as they colonized Timorese people without respect for the human dignity and occupied all the native or traditional land. Besides this, Portuguese colonized the Timor Island through Catholic Religion during 450 years of the occupation, there were some violations against the human beings, forced women to work as slaves, high tax payments from the native people to the occupiers, and big discrimination between the kingship family and common societies since only the kings relatives and generation or those people that having power and money at that time, that could able access to the education, therefore, created more illiterate people during these periods. Furthermore, as Wallace mentioned that; "the Portuguese government of Timor is a most miserable one. Nobody seemed to care the least about the improvement of the country, and at this time, after three hundred years of occupation, there has not been a mile of the road made beyond the town, and there is not a solitary European resident anywhere in the interior."⁷

Freedom and respect for human dignity is the key for the Timorese people to fight against the occupation and/or invasion. Through cultural influence, Timorese could fight for liberation. Over the faith and dependability of culture, Timor's people might be courageous to fight for their rights from the occupiers. Exactly, Timor-Leste had

⁷ A. Russel. Wallace, *The Malay Archipelago: The Land of the Orang-Utan and the Bird of Paradise, a Narrative of Travel, with Studies of Man and Nature*, (London: Macmilan and Co. 1883).

its own customary law before Portuguese came. In reality, Timorese people continued to use *Tara Bandu* during the colonization periods both in Portuguese and Indonesian era as an ordinary law to govern its people. Moreover, this customary law is maintained to be used/utilized after referendum as a mechanism to find the positive solutions for the community problems. Since, the 1999 there was not merely violent conflict between Timor and Indonesia but also between Timorese people such as pro and cons integration, as well as in internal crisis 2006, *Tara Bandu* was a good model in conflict transformation because through this traditional mechanism, it could bring the conflicting parties together to find the win-win solutions through the *Nahe Biti Boot* or mediation. *Tara Bandu* is commonly known as the Peace Pact or Community Accords of Timor-Leste's tribal or cultural groups. Several of community conflict in Timor has find the solutions through *Tara Bandu*, as in the end of this process, both conflicting parties would be signed the peace agreement together and then continue with the ritual ceremony to fortify their agreement.

Tara Bandu or Peace Accord is commonly used at community and national level in Timor-Leste. The majority of Timorese people believe/trust this traditional system to solve the conflict in society. *Tara Bandu* is a social norm and a technique for conflict resolution and reconciliation. There are several rituals ceremonies using the traditional resources or materials need to be done and this holds a strong value in Timor-Leste society. Mostly people are compliance to the law that are written in *Tara Bandu*, although during the ancestor's times the law was just verbally but the community did obedience to it. This customary law does have the power to govern the population to reduce and prevent violent conflict in each community. *Tara Bandu* is a local wisdom and practice and one of the Timorese traditions or *lisan* that valorized and preserved from generation to generation. All of the Timor-Leste communities are practicing *Tara Bandu* as a traditional method to reduce and prevent the violent conflict in society as well as through *Tara Bandu* the communities could respect nature to protect the environment including people's farms and gardens. There is a law in *Tara Bandu*, the community itself is discussed and decided together this law to protect and build peace in their communities. The majority of Timorese people respect and comply with this law because they decided together on those articles mentioned in this law based on the community context and needs. Actually, in each community and/or clan, there is a *Lia Na'in* or traditional leader (the person

who is responsible to communicate with each party to find the solution for a problem, and most of the time Lia Na'in is also a mediator within a family or community. The *Lia Na'in* should be the elderly person in a community or kinfolk, who knows very well the history and context of that community or clan). People believe that Lia Na'in is a person that has power from the nature and spirit to lead the ritual ceremonies, and also he is a neutral person in terms of the problem solving processes. The Catholic Religious also respect this custom as the majority of Timorese people are continuing to foster their culture and values to promote peacebuilding in Timor-Leste.

The traditional ritual "Tara Bandu" could bring change to their community. This ceremony could transform people's relationship to be constructive and as mentioned that in this process also has a mediation that called *Nahe Biti* to find the win-win solutions for both conflicting parties. *Tara Bandu* is a traditional justice system and based on the regulations that decided together to be part of the Tara Bandu Law. Actually through this traditional justice system both conflicting parties would have the similar portion since there is no victims and perpetrators but both are conflicting parties. Therefore, the majority of the community chose to solve their problem through Nahe Biti and using Tara Bandu Law rather than legal justice system. Not merely the community is preserving and valuing this tradition but also including the government of Timor-Leste and the Religious respected and this customary law because it is part of the Timorese people practice and believe. Therefore, the Timor-Leste Constitution also does recognize and value the Timorese traditions because Tara Bandu could make a change in the community as well as in the nation in Timor-Leste. Timorese people surely trust the customary law and it is promoted from generation to generation before the colonization periods. The customary law is genuinely worth for Timor's people to transform violence into peace, not simply for the natural resources. Moreover, resolving problems using the Tara Bandu will be sustained through building peace between conflicting parties. Tara Bandu or Peace Pact is local wisdom in Timor-Leste for conflict transformation. This approach does show positive results since the majority of Timorese people certainly believe in the customary law to find the solution for the community problems, including at the national or government level.

Tara Bandu is local wisdom for conflict transformation. This has been practiced from Timorese's ancestors until the current generation. "Tara Bandu involves the hanging of culturally significant items from a wooden shaft to place a ban on certain agricultural or social activities within a given area. In contemporary post-conflict Timor-Leste, Tara Bandu codes of behavior continue to be established in conflict-prone areas."⁸ Likewise, "communities defined Tara Bandu as a traditional and common practice with the means to reduce or prevent community conflict, reduce crime, protect the environment, manage natural resources and improve community welfare."⁹ Furthermore, through Tara Bandu, the community could respect each other and create good communication to live in harmony and peace. The Timor people believe the traditional ritual "Tara Bandu" could bring change to their community. *Tara Bandu* has been practiced before the Portuguese colonial era then the community including government continues promoting it. In conflict transformation, *Nahe Biti* is one of the problems solving mechanism to find the solution for a conflict and actually through *Nahe Biti* the solution would be sustainable because *Lia Na'in* is a mediator and he/she knows well about his/her community and the root of the problem. As underlined by Lederach:

"The general tendency is to think of peacebuilding as being initiated with outside resources, whether money or personnel. But the inverse is probably true. The grates resource for sustaining peace in the long term is always rooted in the local people and their culture. We can note several important characteristics about these cultural concepts and modalities. First, these natural helpers, or mediators, emerge from within the setting. Their knowledge of the context and their relationships with people are seen as a resource not an obstacle. Second, they are connected on a long-term basis and are not "in and out" of the setting. Third, they are chosen not for their expertise or profession, but for who they are in the network."¹⁰

The communities trust the traditional justice system or the traditional constituency that has been written in the community accords or in the *Tara Bandu* agreement. They are using the constituency to give the sanction to the conflicting parties, then it will be transformed the violence-conflict into harmony and peace because they are together created the constituency and they believe to the traditional mechanism could

⁸ Belun and The Asia Foundation, *Effective Use of Tara Bandu to Prevent Conflict in Timor-Leste*, (Timor-Leste: Dili, June 2013).

⁹ A. Gusmão, and M. A. Brown, *Community Policy and Peace Building in Timor-Leste*, Article of UNDP, (Timor-Leste: Dili, 2009).

¹⁰ J. P. Lederach, *Building Peace; Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*, (Washington: United States Institute of Peace Press 1550, M Street NW, DC 20005, 1997).

resolve their conflict through the Nahe Biti. In the cultural dimension of conflict transformation refers to changes that result from the pattern of conflict in life that most broadly cover the identity and culture affect the way a pattern of response to the conflict at descriptive and prescriptive levels. As Lederach confirmed:

“At the descriptive level, the transformation of trying to understand how conflicts affect and change the culture of a group of patterns and how patterns of accumulated distributable and it affect the way a particular culture to understand and respond to conflict. And at the prescriptive level, want to help us to understand the transformation of cultural patterns that have contributed to the conflict and then identify, promote and develop cultural resources and mechanisms for response and handle conflict constructively.”¹¹

Since the Tara Bandu is one of the traditional mechanisms for preventing violent conflict, the government of Timor-Leste also recognized the significance of this ordinary law and emphasized the importance of several procedures and regulations. Therefore, the Timor-Leste Constitution also acknowledges the value of the customary law as in Article 4 of RDTL Constitution declares: “The State shall recognize and value the norms and customs of Timor-Leste that not are contrary to the Constitution and any legislation dealing specifically with customary law.”¹² Historically, the head of villages were from a clan that community believe could reign the population, and after independence there is a law to choose the head of villages through direct election. Then above of the villages there is the administrative post and then municipality, which is from the political appointment because at this level usually called the local government. The local government also has the responsible in terms of implementing Tara Bandu in communities because they would be part of the witnesses of conflicting parties’ agreement or peace agreement from the both parties. The local government also will sign the peace agreement as a testimony. Therefore, Tara Bandu or customary law does not only implement at the village level within the communities and its head of village or village council but also get support from local government as well as from the local church. The traditional leaders do have the leadership in implementing the customary law effectively. As written in some research that: In practically Timorese is utilized Tara Bandu to prevent violence-conflict neither at the community level nor at the national

¹¹ J. P. Lederach, *Conflict Transformation*, Translated by Daniel K. Listijabudi, (Yogyakarta: Duta Wacana University Press, 55224, 2005).

¹² Government of Timor-Leste, *Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste*, (Timor-Leste: Dili, 2002).

level. For example; before the election, the community used traditional mechanisms to discuss how to implement the election without violence or peaceful election between community leaders, youth, and some political leaders in their areas. Reciprocally on the national level, on December 10, 2006, the previous President Xanana Gusmão, invited Lia Na'in from each district to make a peace settlement in Government Palace. This encounter has a positive impact on reducing the ethnic conflict that happened in 2006.¹³ Lederach also agreed that:

“Traditional approaches to diplomacy have tended to see reconciliation as peripheral, or worse, as irrelevant to the substance of building peace, when in fact reconciliation is the ingredient with the capacity to create the conditions for proactive, sustainable change. Consistent with the need to develop and support a peace constituency is the need to build on the cultural and contextual resources for peace and conflict resolution present within the setting.”¹⁴

The violent conflict could resolve over the Tara Bandu or customary law in Timor-Leste because through it could distinguish the characteristics and behavior to create the violent conflict as well as better in understanding the nature of conflict. Furthermore, it could identify and build a variety of sources and mechanisms in a certain culture to respond and manage conflict constructively.

4. Church or Religious Involvement

The collaborations between the Catholic Church and the State in Timor-Leste have been continuous, reinforcing each other, both in colonial and postcolonial times. In the 20th century, the Catholic Church played a central role in backing up the dictatorship in Portugal and its colonies. Christian denominations other than the Catholic Church were forbidden to work in Portuguese Timor during most of the colonial period. In the 1970s the Church criticized both colonial policies and the emergent independence movements in Portuguese Timor.¹⁵ Besides the political divergences, one of the other reasons Indonesia invaded Timor-Leste is because the Timorese were labeled as communists. This idea is contradicted with the Timor-Leste situation since Indonesia knew that, the Portuguese colonized Timor Island through religion. Before the Indonesian invasion, the majority of Timorese people

¹³ A. Gusmão and M. A. Brown, *Community Policy and Peace Building in Timor-Leste*.

¹⁴ J. P. Lederach, *Building Peace; Sustainable Reconciliation in Divided Societies*,

¹⁵ K. Silva, “*Christianity and Kultura: Visions and Pastoral Projects*”, (Brazil: Brazilian National Council for Scientific and Technological Development (CNPq), 2014).

are Catholic. Indonesia called Timor Island as Timor-Timur and parted of 27th province of Indonesia for 24 years. There were a lot of human rights violations that happened in Timor-Leste because of the Indonesian militaries, policies, and militias. The tortures were against the Timorese people including the young people, women, adults, as well as religious people. Since there were many violations and crimes conducted by the Indonesian militaries, the Catholic Church or the religious could not be silent in watching these criminalities and abuses. As Christian doctrine is love one and another, and create peace among God's creations.

The Catholic Church in Timor-Leste is an essential part of the Timor-Leste society. The religious people especially the Catholic priests started collaborating with the resistance groups or the Timor-Leste Armed Front in the mountain and forest through providing food, clothes, and medicines, as well as doing the clandestine works. These priests were not merely originally from Timor-Leste however, including those from the other countries. They contributed a lot to liberate this country from the invader. Besides the supported the Armed Front, and the Clandestine works, the priests also cooperated with the Diplomatic Front to send messages to the international people about the situations in Timor-Leste under Indonesia's occupation. This could wake up the international people to be cooperative in liberating the Timorese people and this island from human rights violations. The crimes that were conducted from Indonesia to the Timorese people were not really like human beings; there were no values of humanity at all, although the animals still care for each other. For this reason, mostly the religious people in Timor-Leste were against the Indonesian acts and principles or the Indonesian ideology for invading Timor-Leste. Correspondingly to this, on the 12th of October 1989, Pope John Paul II visited Timor-Leste.

At that time, there was also established the Catholic Church Organization called Diocesan Justice and Peace Commission (DJPC) to obtain and promote justice and human rights for people in Timor-Leste. The Bishop of Dili Diocese as well as an Apostolic Administration on behalf of the Pope at that time "Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, SDB" a Nobel Peace Prize in 1996 founded the DJPC. In addition to this, there was also the Catholic Relief Services (CRS) an American Caritas Organization that more focused on the humanitarian program for the Timorese

people especially after the Indonesian militaries bombed some areas on this island.

5. Catholic Church in Timor-Leste

The presence of the Portuguese priests in the FRETILIN areas, although initially was forced, it was an indication of a significant evolution of the Catholic Church in Timor-Leste, which would be of paramount importance in the future. This was a change in the relationship between the Church and the people, with the growth of a ministry increasingly sensitive to the spiritual and national aspirations of ordinary Timorese people. Throughout the colonial period, and notably after the signing of the Concordat between Rome and the Salazar Government in 1941, the Catholic Church had been an integral part of the colonial system.¹⁶ During much of that time, the Church was often the only symbol of Portuguese authority in rural areas, and it administered almost all the colony's educational establishments (for example, most of the leaders in FRETILIN came from Catholic High-Level Education or the Catholic Seminary in Dare, one village of Dili).¹⁷

After the Portuguese colony, Indonesian military invaded Timor-Leste on December 7, 1975, a week after Timor-Leste declared Unilateral Independence. During this time, the Catholic Church played an essential function in the society and Bishop Carlos Ximenes Belo, SDB became one of the main person who did advocate for human rights therefore he also established DJPC to focus on the human rights advocacy, and throughout these periods not merely the Bishop but also the other religious such nuns and priests were protecting the Timorese people from Indonesian military abuses although they should be put their lives in the dangers. As written at UCA News:

“Since its independence from Indonesia 1999, East Timor became a predominantly Catholic country in Asia (after the Philippines), a legacy of its status as a former Portuguese colony. While just 20 percent of East Timorese called themselves Catholics at the time of the 1975 invasion, the figure surged to reach 95 percent by the end of the first decade after the invasion. The local Catholic Church is involved in politics. The number of churches has grown from 100 in 1974 to over 800 in 1994.”¹⁸

As the majority of the Timorese are Christian Catholic and also the Catholic Church

¹⁶ S. Cox and P. Carey, *Timor-Leste Gerações de Resistência*, (Lisboa: Caminho, 1995).

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ UCA News, *Catholic Diocese in Timor-Leste (East Timor)*, at <https://www.ucanews.com/the-pontificate>, retrieved from March 10, 2021.

is contributing to Timor's people since the Portuguese period, they established the qualified schools from primary up to the high-level school called seminary and also sent some Timorese to continue their study on Theology in foreign countries such in Macau and Portugal.

In this thesis proposal, the researcher prefers to focus on the Catholic Church's roles and contributions for peacebuilding in Timor-Leste during the Indonesian occupation. The author would not include the other churches in this thesis because, at that time, the majority of the Timorese are Christian Catholic then the Catholic Religion is a unique religion that was established during the Portuguese colonization period, therefore it is the dominant religion in Timor-Leste from the Portuguese epoch until this contemporary stage. The author would like to focus on this subject because there are very few writing documents about the Catholic Church's support and involvement in the liberation struggle, and also there are uncommon writing documents about the religious victims during the internal conflict in Timor-Leste. Although in oral history or verbal testimony there were many religious supports for the Timor-Leste independence, then they became the victims of the human rights violations under the FRETILIN rule and continued as victims under the Indonesian military power. It looks like the history of the church's contributions and involvement in the independence is a hidden written history in Timor-Leste. It is precisely a few citations about this subject and not exclusively. Therefore, in this research, the writer would concentrate to explore this topic entirely.

6. Research Questions

The questions of this research would be focusing on:

- a. How are the roles of the Catholic Church for peacebuilding in Timor-Leste?
- b. What are the activities of the Catholic Church during the occupation time?
- c. How are the impacts of the Catholic Church's involvement in peacebuilding during the occupation periods?
- d. Why does the Catholic Church continue to be involved in peace and community development in Timor-Leste after the independence?

7. Research Objectives

- a. The history of the Catholic Church's involvement in peacebuilding in Timor-Leste from 1975-1999.
- b. The impact of the Catholic Church's role in peacebuilding in Timor-Leste from 1975-1999.
- c. Communities' perceptions of the Catholic Church's role in peacebuilding during the occupation periods.
- d. Communities' perceptions of the Catholic Church's contributions to the Timor-Leste's independence.

8. Research Limitations

This research is simply concentrating on the Catholic Church's involvement in peacebuilding in Timor-Leste from 1975-1999 because at that time majority of Timorese are Christian Catholic and a unique religion in Timor-Leste. Furthermore, the researcher will obtain the primary data through the field study with 15-20 individuals including the key stakeholders and direct testimonies of the events.

9. Outline of the Thesis

Chapter I: Context

Chapter II: Literature Review

Chapter III: Research Methodology

Chapter IV: Key Findings

Chapter V: Conclusion

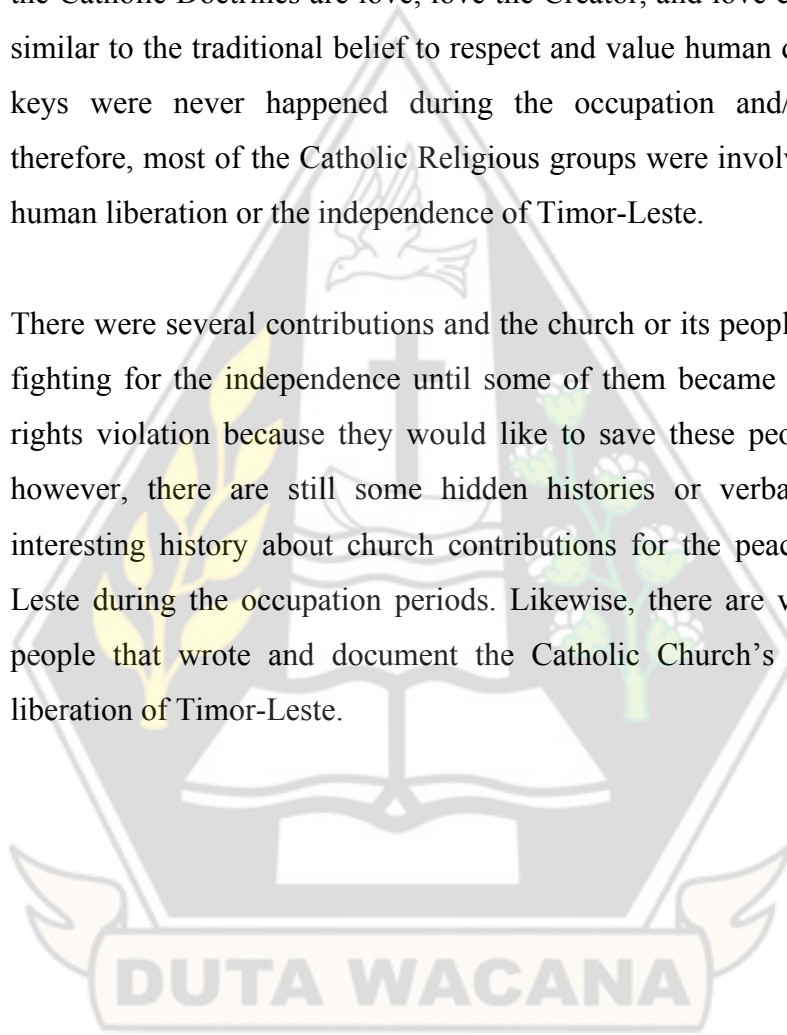
10. Summary

Timor-Leste is a small island-nation in the Asia Pacific with a small population, which is predominantly Christian Catholic before the Indonesian annexation on the 7th of December 1975, nine days after Timor-Leste declared its Unilateral Independence from Portuguese. The Catholic religion was one of the greatest influences used from the Portuguese government to colonize the Timor-Leste island at that time, therefore the majority of Timor-Leste is still practicing this belief until now. The Catholic Organizations and leaders in Timor-Leste also have contributions for the Timor-Leste independence as well as during the Indonesian

occupations, the Catholic organizations and its leaders including the bishops mostly conducted the advocacy against the human rights violations that happened in Timor-Leste because of the occupation by the Indonesian armies.

Besides this, historically the ancestors had to practice peacebuilding mechanism by using Timor (local) way to find solutions for the conflict-violence before Timor Island became one of the predominantly Christian Catholic. Moreover, the keys of the Catholic Doctrines are love, love the Creator, and love each other, as it is also similar to the traditional belief to respect and value human dignity. These priority keys were never happened during the occupation and/or invasion periods; therefore, most of the Catholic Religious groups were involved in the struggle for human liberation or the independence of Timor-Leste.

There were several contributions and the church or its people were helped a lot in fighting for the independence until some of them became victims of the human rights violation because they would like to save these people and this country, however, there are still some hidden histories or verbal and undocumented interesting history about church contributions for the peace building in Timor-Leste during the occupation periods. Likewise, there are very limited Timorese people that wrote and document the Catholic Church's contributions for the liberation of Timor-Leste.



CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Conclusions

Timor-Leste is a young nation in the region of the Asia Pacific that majority of the society is Catholic predominantly. Historically, the Catholics were influenced from the Portuguese colonization of Timor-Leste for 450 years. Catholic remains strong in society until this contemporary epoch. It could say that Catholicism is part of the social identity of Timorese since the colonization, invasion, and independence period. It becomes the distinctiveness of the Timorese because Catholic religious leaders and their communities have contributed a lot to the liberation of the Timorese people from the human rights abuses during the 24 years of the invasion period. The churches and chapels used to be a place for the resistance meetings. Besides this place, the Catholic religious leaders and their followers were involved as the messengers between the resistances people and the leaders. Moreover, the faith institutions were active in the humanitarian support for the Timorese people in the mountain and also in the urban area, when there was a food crisis because the invader bombed all the food supplies at that time. Some of the religious were victims of the human rights violations because protected the Timorese people from the invader's military abuses.

After the referendum, the religious groups are continuing to support the government for the development of the country through numerous activities in the communities as well as an advisory for the government officials. This is not merely from the Catholic but also from the other religious groups in Timor-Leste, such the priests and pastors (*pendeta*) was also involved in CAVR and CVA. In fact, the Constitution of Timor-Leste values and respects the religious groups' contribution and support from the colonization periods until this development processes because they are the essential part of the peacebuilding and state building in Timor-Leste. As stated in Section 45 about "the Freedom of conscience, religion, and worship; "Every person is guaranteed the freedom of conscience, religion, and worship and the religious denomination are separated from the State".³⁴⁴ Likewise Section 12 of Article 1 stated; "The State shall recognize and respect the different religious denominations, which are free in their organization and in the exercise of their own activities, to take place in due observation of the Constitution and

³⁴⁴ Government of Timor-Leste, "*Constitution of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste*".

the law”; and in the Article 2 indicated that; “The State shall promote the cooperation with the different religious denominations that contribute to the well-being of the people of East Timor.”³⁴⁵ As well as affirmed in Section 11 about the Valorisation of Resistance in article 2; “The State acknowledges and values the participation of the Catholic Church in the process of national liberation of East Timor”.³⁴⁶ Therefore until today, the Catholic Church is remaining to support the government and societies in the development process including criticizing the high-level decision making towards the well-being of Timorese and as well as becoming mediator for the conflicts at national conflict.

The Catholic leaders are enduring to support the government in developing the country. The Catholic Church Leaders and Church Organizations were involved in the reconciliation processes, to facilitate the dialogue between the Timorese leaders and the Timorese communities as well as dialogues between the nation’s leaders of Timor-Leste and Indonesia. Besides this, the faith leaders of the Christian Catholic, and Protestant were part of the Commission for Reception, Truth and Reconciliation in East Timor (CAVR) to heal and reconcile among the human rights violation victims and Indonesian militias and Indonesian leaders. Moreover, followed on the first interfaith held in Yogyakarta, Indonesia in 2004, Timor-Leste was one of the 187 countries that attended in second Interfaith Cooperation on Peace, Development, and Human Dignity and Specific Country-Level Commitment conducted in Cebu, the Philippines in 2006. In this interfaith cooperation was participated from the faith and community leaders to “promote a culture of peace, mutual tolerance and understanding, and non-violence amongst the different religions of the region and to strengthen the position of religious moderates”.³⁴⁷ Therefore, even though this country is Christian Catholic predominantly but the religion identity is not a unique power to influence and discriminate against the minority in the peace-building processes. In reality, the most crucial issue in this country is about the resistance or veterans versus non-resistance or non-veterans. The political parties and also the most of society are still discriminates each other because of the difference views and stance in the political ideologies during the Indonesian occupations. This discrimination phenomenon is identically related to the nationalism, although there was reconciliation among the pro-independence and pro-integration, however, in the societies, are still

³⁴⁵ Ibid.

³⁴⁶ Ibid.

³⁴⁷ United Nations, “*Security Council*,” (International Organization: no. 2. 2007), 236–238.

unacceptable, because of the dark experiences in the past, as well as are questions about the truth and international justice system. As Eriksen and Kelman suggested “ethnic and national identities are not purely individualistic that such identities emerge within a specific sociocultural context.”³⁴⁸ In the Timor-Leste context, it is genuinely about “I am Timorese” rather than “I am Christian Catholic”. Although Timor-Leste is one of the countries in Asia Region that largely is Catholic.

Since the Indonesia invasion, the faith organizations were active in supporting the humanitarian to the Timorese community. The programs are continuing during the independence era, however not merely focusing on the humanitarian program but too on peace-building and state-building development. The church organizations and the faith leaders are enduring committed in supporting to build the nation with the government leaders. Through provided the space for the refugees, food, clothes, medicines, healing, shelters, and other activities to the Timorese just right after the crisis in 1999. Moreover, following the internal crisis or military crisis in 2006, the faith leaders and its organizations also were committed in supporting the government to reduce the tension and violence among the Timorese people especially the young people around the country. All the faith leaders in Timor-Leste were collaborated to implement the peace-building activities such as dialogue, mediation, capacity building, peace messages, and cultural activity to bring together the conflicting parties to reduce the violent conflict and transformed the conflicting parties to be peace actors in the community, as Appleby emphasizes that “ethic and ethical convictions, as expressed through religious beliefs, are the main driver for peace. Regardless of which religion may be prevalent, the ethical power of religion can help to unite the divided societies.”³⁴⁹ Therefore religions are the best way to promote peace rather than create conflict in the societies, as agreed and written in the British Academy that “religion has the huge potential in promoting peace in any society and/or in the international arena”³⁵⁰, since all the doctrines and dogmas of the religions are teaching about peace and love.

³⁴⁸ Richard D Ashmore, Lee Jussim, and David Wilder, *Social Identity, Intergroup Conflict, and Conflict Reduction, Volume 3*, vol. 3 (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2001).

³⁴⁹ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*, (USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2000).

³⁵⁰ British Academy, *The Role of Religion in Conflict and Peace-Building* (London: The British Academy, 2015).

Likewise, as Appleby has written in his book *The Ambivalence of the Sacred*³⁵¹ in the twentieth century the Catholic Church transformed to willingly recognize the pluralism in the religious itself and this was enhanced influential including for the human rights and peace. Then the “Vatican II provided both the theological legitimation and the religious foundation for Catholic involvement in the struggle for human rights.”³⁵² Therefore human rights were the root cause for the Catholic Church in Timor-Leste to immediately intervene in the struggle against Indonesian militarism, the religious leaders conducted several interferences to ensure the populations could access to justice and live in a peaceful way, including through the advocacy activities in diplomatic sceneries. As according to the Christian Doctrine to promote peace and justice through the active non-violence ways, Jesus Christ is solitary a virtuous model for peacebuilders no matter what your religion is. For example, Gandhi is an Indian however he likewise adheres to the Christian’s method through Jesus Christ to shape peace through non-active violence. Additionally, Henri Nouwen’s principles to build peace are prayer, non-violence resistance, and Christian Community. These are the precedence ways for a peacebuilder to effort the peacebuilding development without violence.

Since one of the main Catholic Church Roles is to build peace among the conflicting parties based on the Catholic Social Teaching not merely the religious leaders, but also the Catholic organizations became more active in promoting the justice and peacebuilding at the community level. While in the Timor-Leste context, the religious leaders were working for peacebuilding at the high level or state level to do the advocacy and expand the activism network around the world, and then the Catholic organizations/NGOs and the clergies were working at the low level for the community building well as in the middle level to link the community and authorities. Since 1975, CRS (Catholic Relief Organization) supported the Timorese through humanitarian support and then Justice and Peace Commission and Diocese Caritas were focusing on promoting human rights and became more active in advocating human rights issues that happened in Timor-Leste at that time. After the independence, CRS changed its program to focus on the peacebuilding, agriculture, and health sector.

³⁵¹ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*.

³⁵² Hehir, “Religious Activism for Human Rights,” in R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*, (USA: Rowman & Littlefield Publisher, Inc., 2000).

Compassion, forgiveness, and reconciliation are the abundant of actions of religious people. Therefore, it is increasingly the religious leaders act “as conflict mediators, and they take responsibility for rebuilding the institutions of war-ravaged societies.”³⁵³ The religious do highlight the forgiveness and reconciliation in the community as well as at the state level. For example, in Timor-Leste, after the independence the religious leaders were also extremely active in doing the negotiations and mediations among the conflicting parties to be reconciled as either Catholic or Protestant pastors were involved in the Truth and Reconciliation Commission to reconcile the Timorese political leaders then also helped the State and UN mission to bring back the Timorese that refuged to West-Timor in 1999. In this mission, the Catholic Organizations such as CRS, Caritas, and Justice and Peace Commission were the ones that conducted the community peace dialogue to accept the Timorese refugees from Atambua and Kupang, mainly for those that would like to return to their home. Besides this, religious leaders also were involved in the Indonesian-Timor Leste Truth and Friendship Commission as a continuation commitment from the CAVR works to promote justice for the human rights violations in Timor-Leste during the 24 years.

Through all of these, the Catholic Church’s role is indeed really necessary in terms of peacekeeping, peacemaking, peacebuilding, and also state-building. Peace without justice is negative peace. We could only recognize there is positive peace if there is justice, truth, and love. It is not easy to transform a negative situation to be positive one. Forgiveness and reconciliation are a process to achieve peace. As Pope Paul VI said: “*If you want peace, work for justice.*”³⁵⁴ Although we could forgive each other and reconcile with those who offended us, if there is no justice then it is no peace. However, as a human being, we should transform our memories and feelings to be positive therefore we could convert our relationships to be healthy. “*We must develop and maintain the capacity to forgive. He who is devoid of the power to forgive is devoid of the power to love. There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies,*” Martin Luther King, Jr.³⁵⁵

³⁵³ R. Scott Appleby, *The Ambivalence of the Sacred: Religion, Violence, and Reconciliation*.

³⁵⁴ Pope Paul VI Quotes.

³⁵⁵ Martin Luther King, Jr. Quotes.

2. Recommendations

The writer considers this research to be very important to be included in the national history of Timor-Leste, therefore the writer recommend the relevant government institutions, academia, researchers, and future students to explore the following related focus areas:

- 2.1. Human beings need to continue consider and respect the church as one of the key people in Timor-Leste and the world, which is to support human development, human rights, and peacebuilding development.
- 2.2. Suggest also to put the consideration and importance in doing the historical research of the Timor-Leste struggle to include the church contributions in the Timor-Leste struggle against the human right violations to Timorese people during the 24 years, and recommend also to place the church contributions and roles in the Timor-Leste struggle for independence in one Volume or include in each periodization of the history.
- 2.3. Continue to involve the church in the human development or education development either in formal or informal education to educate the young Timorese people to be more acted peacefully and became the qualified people to develop this country.
- 2.4. For future researchers or students in similar areas to be more attention to those sensitive cases that somehow it is not the right time to publish, since it is related to the sensitive history, therefore will not create another controversy in the public.
- 2.5. For the practitioners and academia to continue involving church organizations in each peacebuilding and human rights activity or program to promote people live in harmony and peace.
- 2.6. Recommend the relevant organizations/institutions to protect the historical sites since it is a memory for the Timor-Leste as well as for the young generations.
- 2.7. On this occasion also I would like to recommend the church to continue to be a good model in societies in terms of building peace and respect for human rights and human dignity, not merely in Timor-Leste but all over the world.
- 2.8. Finally, recommend to both the governments of Timor-Leste and Indonesia to be committed in implementing the recommendations from the CVA Report in terms of the peace and justice, beside of this, really suggest to both societies continue the healthy relationship through the peace and reconciliation process although politically both nations have been reconciled, however, in reality, it is still

challenging for the communities mainly those pro and cons integrations to work together. It is true that everyone has the right to choose or to have their own political ideology, but it does not mean separating and discriminating against each other as human beings.



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