

**THE** experience of tolerance there is in symbols, practices, and figures. However, the landscape is on geographic areas. This geographic area provides us the information and reality of the archipelago-from before Republic, until up to 70 years of the age of Republic. This archipelago reality is never stops. This reality of archipelago is become a deposit or sediment of a culture of tolerance that developed.

By “pointing” to the spots of tolerance’s experience in landscape geography, there are some other experiences to be grown, is the awareness that this experience of tolerance is the points of archipelago’s civilization growth. The points of these experiences spreads out from the west to the east, like an emerald chain. This chain became a witness how strength and durable these experiences.



INDONESIA emerald chain of tolerance

# INDONESIA

## emerald chain of tolerance



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# CONTENTS

## Preface **VIII**

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance **2**

Tolerance, About The Term ..... 5

Conflict in Diversity ..... 7

Local Wisdom ..... 10

Explaining The Drive of Indonesian Tolerance ..... 12

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia **16**

A. Formative Decades of Nusantara ..... 16

Stimulus of The Civilisation of Hindu ..... 21

Stimulus of The Buddhist Civilisation ..... 23

Stimulus of The Civilisation of Islam ..... 24

Stimulus of The Western Civilisation ..... 26

B. The Habitus of “Gotong Royong” ..... 28

Understanding “Gotong Royong” ..... 28

Gotong Royong as Unifying Spirit of The Nation .....	29
Gotong Royong in Practice; What it is, what it is not .....	31
C. Indonesian Intelligentsia .....	32
D. Pancasila and The Spirit of Indonesia .....	36
Principle 1: Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa (The God Almighty) .....	38
Principle 2: Kemanusiaan yang Adil dan Beradab (a Just and Civil Humanity) .....	39
Principle 3: Persatuan Indonesia (The Unifying of Indonesia) .....	43
Principle 4: Kerakyatan yang Dipimpin oleh Hikmat Kebijaksanaan dalam Permusyawaratan Perwakilan (The Foundation of People which is Led by Wisdom of Deliberation and Into Representation) .....	45
Principle 5: Keadilan Sosial Bagi Seluruh Rakyat Indonesia (Social Justice For All People of Indonesia) .....	46
E. The Character of Nusantara .....	48
1. The Cycle of The History .....	51
2. The Long-term Perspective .....	51
3. Interaction .....	51
4. Trade and The Landscape of Nusantara .....	51
5. Trading as a formation to “commonwealth” .....	53

## **The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values 56**

- A. Peace Inspiration from Maluku ..... 56
  - The Culture of Maluku ..... 60
  - The Role of Peace Actors in Maluku ..... 61
- B. “Knitting” The Peace in Poso ..... 65
  - The Arrival of Islam and Christianity in Poso ..... 67
  - The Knitters of Peace in Poso ..... 68
- C. Diversity as Treasure, an Experience of Kalimantan ..... 70
  - Madura in Sambas ..... 72
  - The Conflict of Sambas and it’s Trigger ..... 72
  - Knitting Peace in Kalimantan ..... 74
  - Dayak-Madura Harmony in The Village of Retok ..... 75
- D. Harmony in The Province of North Sumatera ..... 77
  - Violence Against Ethnic Chinese ..... 78
  - Ethnic Tionghoa in The Province of North Sumatra ..... 81
  - Interaction of Inter-Ethnic Groups of Sumatra Utara ..... 81
  - Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok ..... 83
  - Sekolah Pembauran or The School of Assimilation ..... 85
- E. Inter-Religious Tolerance in Bali ..... 86
  - Bali as The Last Heaven on Earth ..... 87
  - Multiculture Society ..... 87
  - The Value of Tolerance in Hindu Bali ..... 89
  - Integration of Socio-Cultural Sphere ..... 90

Bali Bombing, The Challenge to Peace .....	93
Responses to Bali Bombings .....	94
Muslim Village of Pegayaman .....	96
Ibu Gedong Bagoes Oka .....	97
F. Religious Tolerance in Yogyakarta .....	99
Tolerance Experiences in Everyday Life in Yogyakarta .....	102
G. Managing Diversity in The Land of Papua .....	104
The Philosophy of “Satu Tungku Tiga Batu” (One Stove Three Stone) .....	107
H. Gus Dur (Abdurrahman Wahid) .....	108
<b>Concluding Note</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>113</b>



# PREFACE

**T**he book presented to you here is the result of a process which the team of PSIK-Indonesia (Indonesian Centre for Islam and State Studies; the centre) worked on during the period of 2016. It is intended as a compilation followed by reflection. At the very same time, the content in the book reflects fully the work of the Centre since its foundation. Numerous works on posing, initiating and tailoring various initiatives have been produced which have allowed “the common ground of Indonesia” to come into life, and maintained that common ground during good and bad times.

Some in the centre have also been involved in the experience of conflict resolution in Aceh (during the period of 2004-2006), Papua (invariably), sectarian tensions and skirmishes. This gives another legitimate background to conceive a documentation where a “commoner”, as opposed to a charismatic and “be all, knows all”

leader, plays a bigger and bigger role. The centre has witnessed that a good number of “tie” (*simpul*) have allowed such regular people to pose a role ensuring a shared perspective of common ground. In bad times, this “tie” is also able to initiate conciliation and resolution, and, later, normal multicultural life.

The desire for this common ground could also prove more prescient in predicting what shape and form the resolution would take. As illustrated in the famous story, a story of many persons, of Maluku (*Molucca*) during the period of conflict (circa 2000-2004) is that “in the airport of Maluku, we kept our body guarded, looking away against the opposite group; in the airport of Makassar, we started to see them; in the airport of Jakarta, we hugged them in relief”. The story speaks of the journey of the family in the conflict. It tells of how they took flight to Jakarta, with a stopover in Makassar. It was impossible not to meet families



The Mosque of Masjid Raya al-Mashun or the Great Mosque of Medan demonstrates a cultural acculturation of in Northern Sumatera. The building of the mosque was initiated by Sultan Maimun Al Rasyid Perkasa Alamsyah in 1906. The mosque has Moorish-style with variation of European, Indian, Middle Eastern style.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

from the opposite group during the flight, and in the stopover. While away from actual and protracted conflict, the flight forced them to reflect more. Then, many witnessed the various resolutions and reconciliations starting in different places during the latter period of the conflict. Many common persons, not a big famous leader, bravely posed themselves into the foray, taking meaningful initiatives. This, in Bahasa Indonesia, has become known as *mata air keteladanan* (the fountain of righteous example).

It is also part of the reflection that in 2014, Dr. Yudi Latif, the chairman of PSIK-Indonesia, released a book titled “Mata Air Keteladanan” (Fountain of the righteous example) (Mizan, 2014).

In the book, stories on many leaders in Indonesia have been playing a prominent role in shaping the socio-historical foundation with layers of common ground. During the period of the pre-republic, a new nation of Indonesia, up to present, leaders have kept playing a role in setting an example to wider society. Even in the height of political tensions, the persons in the book embodied a form of leadership who rose above the waves of unusual pressure.

Those above exposure will also be a good reference point on what Indonesia constitutes. For Indonesians, it is common knowledge and street wisdom that “Sukarno-Hatta” is the *proklamator* (Declarator of Independence).

Later, Sukarno was the president, and Mohammad Hatta was the vice-president. However, it is tricky to discern at this moment how both persons, along with other fellow founders of the nation, could agree on a common platform called “Pancasila”. The debate among founders was strong, argumentative, but honest. The present generation can still read the notes from the debate, as this is well documented in “Lahirnya Undang-Undang Dasar 1945” (the birth of the Constitution of Indonesia), worked by RM.A.B.Kusuma (Badan Penerbit, Fakultas Hukum Universitas Indonesia, 2009). The debate on the Pancasila, and towards multicultural life is very clear. For the present generation though, the debate could be “another time” situation. This may well raise the

question of the longevity of the spirit of multicultural life.

The centre is well aware that making multicultural life a habit of life is incredibly challenging. The difficulty lies in the fact that ethnically, religiously and socio-culturally group-wise, Indonesia is vast. With more than 500 local languages, with various religions/beliefs and around 350 ethnic groups, bringing accessible discourse and the practice of tolerance can be daunting. The challenge, though, only confirms that common ground is so important to allow all members of Indonesia to grow together. The domination and exploitation of one against the other could bring ugly conflicts. Especially where current global purist's persuasions could penetrate the habit of Indonesian life. The life "as lived together" faces many challenges. The challenges fall into the hands of commoners and leaders alike. It indiscriminately questions the basic knowledge and wisdom of multicultural Indonesia.

So, this is a good process where the centre starts (or re-engages) the discourse and practice of "tolerance". The above description would regard tolerance as a point of reference, culturally. It recognises the long-standing embrace and practice of tolerance. Amongst other things, tolerance would refer to the term "sober" in various cultures in Indonesia. This will point to the practice of self-preservation, to not go over the top, or be suspicious of anything drastic. Tolerance



The Mughal-style in the ornament of pillars and roof of the Great Mosque al-Mashun.

Picture: Khomaini.

is considered as a fundamental start on espousing a multicultural life and the development of common ground. This tolerance in life is so fundamental that successive generations of Indonesians will always have to work on the seed/culturing process, planting, and making land fertile for the future. Facing different experiences of tragedy of humanity, war, protracted conflict, competition over space of life, and marginalisation towards the weak in society, tolerance is mentally, culturally a relay process towards next generations. Even as now Indonesians refresh Pancasila, the cultural capability of tolerance provides the basis upon which being Indonesian is formed.

The term "chain of emeralds" refers to various practices of tolerance in Indonesia. In different communities, in public life, in education, in a conflict resolution, there are many of such practices. If we put in a geographical image of Indonesia, it resembles the green chain, just as the colour of nature

of Indonesia with rich biodiversity. It also resembles the emerald, as Indonesia is rich with gemstones (of green, in this case) which are not only in the surface, but beneath. This resembles so much common ground with which to work tirelessly, without fame, towards multicultural life.

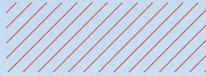
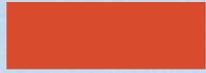
As this is a collective work, the Centre acknowledges the work of the working team producing the series “Indonesia, Emerald Chain of Tolerance”, those works in this book, in the supporting material for education, in the movie and the animation series. The work reflects not only intergenerational ideas of those works on tolerance in Indonesia, but also those who are willing to go the extra mile to make sure that Indonesia is a wonderful multicultural life for all. The centre would also credit the inter-university academics who within a democratic network have worked on subjects related with this subject matter up until now. The centre also acknowledges many institutions and communities, including the interfaith movement, those who work for vulnerable groups, and several institutions of government who dedicate abundant time and energy for multicultural Indonesia. The centre relates with them in various works, and thanks them for being generous friends on the journey. The Centre is extending a very special thanks to Friedrich Ebert Foundation for providing support for the selected production of this work, including this very book. On top of

everything, the Centre owes a great deal to Dr. Yudi Latif, for his inspirations and encouragement to work further on the Indonesia Bhinneka (multicultural Indonesia), and for all readily and unparalleled books, references, public lectures and having those extended to the work of the Centre. The Centre is monumentally grateful towards him.

The original edition of this book is in Bahasa Indonesia, with the title “Indonesia, Zamrud Toleransi” (Indonesia, The Emerald Chain of Tolerance). This English edition relies mostly on this original edition. However, the English edition is re-written to relate with several debates in the English literature (including those which are already in publication) and with current world affairs. Also, the edition will add several explanations on what Indonesians already assume.

In all extents, the working team is fully responsible for all that is written in this book. Persons to which this book refers to are not intended to bear any responsibility. The Centre would encourage the reader of this book to add notes, and correct errors on the timeline and details if that is relevant. In all accounts, the working team have rendered the writing as enjoyable as possible as it is would bring the experience of both commoners and leaders of multicultural Indonesia into life. ■

Tim Penulis PSIK-Indonesia



The Mosque of Muhammad Cheng Hoo, in Surabaya, a very unique and momentous religious site; the architecture is of Java, Chinese (Ming-era), and Arab. The architecture drew the inspiration from the Mosque of Niu Jie in Beijing.

Picture: Khomaini.







# INTRODUCTION: THE EXPERIENCE OF INDONESIA ON TOLERANCE

**T**aking a second look into multicultural life could be a healthy exercise. For Indonesia, this could come naturally since multi-ethnic, multi-faith, multi-locality have encompassed the life of Indonesians. Any doubt towards multicultural harmony could probably arise with the fact that primordial groups within Indonesia are so tremendous in number. Considering that Indonesia is a vast archipelagic nation, it may come as no surprise that ethnic groups are numbered at around 656 while The Indonesian Ministry of Education has recorded around 500 languages

that exist across Indonesia. Indonesia simply has so many gates of entry that it is impossible for Indonesians to live away from outside engagement. Or, it is impossible that one group or one province lives on its own in isolation without others. It is impossible that one group can “pick-and-choose” one over the other, and pretend that the “unpicked” do not exist. There is no way for a “fortress Indonesia” as such.

In the abovementioned exercise, that of taking a second look, could also be an exercise of doubting the possibility of an inclusive multicultural way of life. For Indonesians, there is a kind of cyclical or fluctuation between

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance



Mohammad Natsir (1908-1993) presented his speech in the lifetime appreciation "70 years the fight of Mohammad Natsir" at the Mosque of Al-Azhar, Kebayoran, Jakarta Selatan.

Picture: Kompas.

doubting and embracing multicultural life. At one time, it is successful. At another time, it is not. In real life, this often poses more challenges than opportunities. A constant alert towards "the others" would be a commonplace practice of everyday life. Those who directly argue against multicultural life, in Indonesia, are accepted as party of those cycles and fluctuations. The proponents and opponents of multicultural Indonesia all exist in one Indonesia, together. The discussion here, however, is the question of the intolerant trait which could endanger the very possibility of a harmonious multicultural life. What if the intolerant expressions morph into violence? What if the intolerant group, however small, could fill the public space with hatred?

Do Indonesians lose sight of the bigger picture in times of crisis? In such a context, the doubt towards successful multicultural Indonesia should be responded to seriously.

This reflection touches many groups and prominent persons in Indonesia; the ones who work for democracy, for multicultural life, in the capital (Jakarta) and in other places in Indonesia. They see the good in Indonesia and in being Indonesian. However, the appetite for false heroism which masks intolerant practices could always be the challenge against the wisdom which they promote. While multicultural life and values are self-evident in Indonesia, making it tangible and heroic is a real problem. The questions of how heroism in life is directed towards strengthening the multicultural aspects of Indonesia and how the crisis does not discourage good heroism are difficult concerns that groups and prominent persons must somehow face.

At this stage, so far, we have tried to draw upon the uniqueness of Indonesia, including both good and bad qualities. This should elicit a reflection of a broader view on the subject. In a way, there is a temptation to see intolerant practices as merely behavioural ones. It may help to give the subject context when we consider the behavioural dimension of the group who promote and practice intolerant life. (For example, when we read "Phishing for Phools" of Robert Shiller, or consider Erving Goffman's

“Behaviour in Public Places”). Taking it into a broader view, then we can see several other dimensions, such as history, understanding our own values, the socio-political setting, the

understanding towards symbol and gestures. This is where we will look into the experience of Indonesia on tolerance.



I.J. Kasimo/Ignatius Joseph Kasimo Hendrowahyono (1900-1986), key founder of Catholic Party. The party contributed significantly in the political atmosphere and thought in Indonesia. The State of Indonesia recognized him as national hero in 2011.

Picture: [www.sesawi.net](http://www.sesawi.net).



Soedjatmoko (1922-1989), a cerebral Indonesian statesman, gifted with words and good intuition towards his nation. Here, he gave speech in Georgetown University. This was of the proceeding of honorary academic recognition which was awarded to him by the university.

Picture: <http://repository.library.georgetown.edu>.



Mohamad Roem (1908-1983), a quintessential statesman and diplomat of Indonesia. He led the process of Roem-Roijen Accord (1949). The Process recognized de facto Independence of Indonesia, and then paved the way for full sovereignty Indonesia with Hague Agreement/Round Table Conference Agreement.

Picture: Istimewa.



SK Trimurti/Soerastri Karma Trimurti (1912-2008), a prominent leading figure in press in the pre and in time of Republic. She was famous on bringing a call to end colonization in Indonesia. She was also key promoter of equality in Indonesia during first formative decade of Independence Indonesia.

Picture: Istimewa.

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance

### TOLERANCE, ABOUT THE TERM

The term “tolerance” is derived from the English “toleration”. The root is taken from the Latin of “toleratio”. The classical (16th century) reference for “toleration” is “permission granted by the authorities or license”. While in the 17th century (1689), this term acquired a feel of inter-religious relations referring to the enactment of the Act of Toleration. The act affirmed the freedom of religion and worship for Protestants in England. At that time, there were frequent prohibitions and restrictions on the practice of one

group of religion as a result of conflict between Catholics and Protestants, and among Protestants in Europe which also took place in England. Through the act, the authority of the day was obliged to recognise the rights and religious freedoms of recognised groups.

Over time, indeed, the term and the practice of tolerance has been deepening. Tolerance is not just about accepting difference. Michael Walzer explained several degrees of meaning and practice of tolerance throughout history (On Toleration, 1997). He wrote that there are several meanings and gradations in the practice of tolerance.



The condition of Gedung Sumpah Pemuda (The Building of Sumpah Pemuda/Youth Pledge) in Kramat Raya street 106, Jakarta Pusat. The Building was historical site where Youth Pledge was called in the Second Congress of Youth. The Youth Pledge is the first and most visible call for Indonesia as unifying spirit in Indonesia where hundreds of ethnic-groups, languages, religions and beliefs of Indonesia.

Picture: Istimewa.



The replica of Wage Rudolf Soepratman (1903–1938) played his violin, accompanying the singing of Indonesia Raya (later, Indonesian national anthem) in the Second Congress of Youth.

Picture: Istimewa.

At the first level, the practice of tolerance which took place in Europe since the 16th century and the 17th is actually of passive acceptance towards difference for peace to happen. This would still refer to the period where there was a war between Catholics and Protestants that lasted such a long time that the warring parties ended up feeling tired and proposed a peaceful solution by accepting the existence of each group. In his view, this is not enough to encapsulate a more active tolerance.

He then describes the second level of tolerance. He calls this level soft indifference towards difference. At

this level, the presence of others (the others) is already recognised. It is just that his/her presence does not have any meaning. Perhaps, within the sense scale this still sits at a minimum in the relationship between differences. We know that we have a neighbour who is different, but we are not too concerned about their difference. In fact, we tend to avoid any process of understanding towards differences. It could relate to the potential fear of engaging them in quarrel or even open conflict. In the context of tolerance towards differences, this condition is certainly still not ideal for us to call it true mutual tolerance.

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance



Haji Agus Salim (1884-19534), key founder of Indonesia and third Indonesian foreign minister. He was the key Indonesian negotiator in the UN Security Council in which the case of Independence of Indonesia is the first case in its kind in the council.

Picture: Parakitri T. Simbolon, *Menjadi Indonesia Buku I: Akar-akar Kebangsaan Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kompas, 1995), h. x.

In the third level we can then see the recognition towards differences. At this stage, we recognise that other people have basic rights and that those rights cannot be violated. This recognition would maintain even in a situation where we do not agree with the views of others. Tolerance at this level is transformed into a situation where (any) differences are not responded to negatively. In practical terms, if a society is able to achieve this level, they have reached the level of tolerance, so well in fact that they can build lives together in peace (peaceful coexistence). They mutually recognise each differences and do not consider any difference as a problem, even though they do not agree with the other's view.

We still can lift this condition to a

higher level, to the level of the fourth. At this higher level, we do not only acknowledge differences but are also open to others. On the third level, we already recognise the difference even in the matter of principle, but are each still yet to build an openness. At this level, there is not a process of understanding each other (mutual understanding). In the fourth stage, openness and efforts to build mutual understanding take place and progress. Of course if a society is able to achieve this level, they have reached an excellent state of tolerance.

There is however a level of the highest or fifth level. This level is regarded as the highest achievement in the practice of tolerance. Here, we do not only recognise and are open to, but also support, nurture and celebrate those differences.

Throughout this book, we want to present a process of tolerance which produces various practices of social inclusion in Indonesian society. The process in Indonesian society may well have different levels of tolerance. What is presented is certainly not the ideal model of a tolerant society. But one thing to note, though not ideal, the experience of Indonesia that has lasted so far represents the diversity of Indonesia in a very remarkable way.

### CONFLICT IN DIVERSITY

Conflict in public life is something that is endemic (Suparlan, 2005). Each and every society has their own



Rumah Tradisional Batak (Ruma Gorga) di Toba, Samosir, Sumatra Utara.

Sumber: KHOMAINI.

conflict, within and without. Therefore, conflicts always exist in any society, including Indonesia which is itself very diverse in socio-cultural life. Cultural gaps and differences in beliefs potentially could become causes of conflict. But the conflict exists not only because of differences in culture and beliefs. There are other factors that are also important to be seen, namely social inequality and access to or participation in power. In the various conflicts that have occurred in Indonesia, these factors can be traced, although perhaps not as simple as one would imagine.

The first factor could refer to cultural gaps and differences in beliefs,

such cultural issues as we are well aware exist in a community that is very diverse as a nation. Therefore there should be wisdom in managing diversity. Supardi Suparlan undertook much research on addressing the diversity of Indonesian society. According to him, in a pluralistic society like Indonesia, we need to pay attention to the balance of power relations between ethnic communities and national systems. That balance is a prerequisite for social stability. If the national system is too strong or dominant then the values espoused by ethnic communities will be depressed and weakened. This condition could lead to expressions of disappointment in satire or farce. That expression is a form of veiled rebellion against the dominance of national power. If not responded to appropriately, resentment could burst into open space as can be seen in the case of communal conflict in 1996 to 2000 in West Kalimantan.

On addressing diversity policies in Indonesia, Suparlan argues, one should give more attention to the diversity of cultures. In this case he distinguishes between the perspective of ethnic and cultural diversity. We must adopt a community perspective as a multicultural and not plural society. He understands multiculturalism as a way of life that celebrates the cultural differences or a belief which recognises and promotes cultural pluralism as a way of life. Multiculturalism celebrates and protects cultural diversity,

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance

including the cultures of the minorities. In multiculturalism, all cultures are in an equal position. Not only that, the cultural enrichment has a unique dynamic in that they adopt elements of other cultures - a cross-cultural enrichment.

Beside cultural factors, we also need to look at social inequality as a source of conflict. The problem of unemployment in the absence of work has come to the attention of (Gerry) van Klinken when analysing conflicts outside Java. The view that conflicts outside Java is the result of massive migration is not very precise. In more detailed observation, the number of migrants in some areas of conflict is really not that big. For example Madura in Kalimantan, they are no more than 3 percent of migrants. Yet elsewhere, the number of migrants can be larger. Equally incorrect is the view that conflict arises as a result of aggravation and deep jealousy which mobilises groups to attack other groups. For Klinken, it is difficult to imagine that people can be mobilised over a very long period of time just because of aggravation or hurt alone, as this happens in conflicts outside Java,

In his view, the case outside of Java is access to jobs for those who are experiencing deagrarianisation. Deagrarianisation is a shift in society from the agricultural sector and fishing to non-agricultural employment. Since the New Order period, Indonesia experienced massive deagrarianisation, from 36 percent in 1971 to 55 percent

in 1998. The important question in this matter, after they went out of the agricultural or fishing sector was, where will they then work? In Java, the industrial sector could partly respond to this situation, but outside of Java it becomes a very serious problem. Groups who experienced deagrarianisation rely on brokers on obtaining projects of the government bureaucracy. This dependency becomes the enabling conditions (*condition of possibility*) for communal conflict in the long term when the brokers became the main actors in the conflict.

Another factor that also needs to be seen as a source of conflict is the massive marginalisation process which is caused directly and indirectly by the state against one group. In the New Order era, through their developmentalist policies, governments often designated local ethnic groups, as in the case of the Dayak in Kalimantan, as backward and primitive entities. The policy on attributing this group as primitive increasingly marginalised that very group. They could not access power and also lost their living space. This condition was/is a fertile ground for collective anger. Concurrently, that marginalised group could not resist the state power which was guarded by the military then. Then the consequent anger is directed to the group mostly supported by the state. Often, these are just other vulnerable groups and are as vulnerable as the attacker.

In the broader view, the conflict



Picture which expresses the harmony and multicultural life in the life of Kampung Sawah community. The picture is in the St. Servatius Catholic Church of Kampung Sawah, Jatimelati, Bekasi.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

in Indonesia has many factors to be considered. The factors are also very diverse, being as Indonesia itself is diverse. All factors should be realized and understood as a warning that we should not again fall into big conflicts in the future. Indeed, in very complex conditions such as in Indonesia, there is no guarantee that conflict will not arise again. Suparlan once argued that in inter-group relations and cultural diversity, there is no panacea for immunity that guarantees the public from future conflict. Inter-ethnic conflict for example, is the product of inter-ethnic relations itself, with is caused in their own local contexts. Therefore, the solutions cannot be the same for all conflicts. For him, the best method is obviously not to resolve the conflict by force, for example by using the army. The potential conflict is always there and will stay alive as the

fire in the hull that could explode at any moment. In the long term, conflict can be mitigated by understanding its causes. After that, we need to think about the negotiation strategy so that hostilities and hatred could be resolved and transformed.

### LOCAL WISDOM

Local wisdom in Indonesia is deep and very diverse. Local wisdom is not a panacea, but it could help reduce the potential for conflicts in the community. In cases of conflicts that have occurred, such as in Maluku, Poso and Kalimantan, local wisdom could speed up the recovery. There are some examples of local wisdom that have a specific function to embrace groups.

One such example is the tradition of *pela gandong* in Maluku. In this tradition, the two villages with different religions, Islam (Salam) and Christian (Sarane, from the word Christian) are bound in brotherhood. This tradition has existed for a long time and has enabled most of the people of Maluku, with different religions, to become as siblings. Therefore, for most people, the conflict between Muslims and Christians in 1999 was a very shocking incident. Where had the tradition gone? Of course, the explanation is much more complicated than just the erosion of culture itself. There is the problem of unjust political distribution and social resentment as a result of poor governance.

After the conflict, in addition to

## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance

improving governance of the diversity and distribution of power, both Muslims and Christians came back to their tradition. The groups who have a brotherly bond again came to feel obligated to help one another. If the Muslims were to have public work, such as building mosques, the Christian brothers and sisters would certainly help. Likewise, when Christians were building a church, the Muslims would extend their hand, and go down to participate in its construction. This sort of culture is not a guarantee that they will avoid disputes. But this example of culture could be an early warning device so that conflict does not spread.

In other communities in the archipelago there is also a culture that

has a function to resolve a dispute. These emphasise putting the position of any person or party in a position of dignity, worthy of respect. Many other local traditions in the archipelago more or less have the same function: on building harmony, brotherhood, cooperation and other positive values. Perhaps, the traditions were born because we are well aware that at any moment there could be a conflict in this highly diverse society. Not all conflicts must be resolved through the legal system. Through these traditions, conflicts and disputes are resolved amicably while maintaining the dignity and honour of each party. That tradition also establishes the kinship between groups and neighbours.



"Rumah Budaya" (Home of Culture) in Kampung Budaya (Cultural hamlet) Sindangbarang, Bogor, Jawa Barat.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

## EXPLAINING THE DRIVE OF INDONESIAN TOLERANCE

When the reader delves into chapters of the book, they will surely have questions. The primary question is on how to equate the story into Indonesian tolerance. Does the process of equating (or extrapolating) one or two stories not cause an event of tolerance? How does one relate one story to another as in the experience of

Indonesia.

This book puts forward some stories as a showcase. These stories combine experiences during conflict, the long-standing habits of life, and diverse resolutions which then turn into habits of life.

As for characterisation, the below is a representation of the experience in “arrow and blocks”:



## Introduction: The Experience of Indonesia on Tolerance



Cultural tradition of Okomama in Kabupaten Soe (District of Soe), Nusa Tenggara Timur is the symbol of fraternity and friendship. The tradition is called, invariably, when they have to deal with conflict within their community. Across Nusantara (Indonesia), there are many similar traditions in which they are to develop harmony, fraternity, collaboration, and other forms of acceptance towards others. This also serves to extend gratitude, generosity, and dignity into deep level of the life.

Picture: Istimewa.

### **1. A socio-cultural life:**

This involves “symbol and gesture”, “ability to relate, “habit of life”, and “literacy”. Tolerance is primarily an attitude of heart based on values. Indonesians, just like other humans on the planet, relate with tolerance from their own socio-cultural life. In time, this socio-cultural life will enable them to seek better forms of tolerance, in the context of their time, in the context of the challenge they need to respond.

### **2. Responding to crises**

A socio-cultural life could be ruined by a onetime crisis - as some historical

facts show. In this case, one intolerance crisis (especially when it spirals into violence) could ruin the habit of tolerance. When there is strong doubt against multicultural life, then it will be difficult to revive, and for it to become habit again. Here, the components of “resolution”, “equitable resource”, and “conflict transformation” are the main drive for tolerance.

### **3. A state that works for all**

Indonesia is, at the very same time, a state. It organises power (and its distribution and separation), spaces for participation, opportunities, and addresses the need for a just and fair life. Many times, the state leads the whole nation to embark on an exercise in tolerance, in recognition of others as family. Here, “historical precedent” and “politics and governance” serve as the drive for tolerance.

### **4. Actors**

At particular points in time, individuals have proven themselves capable of rising above challenges. One individual can overwhelm another with the call for tolerance, with the action of tolerance and with the refusal of succumbing to hatred. At other times, one group can pave the way for resolution. This group has no one hero, but a team working without compensation. In the drive for tolerance, individuals and groups can have their own moment, and achieve a unique result out of this endeavour.



Kelenteng Sam Poo Kong in Semarang was built to commemorate the visit and the life of Admiral Cheng Ho (Zheng He, 1371-1433) in Semarang during the course of 1400-1416, with notable reference to 1411 (as it could possibly refer to the record of The Semarang and Cirebon Chronicle, as in <https://kyotoreview.org/issue10/ontherelationshipbetweenchenghoandislaminsoutheastasia/>). The temple is a place of confucian worship, and a place where tourist and wider society get to know the admiral.

Picture: KHOMAINI.





# SOCIO- CULTURAL ROOTS OF TOLERANCE IN INDONESIA

## A. FORMATIVE DECADES OF NUSANTARA

Allow us first to look into the Islands of Aru in the Province of Maluku (*Molluccas*). The Islands are organised into one administrative level, called “Districts” (*kabupaten*). These districts alone have around 300 islands, big and small. These districts border Australia, and share key characteristics of Pacific culture. At the very same time, because of the long-standing maritime culture of many kingdoms, ethnic-based society, ports of call, and trade, Aru shares the civilisation of Asia in which Malay-

Islam Muslims, early Christian voyagers to Asia, Buddhists, and Hindus all settled. The songs, outfits, astronomical knowledge all unmistakably express this diversity throughout their lives. Then, comes the question, how to manage such vast and numerous islands. Then comes the term “Nusantara” or “*nusa antara*” which denotes the archipelagic state of the civilisation. The word has been uttered as an expression of a habit of life where the sea embraces so many islands, and with the unique examples of life that come with that. It is about the geography, but also about

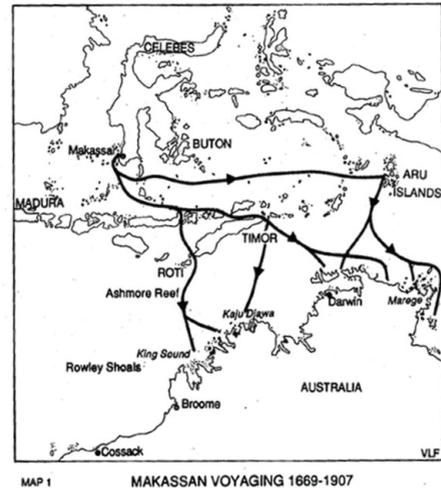
## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia



Picture: the District of the Islands of Aru, with lower administration (in colour).

how living in the sea, islands, and inter-insular life shapes how society will develop meaning in their life. From a cursory observation, the people of Nusantara (Indonesia that is) have been living side by side, taking what is best from others, and actively engaging other nations. Simply put, exclusive living is just impossible.

Then, allow us to take a snap look into Anambas (the District of the Islands of Anambas). Anambas has around 238 small islands, and is directly adjacent to Vietnam, Malaysia, and Singapore. Anambas has been a key trafficker of civilisation, mainly Malay-Islam, Java, Sunda, Bugis, China, and Indo-China. The dress and outfits resemble that



Picture: Vogaging of Makassar; Aru Islands is both the key post and cultural space of Makassar; the interconnection exposed archipelagic setting of Nusantara and the culture its nurtures. (from presentation of Dr. Dedi Supriadi Adhuri, November 2016).

of Malay, Chinese, Java and Sunda characteristics. Some might say that the local people just take everything from the outside; the reality is that they can foster diversity as a habit of life

To resoundingly explain Indonesia as an “archipelagic nation”, is to also attribute the name “Nusantara”. The Indonesian archipelago of the world totals a number of 13,466 islands. Those are of five major islands, namely Kalimantan (Borneo), Sumatra, Papua, Sulawesi and Java, as well as many small island clusters. The Indonesian archipelago is made up of mountains stretching from west to east. Indonesia is the most active volcanic region in the world. Indonesia has a land area of 1.91 million km<sup>2</sup> and 6.279 million km<sup>2</sup> sea

area, stretching across the Equator, and is at the crossroads between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

Nusantara is inhabited by around 255 million people. They consist of numerous ethnic groups, including Javanese, Sundanese, Malay, Batak, Madura, Betawi, Minangkabau, Bugis, Banjar, Bali, Aceh, Dayak, Sasak, and many more. More than 700 regional languages have significant amounts of active speakers. There is one national language, Bahasa Indonesia. Bahasa Indonesia is rooted in Malay - then, it was called “high-Malay” (*Melayu Tinggi*). There are many groups of faith, including 87.2% Muslim, 7% Protestants,



Three founders of *Indische Partij*: Soewardi Soerjadiningrat (1889-1959), E.F.E. Douwes Dekker (1879-1952), and dr Tjipto Mangoenkusumo (1889-1953).

Picture: Parakriti T. Simbolon, *Menjadi Indonesia Buku I: Akar-akar Kebangsaan Indonesia* (Jakarta: Kompas, 1995), h. ab.

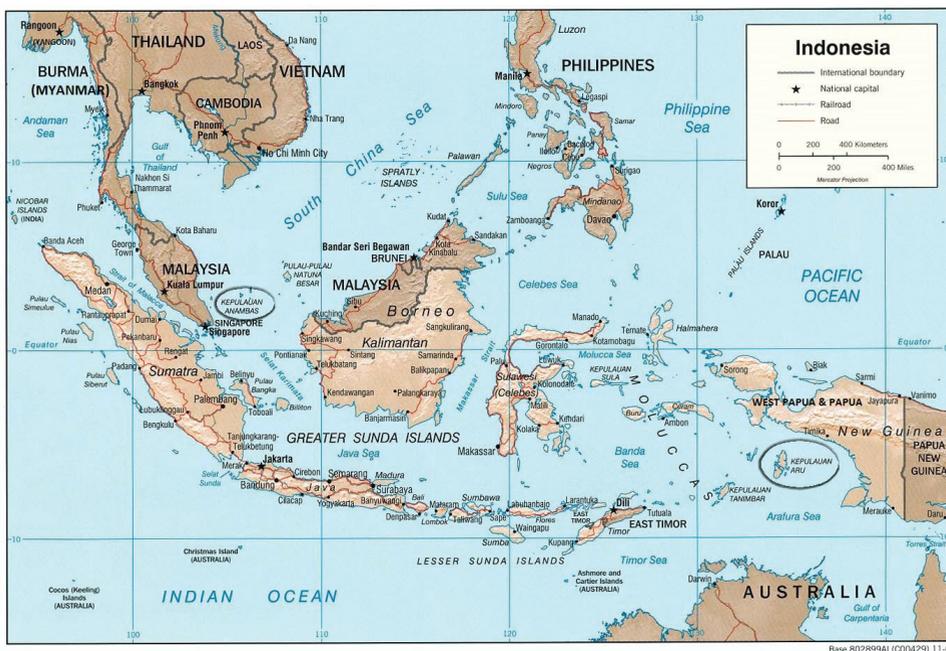
Picture: The district of the Islands of Anambas (circled), with proximity towards Singapore, Malaysia, Vietnam.



Those resoundingly explain Indonesia as “archipelagic nation”, hence “Nusantara”. Indonesian archipelago in the world with a total number of 13 466 islands. Those are of five major islands, namely Kalimantan (Borneo), Sumatra, Papua, Sulawesi and Java, as well as many small islands clusters. The Indonesian archipelago is made up of mountains stretching from west to east. Indonesia is the most active volcanic regions in the world. Indonesia has a land area of 1.91 million km<sup>2</sup> and 6.279 million km<sup>2</sup> sea area, stretching across the Equator, is at the crossroads between the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean.

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia

Indonesia, Aru (circled), and Anambas (circled).



Retrieve: [http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle\\_east\\_and\\_asia/indonesia\\_rel\\_2002.jpg](http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/middle_east_and_asia/indonesia_rel_2002.jpg) (with additional name for Papua (Province of), West Papua (Province of), Myanmar, Yangoon –editor).

2.9% Catholic, 1.7% Hindu, 0.9% Buddhist and Confucianism, while 0.4% live in accordance with long-standing traditional and local beliefs.

The name of Indonesia, which means islands of India, was popularised by a German ethnologist, Adolf Bastian. This was in use since 1884 referring to all of the islands between Australia and Asia (Vlekke, 2016: 5-6). The name was used in the studies of Cornelis van Vollenhoven but then became increasingly established in its own right in world knowledge. In 1930, “Indonesia” was used as the subject of the ideals of nationhood in the defence of Sukarno in court. The title of the defence was “Indonesia



The inscription of Yupa (Prasasti Yupa) is the testament of the Kingdom Kutai, the oldest Hindu kingdom ever recorded.

Picture: [www.satujam.com/kerajaan-kutai/](http://www.satujam.com/kerajaan-kutai/)

*Menggugat*” (loosely translated as, ‘Indonesia exclaims’). The name was then taken as a badge of honour by the early nationalist movement and a wider call for unity as a new nation. The proclamation of Independence by Soekarno-Hatta on August 17, 1945 was then enshrined as a declaration of national unity, statehood, and the

spirit of the nation. EFE Douwes Dekker, was then recognised as a national hero, once taking the name in the same breath as Nusantara, as it was referred in the period of Majapahit. Nusantara was given fresh meaning as “islands between two continents and two oceans,” hence the archipelago of Indonesia.



Prambanan temple is great Mataram Hindu temple with rich cross-symbols between Hindu, along with Java, Buddhist, local cultures. The temple was initiated by Rakai Pikatan (ruling ca AD 9850-856) and then with most sophisticated development by Rakai Balitung (ruling ca AD 899-911). This is one of largest Hindu temple in the world, with 47 meter heights, and with around 100 hectares (including with other nearest temples in the complex, such as as Ratu Boko, Plaosan, Kalasan, and others)

Picture: KHOMAINI.

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia

Since the early life of Nusantara, and the founding of a new nation of Indonesia, diversity and openness have always been the foundation of Indonesia. This diversity gives rise to a rich Indonesia. The openness continues to reshape Indonesia so that Indonesia becomes ever richer. Assimilation also shows a creative energy, which reveals Indonesia not just as recipients of many cultures, but also creators of new culture. This is concisely formulated in the motto or slogan of Indonesia “*Bhinneka Tunggal Ika (tan hana dharma mangrwa)*”. This refers to the book of Sutasoma, created by Mpu Prapanca of Majapahit in the fourteenth century. The motto has the meaning of “unity in diversity ((because) truth is never altered/never becomes a vice). The motto is in the state emblem of Indonesia, i.e. in Garuda Pancasila.

Not only a plural nation, culturally speaking, Indonesia is a hybrid nation of where much cross-fertilisation/ combination takes place between various cultures over the decades. Indonesia is a melting pot where different ethnic groups and racial types shape a cohesiveness following the ideals of unity. Indonesia is also the place for a dialogue between different civilizations. The civilisations enrich each other in the long term without causing shock. Inevitably, the past poses the heritage and experience of tremendous tolerance towards contemporary life. Living with differences and mutual enrichment is a

key trait of being Indonesian.

### ***Stimulus of the civilisation of Hindu***

(The term “stimulus” is used in the work “Negara Paripurn”, YudiLatif, 2011. The term refers to the basic component of the word, as something coming from outside the self which has an impact on its transformation. This also refers, interchangeably with the understanding of exchange and inter-relational life.)

The first Kingdom with a strong culture of Hindu is the Kingdom of Kutai in East Kalimantan, which was founded by Kudungga around the fourth century. The existence of the kingdom of Kutai, among others, is a monument with writing in Sanskrit, written in the Pallawa alphabet. Aḥwawarman, the name in Sanskrit, is the second king who is known as the founder of the dynasty. Looking into this kingdom, Vlekke (2016: 19) observed that there was gradual



Relief panels of Borobudur temple describes the life of Buddha and tradition of Buddhism. The symbols and stories are a cross fertilization of Java and India origins.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



The Buddhist statue in the stages of Arupadhatu (the third stage) of Borobudur temple.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

assimilation of Hindu culture with local ancient practices which existed before the foundation of the kingdom.

There was also the kingdom of Tarumanagara in West Java in the fifth century. Their prominent king named Purnawarman was a Hindu. The image of the greatness of Purnawarman, which was believed to be the embodiment of Vishnu, was inscribed in the “prasasti” (inscription) of Ciaruteun. The inscription explained the initiatives of the king in the construction of canals. Such advancement of civilization indicates that cultural contacts with India was an exchange in form, not a one way dialogue.

During the period of the civilisation of Hindu, there was the Kingdom of (ancient) Mataram which was founded in the eighth century in Central Java (the term “ancient” is to differentiate this kingdom with the later Mataram

Islam which existed in the 17<sup>th</sup> century). Their first king was Sanjaya, who after his death was replaced by Panangkaran - who later became a Buddhist. King Sanjaya ordered the Inscription of Canggal dated 732, which was written in the Pallawa alfabet, in Sanskrit, explaining the origin of his rein and the vast development of Hindu-Buddha facilities and infrastructure. We also can look into Majapahit as the last Hindu kingdom in the archipelago. Located in East Java, Majapahit was founded by Raden Wijaya in 1293, after he deposed King Kediri Jayakatwang and expelled the envoy Mongolian army of Kublai Khan. Culminating in the era of Hayam Wuruk, as narrated in the book *Negarakertagama*, the Majapahit region stretched from Java, Borneo, Sumatra, to the Malay Peninsula. The Hindu influence is seen in the construction of temples as sacred buildings and rituals which combined local beliefs into it.

The influence of Hindu cannot be separated from the possibility that Hinduism serves as the basis of legitimacy of royal power, among others, with the presence of the Brahmins. The Elites also absorbed the influence of Hinduism as part of a means of increasing social prestige. Contact with India not only raised awareness of the people of Nusantara towards the achievement of Hindu culture, but the exchange among those cultures also shaped the higher civilisation of Nusantara. “This possibility is very clearly reflected in the

absorption of the Sanskrit words into ancient Javanese language” (Simbolon, 2007: 10).

The spread of Hindu civilisation was a very slow process, but the assimilation of Hindu-Indian traditions and local traditions in the archipelago has left a permanent mark to this days. It is an impressive fact that not only have 3% of Indonesia’s population embraced Hinduism (most being in Bali), but that also the various socio-cultural aspects of present day life has inherited the living history of Nusantara from the period of Hindu Civilisation.

#### ***Stimulus of the Buddhist Civilisation***

The Buddhist civilisation made its way into Indonesia from the first

century, primarily through commercial relations by sea, which were then followed by political relations. In addition, scholars from China and India (Brahmin) came to introduce and conduct studies on Buddhism. It is documented that around the year 420, Gunawarman, a prince from Kashmir, taught Buddhism. This later became the religion and civilisation of the elite in the archipelago. Consequently, the flow of students from the archipelago that examined Buddhism in India contributed to the rapid development of Buddhism. Since the second half of the VII century, several Chinese sources reported the development of Buddhism in the archipelago. During the period of 664-667, Hoewi -ning, a Buddhist monk lived in Kalinga, Central Java and translated Hinayana Buddhist with Jnānabhadrā, a local monk. The kingdom of Kalinga itself was founded around the sixth century. The name is believed to come from the kingdom of Kaling in the history of ancient India.

Other reports mention the kingdom of Srivijaya (founded in the seventh century) in South Sumatra, which served as a prominent Mahayana Buddhist study centre, though, among others, the translation of religious texts involving I-Tsing, a monk from China. Vlekke (2016: 37) wrote that the long-standing life of Mahayana Buddhism in Srivijaya allowed the growing of strong links with the outside world, such as China and India. Furthermore, stories of merchants and references



Lonceng Cakra Donya (the bell of Cakra Donya) in Aceh Museum has ornaments of Arab and Chinese origin. The bell is the gift from Yongle Emperor (Ming Dynasty), presented by Admiral Cheng Ho, for Samudera Pasai kingdom.

Picture: Istimewa.

from geographers of Arabic and Persian demonstrated the breadth of commercial relationships with Srivijaya during the period of the tenth century.

One of the oldest examples of evidence towards the kingdom of Srivijaya (in Sanskrit this means 'glorious victory') is the inscription 'Kedukan Bukit' in Palembang, dated 682. Various marks and remnants of the kingdom of Srivijaya are written with the letters of ancient Malay and written in the Pallawa alphabet. This differs with inscriptions from a similar period in Java which were Sanskrit. This shows that the influence of Indian culture extended to the non-elite in Sumatera. Srivijaya territory covered almost the whole of Sumatra, West Java, West Kalimantan, and the Malay Peninsula. Srivijaya is known as one of the greatest empires in the history of Nusantara

Among prominent links in this period are the good relations of Srivijaya and Wangsa (dynasty of) Syailendera, a Buddhist Mataram kingdom in Central Java. In the eighth century, rulers of Java had a prominent relationship with a Bengal knowledge centre, which was famous for the study of Mahayana Buddhism; also with kings of Cambodia. The famous mark of the Syailendra is the Borobudur Temple, which was completed around 820. Borobudur is the world's largest Buddhist temple, with a broad base 123Mx123M, and more than 35M height. No less than 400 statues and 1,400 relief carvings adorns the walls

of the terrace. Each set of reliefs depicts stories which are related to the Buddhist tradition, the literary sources of which are Indian.

Many rulers in Nusantara embracing Buddhism did not set Buddhism as a 'state religion', or a 'compulsory religion', and kept room for all beliefs. In the long standing wisdom of Nusantara, it is to accept newness without rejecting the old. (Vlekke, 2016: 25) .

### ***Stimulus of the Civilisation of Islam***

Since there has been debate taking place, there is no doubt that the civilisation of Islam has played/plays a fundamental role in shaping the nation. It was said that there was already contact between communities in Nusantara with the civilisation since the Caliphate of Ustman (644-656). Muslim communities have played a major role in trade in Sumatra under the empire of Srivijaya, then around the late seventh century. Among the first trace which came into the existence of the early Islamic kingdom within the archipelago is in the northern part of Sumatra with the discovery of the headstone/tomb of Sultan Sulaiman bin Abdullah bin al-Basir, who died in 1211. Collections of tombs which have been found in East Java also indicate that the majority of the Javanese elite, then, had embraced Islam at the height of the Majapahit, in XIII century.

The flow and influence of early Islam into the archipelago throughout

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia



The Catholic Church of *Maria Bunda Segala Bangsa* (Mary, mother of all nations) in Nusa Dua, Bali, adopted local culture as this is expressed in outside church's ornament.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

centuries can be traced into the roots and influence of India, China, Arabia, Egypt, and Persia. Ricklefs [2005: 27] describes two main processes of early Islam in the archipelago. First, the population of Nusantara was in contact with Muslim communities and then embraced Islam. Second, Muslim communities from Asia (Arabic, Indian, Chinese, and others) settled in certain areas and then took on local lifestyles and values. Then, Islam was also spread by preachers, especially among the Malay and Java people. There was also the conquest by Muslim rulers, especially with the growing prowess of trade, coastal life, and agrarian change.

During the period where political and trade relations in the archipelago grew, a group of Muslim traders and outside Sufis had introduced Islam

to communities of Nusantara. Then Islam was widespread along with its peaceful exchange among communities. 'Hikayat Raja-raja Pasai' (*the stories of the Kings of Pasai*) which explained the events during the period of 1250-1350, told a story of King Meurah Siloo who converted to Islam and changed his name to Malik al-Salih. Around the beginning of the fifteenth century, Malacca became a centre of trade, and, at the same time, played an important role in the spread of Islam. During early sixteenth century, the Kingdom of Aceh was founded, and, later grew into one of the strongest Islamic kingdoms in the western region of the archipelago. Islam was also growing in the main islands of Nusantara, such as in Kalimantan and Sulawesi, and the Spice Islands, Maluku.

In Central Java, Demak was founded by Raden Patah as a new force in 1500 from the ruins of the greatness of



Community carries their harvest together. They gave thanks to the creator for the harvest in the cultural gathering of "seren taun" in Kampung Budaya (cultural hamlet) Sindangbarang, Bogor.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



Community carries various harvests for the traditional gathering of Seren Taun in Kampung Budaya Sindangbarang, Bogor.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

Majapahit. Under Sultan Trenggana, the heyday of the kingdom of Demak was marked by missions of spreading Islam and voyages of trade towards the eastern region of the archipelago. The mosque of Demak, which has been established since the era of Raden Patah, was an important Islamic hub for learning and engaging in a diverse discourse on Islam. Here the role of “wali” (prominent leading figures in the spread of Islam) was fundamental both within the faith and in learning.

The assimilation of Islam in Java was an important feature of how peaceful

exchange, dialogue, and growth of Islam can occur. Conversion to Islam was rarely followed by a radical change. The history of conflict between coastal areas and inland areas of Java is not the result of a conflict between religion and culture, but rather a conflict of political interests and economic interests. The process of assimilation and accommodation continued after the majority of the population of Java embraced Islam; Islamisation is a process that continues to this day [Ricklefs, 2005; 34]. After the rise of reform movements in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, the process of assimilation has been more interesting. This shapes Indonesia to this day.

### ***Stimulus of Western Civilisation***

Though often Western influence on the world is rather taken for granted in the present day, in fact, its influence on Indonesia - especially of the Dutch on social life in the archipelago was initially very limited. First, Europe at the beginning of the fifteenth century, especially compared to the Turkish Ottoman, was not the most advanced region in the world despite being the time which they began to explore the region of Asia. However, shipping and military technological superiority allowed them to reach the region. Then, it was initially the Portuguese who explored and then fundamentally changed the organization of the Asian trading system [Ricklefs, 2005; 65]. Second, in the context of internal

Nusantara, the Dutch initially were not interested to engage in social activities, they concentrated themselves on trade. The deliberate policy of Dutch power also contributed to the limiting of culture spread which was allowed for their own employees. This made limited acculturation, and poorly shaped Nusantara [Lombard, 2005; 97]. Those situations began to change in the early nineteenth century. Then, and afterwards, the influence of the Western civilisation became increasingly important in the life of communities of Nusantara.

There are three groups who have played a bigger role in the process of expanding Western influence in the life of Nusantara; the Christian community, the gentry, the military class and academics [Lombard 2005].

Especially in the Maluku Islands and several islands in Nusa Tenggara, Portugal founded the earliest existence of churches after their arrival in the XVI century. Lombard noted that after a long while, there was a new protestant cleric in Batavia, and since 1753 there was another in Semarang, and since 1785 another one serving in Surabaya. It was truly in the first half of the nineteenth century that the mission of Protestants and Catholics were really active and more so towards the end of the century. In the first decades of the twentieth century, Christianity was widespread in Tanah Toraja (the middle of Celebes), the northern part of the *Tanah Batak* (Land of Batak) in

the northern part of Sumatera, and the central part of Kalimantan [Lombard, 2005; 98]. Even so, it did not mean that western civilisation was directly visible and important; local and traditional elements interacted and shaped the Christian faith. This happened in the context of various cultures which happened to interact with newly appeared Christianity.

Another social group who were highly influenced by Western civilisation was the gentry (*priyayi*, local middle class, newly educated segment of society, functionaries of various administrations, former aristocrats who chose affinity to post-aristocratic, post-feudal leadership). Especially after the Java War [1825-1830], the Colonial government in Batavia began their approach to different parts of society, nobility and gentry alike. *Cultuurstelsel* (colonial policy of forced cultivation) was the entry to the gentry as they sought for a new management of colonial rule where locals played an important role. To a certain extent, the gentry was even allowed to participate in the culture of their conquerors [Lombard, 2005; 103]. The strengthening of the colonial administration increased an integration which was coming from bureaucratic structure where locals worked as a civil administrative enforcement (*pangreh praja*). The conformity between Java conformism and backboning 'Calvinist' discipline shaped the mentality of the gentry. This remains prominent and

influential even after the independence of Indonesia [Lombard, 2005; 103].

In the period of post-independence Indonesia, western civilisation became ever more prominent throughout the elite of the republic through two institutions which subsequently played a fundamental role; the armed forces and universities. The formation of the modern army was heavily influenced by principles coming from modern western civilisation. This included the management of education in the universities. Both institutions were the main locus where western civilisation interacted and contributed constructively into the life of society. [Lombard, 2005; 118].

## **B. THE HABITUS OF “GOTONG ROYONG”**

People are actually a creature, and being at once individual and social, they are beings who need to interact with others around them in order to grow and develop themselves properly. From interaction with other people, people live in social groups and feel the presence of the various benefits of relations and cooperation from and with each other. This atmosphere, practices, communication, and inter-relational life are termed as Gotong Royong. The term of *habitus* attributes the atmosphere, practices, communication and inter-relational life which take place during the good period of generational growth.

### ***Understanding “Gotong Royong”***

The term “gotong royong” that we use today comes from the Javanese language. The word *gotong* could relate with the word “bear” or “carry.” The word *royong* relates with the word “together.” So, *gotong royong* simply means bearing and carrying something together. Or this is also interpreted as doing something together. For example, street sweeping, cleaning up the neighbourhood, or pushing the car breaking down together, and so on.

In broader terms, *gotong royong* can be interpreted as a form of active participation of each individuals to be involved in adding value or positively addressing the problems or needs of the people around him/her. Active forms of *gotong royong* could also be of material ones, such as finances, labours, artistic contribution and counsel.

In conceptual terms, *gotong royong* can be interpreted as a model of collaborative ingenuity. Koentjaraningrat, one Indonesian prominent social scientist, observed two types of *gotong royong* which he found in the life of Indonesians, *gotong royong tolong-menolong* (*gotong royong* of mutual help), and *gotong royong kerja bakti* (*gotong royong* of physical and creative labour). The *gotong royong* ‘mutual help’ takes place in agricultural activities, activities around the household and neighbourhood, fest-wise activities, thanksgiving and in the event of a disaster or death. The *gotong royong* ‘kerja bakti’ is usually

performed for public interest or public facilities. This is, for example, building roads and setting up a community centre.

The concept of *gotong royong* can also be interpreted in the context of empowerment. This relates with the role of *gotong royong* as social capital and institutional foundation on the community level, inter-communities, between state and society, and in the international community within the process of the development of shared prosperity. This also relates with the notion of a collective action to struggle, self-governing, common goals and sovereignty, all in *gotong royong*.

In the socio-cultural perspective, the value of *gotong royong* is the spirit which manifests in behaviour or the actions of individuals which expect nothing in return (*tanpa pamrih*) as to collaborate for the purpose of shared interests and objectives. For example, farmers collectively cleanse irrigation corridors across several plots of land to make watering and cultivation productive, or works responding to home residents which are affected by the natural disasters, and many others. In the historical roots of society, farming and harvesting were and are quintessential *gotong royong* which organise timing, allocation of physical labours, navigation of water flow, and roles of members of society.

*Gotong royong* has been reflected across Indonesia throughout the formation of its culture. The various

studies on this subject find that *gotong royong* has various practices, locus, and communities while all sharing the same core values. This is the habit of life, the habitus. This is Indonesia in its fullest manifestation.

### ***Gotong royong as unifying spirit of the nation***

*Gotong royong* has played a very large role in manifesting the nation-building of Indonesia. The declaration of Independence (Indonesians call it “proklamasi”) is the result of organised and step-by-step *gotong royong*. This can be traced back to the Second Congress of Youth which proclaimed the *Sumpah Pemuda* “oath of Youth”, 28 October 1928, calling for the unity and formation of Indonesia. The Declaration itself was created on 17 August 1945. The thrust of the declaration was so strong and unifying that all areas and communities in Indonesia promptly supported and carried the process of making Independence a reality. The founders of the nation surrounding its Independence were key figures in all stages from 1928 onwards. Then, it was a wonder, how colonial power and doubters saw the archipelago being an impossible polity - scattered and fighting for their own values and objectives.

The event of the ‘proklamasi’ was, in itself, a case point of *gotong royong*. The text was written by Sukarno, one of the “proklamator”, and then first president of Indonesia. The text, however, was



Gotong royong is long standing state of mental and practice on collaborative life, having been in Nusantara from centuries.

Picture: Ida Bagus Putra Adnyana, *Bali: Ancient Rites in the Digital Age* (Indonesia: BAB Publishing, 2016), h. 21.

dictated by Mohammad Hatte, the other “proklamator”, and then the first vice president of Indonesia. The text was typed by Sayuti Melik, a journalist from Yogyakarta. The proclamation showed *gotong royong* was even stronger when the youth rushed to broadcast the live reading of the text of the proclamation from outside Indonesia. They rushed to Studio Djakarta Hosyo Kioko. They eventually failed to ensure that the Studio would become the broadcasters of this momentous event. Not wanting to lose the momentum and with

difficulties, Adam Malik, one of the leading figures in the youth movement and the then third vice-president of Indonesia, rushed to the Domei news agency. He persuaded them to broadcast the live reading which could be reached by nations outside Indonesia. Domei was then the first who broadcasted the proclamation. The youth succeeded in making something very precious for Indonesians and for the world was delivered truly big news. This was then followed by a group of Jakarta-based artists of *Pasar Senen* (a market and meeting point in the central Jakarta quarter) that made posters and murals in many places, including city walls and trains, to carry through the event of proclamation.

The youth who could often be met in Jalan Menteng 31, were determined to follow the proclamation through to reality. They copied the text of the proclamation through a simple old printing machine (*stensilan*), and made it available in many places. The estafet of the news went on and on. Among them, for example, were members of Barisan Pemuda Gerindo, M. Zaelani, who stood ready, and was then to be sent to Sumatera; Masri went to Borneo; as well as a number of other young people who were sent to Sulawesi and Java. The mission to bring the good news of course had to go through a difficult series of trips. However, the spirit of *gotong royong* prevailed, and beat all the odds.

Leaders of the nation were multi ethnic and faith, civilian and

military alike. They kept on carrying through the spirit of *gotong royong*, as demonstrated during the era of revolution in Yogyakarta. The spirit of togetherness with the embrace of religions, races, ethnicities and languages made Yogyakarta as a miniature representative of Indonesia in Java. Such religious leaders with a background of various views as Ki Bagus Hadikusumo (Muhammadiyah), Kyai Haji Wahid Hasyim (Nahdlatul Ulama), Mohammad Natsir (Persatuan Islam), Shah Muhammad Sayyid Al-Jaeni (Ahmadiyah), I.J. Kasimo (Catholic) were incredibly smart and closely collaborative in communicating this newfound independence, bringing independence into reality for Indonesia, a multicultural Indonesia.

Following the proclamation of Independence 1945 was a series of pursuits in making Indonesia a real home for every ethnic, religious and social group. Even during difficult years of war during 1946-1949, leaders performed admirable leadership. They were not persuaded in making Indonesia only work for a certain social group, certain religion, or certain ethnic group. Parliamentary government came in and out, but leaders never failed to see the real pursuit of independence. Leadership worked on every level of society and event during every displacement related with war between 1946-1949.

Such leaders led exemplary lives of *gotong royong*, which was commonly

referenced when there were internal wars and conflicts.

***Gotong royong in practice; what it is, what it is not.***

At one point, *gotong royong* was so abused during the period of the New Order, masking the unequal treatment and exploitation that it was difficult to find *gotong royong* at its best. For persons living during the period of the New Order (especially during the 80's and 90's), it was rather difficult to recover true *gotong royong*. In recent years, practices of *gotong royong* have become increasingly recognised in the world. This is not only in the socio-cultural field, but also in local democracy and new rural empowerment. The term *commons*, agro-ecology, eco-system, long-term objective of democracy, all find refreshed meaning in today's society. These usually contrasted against a situation of "winner takes all". In fact, with globalisation, life is not less complex, but much more complex, requiring a fresh look on what guarantees a good quality of life.

Many principles of *gotong royong* are referred to on the 1 June 1945 Speech of Sukarno, on Pancasila. In the speech, Sukarno exclaimed, "As I have said earlier, we established the Indonesian state, which we should all support. All for all! Christians are not for Indonesia and neither are the Indonesian Islamic group, not Hadikusumo for Indonesia and not Van Eck for Indonesia and not

the rich Nitisemito for Indonesia, but Indonesia for Indonesia, all for all! If I could put in a most concise formulation the five to three, and the three into one, then it can encapsulate one true genuine Indonesian word, which is ‘*gotong-royong*’. Our Indonesia must be built as *gotong-royong* Indonesia”

In the 1930s, Muhammad Hatta, later first vice-president of Indonesia, explored the collective and collaborative roots of pre-independent Indonesian society. This mostly amounted to *gotong royong*. Related to this, Hatta assigned true discourse and exchange as the key practice in those collective and collaborative lives. He valued the liberty of humans and that enslavement and domination had no place in the future of Indonesia. At the same time, liberty would be meaningful in common effort among common ground where all can participate. A principle of discourse and exchange. A principle of *gotong royong*.

Respect for the individual and the existence of basic rights should not lead to individualism. Individualism considers that the individual is the basic unit of the whole of human experience. The postulate of individualism is related to personal autonomy. A very famous phrase of individualism states: “You come into the world alone and leave the world alone”, despite the fact that no one is born into the world alone. There is always a mother and community culture that accompanies it, as even they take care of most of the affairs

when one goes to a final resting place.

*Gotong royong* will take the fundamental standpoint that every human is not able to stand on its own isolated from the others. Each person shapes and is shaped by a network of social relations. All humans, except those who live under very exceptional circumstances, rely on other forms of cooperation and collaboration with fellow beings that allows humans to develop humanity and in securing the material conditions of life.

Then one may doubt the value of *gotong royong* when this word is used to exploit common capital for the benefit of the most elite of society, or the most resourceful of society. Many are asked to sacrifice for the upper segment of society. Minorities are asked to be passive in whatever happens to their life. This could happen, and indeed, happened during the course of history of Indonesia, especially during the ‘80s and ‘90s. With a political system which did not provide checks-and-balances, this proved dangerous and paved the way for autocratic power. There is much literature and references in which today’s Indonesians could learn the wrong practice of *gotong royong*.

### C. INDONESIAN INTELLIGENTSIA

Throughout stages of Indonesia, the intelligentsia has contributed significantly to the foundations of Indonesia where tolerance is its backbone. The term “intelligentsia” is explained in the context of Indonesia,

as it could mainly refer to the role of a segment of society which encourages discourse, finding smart solutions, and understanding the context of history and of culture. Among other things, the role of the Indonesian intelligentsia is discussed, in some important works within key references to Indonesia.

The work of “Muslim Intelligentsia and Power: Genealogy Indonesian Muslim intelligentsia of the 20th century” (Latif, 2003, Mizan Pustaka) illustrates the formation of a layer of intelligence in Indonesia. Although discussed as “Muslim intelligence”, it exposes the development of “intelligent Indonesia”, in its birth and shape in society.

The work *Menjadi Indonesia* (becoming Indonesia) (Parakitri T. Simbolong, 1995) is the other. Here, we will refer briefly to some important aspects in which intelligentsia has shaped Indonesia. Theirs have been on forming the key discourse, common ground in Indonesia, and how Indonesia could contribute to the civilisations of the world. In short, how Independent Indonesia should also mean the advancement of humanity.

Generally speaking, however, the role of the intelligentsia is not unique. Theirs refers to the commonly found national movement and civilisation which was the character of the ‘1800-‘1900s. During this period, the world witnessed the powerful role of parliamentary movement in Europe raised by the intelligentsia and

grassroots movements. Mohammad Hatta, one of the founders of the nation, had his education in the Netherlands and observed the constructive role of the parliament. In parliament, it is not just a process of “checks and balances” against the executive power, but also a process of “discussion” (parler) and discourse. This process both set the stage for the formation of what a nation stands for and for a legitimate pursuit on improving living standards. In this case, a “discussion” is the fruit of scrutiny and thinking. Mohammad Hatta also always emphasised the key positive aspects of the intelligentsia, which were discussion and discourse. In his life, he presented as a dowry to Rachmi, whom was to become his wife, his work, titled “Greek Philosophy”.

Being aware of the need for discussion and discourse is a strong part of being Indonesian and explains a fundamental character of being Indonesian, which is *bangsawan pikiran* or nobility of thinking regardless of the social, cultural or group origin. This characterises Indonesian nation building which is not based on primordial roots. In the work of “Muslim Intelligentsia and Power: Genealogy Indonesian Muslim intelligentsia of the 20th century” (Yudi Latif, 2003), this is described well. This is also further explained in the contemporary generation of that intelligentsia, such as Rosihan Anwar, as follows:



Dr. Abdul Rivai (1876-1932), a doctor, a journalist. He initiated and enshrined the term *bangsawan pikiran* as fundamental spirit of Indonesia, as opposed to *bangsawan usul*. *Bangsawan pikiran* denotes the nobility of thinking, regardless the social, cultural, group origin. *Bangsawan usul* denotes nobility by birth.

Picture: Parakriti T. Simbolon, *Menjadi Indonesia* Buku I: Akar-akar Kebangsaan Indonesia (Jakarta: Kompas, 1995), h. u.

*Dr. Abdul Rival, who was also a journalist at the beginning of the 20th century, introduced the term *bangsawan pikiran*, nobility of thinking. The term is to differentiate from *bangsawan usul* or nobility by birth. In the inaugural edition of *Bintang Hindia* magazine (1902), Abdul Rival writes “There is no point in talking about *bangsawan usul*, since its existence just happens. If our ancestors were nobility, then we are called nobility, although our knowledge and achievements are just like frogs in a shell. Today, knowledge and achievement determines a person’s dignity. This situation gave birth to *bangsawan pikiran*, nobility of mind, of thinking ... the persons of *bangsawan pikiran* led the nation of Indonesia to the gate of independence, led the struggle towards the proclamation of independence which is recognised by the international community in the forms of recognition towards The Republic of Indonesia; and that they are central to the progress of our nation.*

*(Rosihan Anwar, 2007, <http://koloms.blogspot.co.id/2007/09/bangsawan-pikiran.html>)*

To explain further of how third world countries were shaped by their dilemma, I would refer to Soedjatmoko, a great Indonesian statesman and thinker, on looking into how interrelation significantly forms the identity of a nation and its



The proceeding of BPUPKI (Badan Penyelidik Usaha-usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia, the Inquiry Committee for Independence Indonesia) in 1945 was officially participated by all groups of Indonesian society. The proceeding is to form fundamental philosophy and basic law of Indonesia.

Picture: Istimewa.

role within the wider community. The following quote highlights the context of post-independent Indonesia, which explains how “the newly born nation” is confronted with issues of power, institutions, socio-economic challenges and the limitations of government power.

*“What changed in the light of the post independent experience was the intellectual’s awareness of power, its function, its limits and its character. Among intellectuals there is now a greater awareness of the need for a strong central government capable of pursuing the goals of nation building and economic development in the face of intractable obstacles*

*posed by tradition, ignorance, and backwardness. There is also a greater awareness of the need to establish and develop countervailing forces within society that can limit abuses of power and ensure voluntary popular participation, initiative, and organization. The intellectuals of developing nations have aligned themselves on both sides of this dividing line...[t]he difficulties of setting economic development in motion, especially in some of the larger developing nations, have made many intellectuals realize that power is not an indifferent commodity that can be applied to all problems and all tasks... (Soedjatmoko, “Transforming Humanity”, 1994)*

The role of understanding the dilemma in society is now played out more widely by various intelligentsia in the present time. Understanding this dilemma does not mean that they will be passive and lament the situation, but rather to build interconnectivity between local and national level in exercising necessary communication and socio-political actions.

#### **D. PANCASILA AND THE SPIRIT OF INDONESIA**

“We want to establish a state ‘all for all.’ It’s not for one person, not for one faction, either aristocratic or wealthy classes - but, all for all.”

Soekarno certainly did not say it arbitrarily when he presented the Indonesianness or the spirit of Indonesia in the *Badan Penyelidik Usaha Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia* or the Committee for Enquiry Body for Indonesian Independence (BPUPKI) on June 1, 1945. As part of a process to establish a foundation of the new nation, Soekarno with the other nation’s founders expressed their deep thoughts on visioning Indonesian Merdeka, the Independent Indonesia. Indonesia is a nationhood and statehood where all groups in the archipelago are valuable and indispensable participants. Since



The Catholic Church of Hati Kudus Yesus in Ganjuran, Yogyakarta (was built in 1924) with unique architecture encompassing Hindu-Java style.

Picture: [www.klikhotel.com](http://www.klikhotel.com).



The delegate of Indonesia led by Prime Minister Mohamad Hatta (1949) arrived in Amsterdam to be in the process of recognition of sovereignty of Indonesia.

Picture: [www.dw.com](http://www.dw.com).

the early growth of the idea and life of Indonesia as a nation in the early twentieth century, Indonesia has grown roots within the rich views of the archipelago. The envisioning of Indonesia recognises various and rich backgrounds; races and ethnicities, religions and political ideologies. The difference, as such, contributes tremendously in the founder's pursuit to develop Indonesia as a strong multicultural nation.

The BPUPKI, despite its very technical and boring name, was a representative institution which was established to prepare the foundation

of the new nation. The membership reflected very well the streams of political traditions, religions, regions of the archipelago and ethnicities. We can make a fair comparison to the Continental Congress in the run up to Independence of the United States America with the original 13 states, which the then Continental Congress transformed into US congress. The BPUPKI then handed the process to the PPKI (Panitia Persiapan Kemerdekaan Indonesia, or the Preparatory Committee for Indonesian Independence). The PPKI then could be compared to the US Philadelphia

Convention where the more formal process to write a constitution took place. It is also remarkable that Pancasila could create a common ground and could achieve agreement early in the process. The last article that the PPKI agreed upon (meaning, that they found it hard to agree) was if the state should provide welfare and parental protection to orphans (article 34 of Indonesian constitution). It is also interesting to compare the document of BPUPKI with Federalist Papers which stimulated serious debate on what the state should be based on, and how the state should perform.

As a result of BPUPKI, PPKI, and the noble pursuit of the founders, Pancasila is agreed as the foundation of Indonesia, as the common ground where all groups could enrich the nation. Pancasila is the solid foundation for the operation of a modern democratic state that protects liberty, and at the same time realises welfare for all citizens. Pancasila has five principles consisting of: 1] *Ketuhanan yang Maha Esa* (The God Almighty), 2] *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (a just and civil humanity), 3] *Persatuan Indonesia* (the unifying of Indonesia), 4] *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan perwakilan* (the foundation of people which is led by wisdom of deliberation and into representation), and 5] *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (social justice for all people of Indonesia).

The Pancasila, further, is understood

by each *sila* or principle. These reflects the roots of Nusantara and the spirit of Indonesia, as follows:

### **Principle 1: *Ketuhanan Yang Maha Esa, The God Almighty***

The debate about the first *sila* (principle) is among the remarkable episode of the birth of Independent Indonesia. The debate was on how to recognise God Almighty as creator - hence, almighty. This gave Indonesians the understanding of not to assign the “mortal human” as “God”. This is in the very principle where, visibly through Sukarno and Mohammad Hatta (both as first president and vice president of Indonesia), exploitation of one human towards another is essentially an enslavement. The recognition of “Gold, Almighty” is identical with the refusal of slavery, colonisation, imperialisation, and now modern exploitation (with reference to the text of Sukarno, of Hatta, and of Mohammad Yamin in the session of BPUPK).

As a nation, Indonesia embraces all ways and means to God, as this is also a platform to reach other humans (see *sila* 2). It is, in fact, nothing new that Indonesia has been living as a big family of civilisations. The sea of Indonesia is essentially a bridge among civilisations. Indonesia cannot build walls upon the sea. The symbol of a ship in Borobodur embodies the meeting of the civilisations of Hindu, Buddha, and Javanese. The symbol of the “ship-like” home of Toraja, Batak,

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia

Daya expresses “no human is ever separated from others; all in one ship”. The route of voyage of Bugis, Chinese, Persians, Arabian, and Javanese in the seas of Nusantara connects all religious traditions in the world. This meeting of civilisation also grows the capacity of Indonesians to live with many streams without feeling trapped in one cold monolithic identity.

We could take the example of the Great Mosque of Demak, which is one of the oldest mosques in Indonesia. Completed in 1479, thanks to the initiative of Raden Patah and Sunan Kalijaga, this mosque combines a Java-Malay architectural style. The roof is three-layered, shaped as a triangle, similar to a place of worship for Hindus. This mosque also has a historical value as the key hub of the spread of Islam in Jawa.

Another example we can look at is the Sacred Heart Church in Ganjuran, Yogyakarta which was completed in 1924 on the initiative of the Dutch Schmutzer family. In addition to the altar of the church, there are two reliefs which were built with Java symbols. The relief of the Sacred Heart of Jesus is described as an ancient Hindu-Javanese who sits on the throne, while the relief of the Virgin Mary is described as an ancient Hindu-Java figure who was carrying a small Jesus - like el-Niño of the Latin Catholic tradition combined with ancient Hindu-Java.

In the freedom given to people to follow their religion and beliefs,

each follower respects both public and private spaces of their living environment. This, as the founder said, represents “*Ketuhanan yang berkebudayaan*”, praising God Almighty as the source and all-encompassing integrator, while recognising the concept of separation of state and religion. Indonesian people can be religious at the same time as cultural. This is well reflected in the Preambular of the Constitution:

*“Atas berkat rahmat Allah Yang Maha Kuasa dan dengan didorongkan oleh keinginan luhur, supaya berkehidupan kebangsaan yang bebas, maka rakyat Indonesia menyatakan dengan ini kemerdekaannya... (It is God Almighty who blesses the struggle of Indonesians, with the strong dedication to achieve a free nation, hence the people of Indonesia proclaim independence....”)*

### **Principle 2: *Kemanusiaan yang adil dan beradab* (a just and civil humanity).**

This *sila* (principle) sits within the foundation of the spirit of Indonesia. Throughout centuries living as a society which cannot decide the direction of its inhabitants own lives, while other outside parties made decisions arbitrarily, humanity has remained in the veins of Indonesians. Sukarno, in his defence in the colonial court in Bandung 1930, called for the nation to determine

its own destiny. The defence was titled “*Indonesia menggugat*” (Indonesia call to claim). The very mention of defence lies against the fact that the occupation and subjugation of Indonesians posed an affront to human dignity, and directly resulted in the suffering of its people. The defence called for a national-movement which is based on humanity. Mohammad Hatta had his defence in the court of the Hague in 1928, titled *Indonesie Vrij*, “Indonesia Free”, the world witnessed a very strong call for the fulfilment of basic rights where these rights are integral to the struggle for Indonesian independence.

The founders of the nation were

fully aware that the new nation should envision the very humanity that they had fought for so far. It should be noted, that during the period of ‘30s-‘40s where they were very active, there was a temptation that the state should be a strong one, a state which “knows all, does all”. One way or another, various types of fascism came into the mind of the founders. They, however, understood that the ideal of the new nation, the new state, should not be in the power of the state, but vested in the people of Indonesia in which they had a legitimate claim for independence. The founders were well aware that organisation, opinion,



The people's parade commemorating Independence Day of Indonesia in the North Square of Royal Palace of Yogyakarta.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



The Musyawarah (conversation for deliberation, or deliberative gathering) is key process for decision making in Nusantara throughout years.

Picture: [www.masoedabidin.wordpress.com](http://www.masoedabidin.wordpress.com).

participation in the nation's decision-making and the ability to relate with fellow Indonesians regardless of their primordial background were all fundamental for the new nation.

The founders were also acutely aware that the same tenets apply to all humans. The new nation should never call for "*Indonesia uber alles*", should never call for a singular uniform form of life. The new nation should be able to pursue the justice and peace of the world (*keadilan dan perdamaian dunia*), as this is stated in the preambular of the constitution. The founders quipped that the principle of the nation is humanity and internationalism.

Nevertheless, human rights abuses

of a violent nature did happen in Indonesia, committed by state power in the name of renewal or maintaining order. During the 1950s, the imprisonment of political opponents, closing newspapers and banning political organisations was undertaken to quell opposition. More than that, a military approach in suppressing insurrection, including legitimate ones created an atmosphere where violence tended to happen easily and quickly.

During the Soeharto era, repression took place systematically. The scale of which being arguably more brutal than ever before. Not only did it restrict political activism but the regime also prohibited the construction of cultural



The Sindangbarang people engage in deliberation in order to the event of Seren Taun runs smoothly.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

expressions and beliefs in which the regime claimed as contrary to the dominant view. The road leading to the fall of the Suharto was opened by unrest, some of which continued into a larger conflict, which mainly stemmed from the poor condition of social life and democracy. After a number of kidnappings and shootings against students, riots hit Jakarta in May 1998 which was then followed by a statement of President of Indonesia Suharto to step down.

Civility fell back into nadir levels during the post-Suharto transition period when unrest and conflict continued in a number of places, such as in Maluku and Kalimantan. In the situation of the poor capability and low determination of the state to

enforce social order, the explosion of social participation often led to conflict between groups. In the midst of the poor economic conditions of post-crisis, social inequality became a point where hatred was ignited against everything that differed between one group and another.

Now, the country faced the challenge to maintain the continuity of the social order, without eroding basic freedoms and with substantive improvement of welfare. In addition to the fulfilment of civil rights, the state had to also give priority to the realization of social justice in which political democracy and economic democracy could exist hand in hand. Furthermore, public civility would be continually tested by the friction

## Socio-Cultural Roots of tolerance of Indonesia

of interests between different groups in society. Injecting the idea of unity in diversity in democratic Indonesia meant making the social system able to bring stability without sacrificing plurality.

### **Principle 3: *Persatuan Indonesia*, the unifying of Indonesia.**

With the fact that Indonesia is a landscape of nations where many ethnic, religious and other groups with distinct traditions, speakers of local languages, ecosystems of marine life, inlands, and others, it is rather normal that one might ask what was the thing in common which unified them all. At the same, it is unique that in 1916 there was a political party using the word “Indische” on denoting Indonesia, and with the ideal of Indonesia as a nation.

Then again, one may well ask how this could have happened.

Historically, there were already big civilisations that predated Indonesia as a nation. There were Srivijaya, Majapahit, the Coastal Islam Kingdom and gold traders along the hub across the seas and islands in Indonesia. This could give an explanation of how and on what terms Indonesia was born out of.

However, in the widest extent, it is rather easier to look into the heritage and ecosystem of value, history, and communities; than if we compare it with the desire to live as one nation, in one state, as Indonesians. We can look into the first generation of Indonesian intelligentsia. While they lived the long tradition of learning from each of their cultures, and those which took external stimuli (see earlier part of this



Two women worked on traditional cakes in the coastal area of Bajawa, Flores, Nusa Tenggara Timur. A more economic advancement is badly needed in the eastern part of Indonesia.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

chapter), they drew great knowledge from the era of the “Ethical policy” of the Dutch-Colonial (*ethische politiek*) circa 1901-1942. The policy was part of the change in Europe. During this period, Europe experienced upheaval where all streams of the emancipation movement blossomed. This also affected the atmosphere where the founders lived. They were very much in the spirit of “anti-slavery”, “anti-colonisation”. So, early generation of Indonesian founders, most notably those who had attended medical school, began to organise a nationalist-unifying movement. This marked the “national awakening movement” where the moment of “Youth Oath” was called in the second national Youth congress, 28 October 1928.

The movement formed a resistance against colonisation as well as developing national identity, transcending primordial identities towards “unifying Indonesia”. In the Congress of 1928, various youth organisations, such as *Jong Java*, *Jong Celebes*, *Jong Sumatranen Bond* and *Jong Islamieten Bond* and other *Jong* worked on a platform of nationalist movements. Calling the Youth Oath, they declared:

*Kami poeta dan poetri Indonesia/  
mengakoe bertoempah darah jang satoe,  
tanah air Indonesia.*

(We, the youth of Indonesia, proclaim one motherland, the “waterland” of Indonesia)

*Kami poeta dan poetri Indonesia/*

*mengakoe berbangsa jang satoe, bangsa Indonesia.*

(We, the youth of Indonesia, proclaim one nation, the nation of Indonesia)

*Kami poeta dan poetri Indonesia/  
menjoenjoeng bahasa persatoean,  
bahasa Indonesia*

(We, the youth of Indonesia, call for a unifying language, the language of Indonesia)

The oath called for a nationality that did not and would never erase or overrun primordial or socio-cultural contributions. The nationality of Indonesia is the *bhinneka tunggal ika*, the one which respects and protects diversity. This episode of nationality had its falls and bounces. During various rebellions during 1950s, there was a strong protest against the growing autocracy and favouritism of Java Island. During Suharto era, the military was favoured and outsourced as “enforcement” of “non-dissent nationalism”. The episode could have been much similar to the Balkans where suppression was the order of the day. Stability was upheld at all cost. Below the surface, though, tensions and contests among groups never ceased. It became manifest after the step down of Suharto. In post 1998, the primordial movement and group-mindedness was part of a growing democratisation and decentralisation - it was a heart-breaking episode where democracy just provoked many conflicts. It is, however, the determination of the



A farmer tended the paddy grains, in the process of harvesting.

Picture: Istimewa.

generation of post 1998 that this should be engaged and transformed into a process of unifying Indonesia. The tensions and conflicts should be seen as an opportunity to revive unifying Indonesia. Looking into the deep deposit of multicultural and nationalist spirit, there has been a good process where the unifying of Indonesia developed both the national spirit of Indonesia and a rich multicultural life.

**Principle 4 *Kerakyatan yang dipimpin oleh hikmat kebijaksanaan dalam permusyawaratan perwakilan* (the foundation of people which is led by the wisdom of deliberation and into representation),**

In 1932, Mohammad Hatta wrote that the foundations of democracy have existed in the origin of social life in

Indonesia. That foundation had been developed into various ways to shape and form community. Hatta pointed to ‘elements of democracy’: meetings for deliberation, consensus, mutual help or *gotong royong*, the right to hold a joint protest, and the right to get rid of the king’s power. In the development of democracy, the elements were adapted into modern statecraft.

*Musyawaharah* or deliberation is part of the decision-making process that has lived in the community for centuries. Traditions of various ethnic groups in the archipelago lived for decades and centuries developing deliberation as a way to find agreement. This has been an important mechanism in the social process. Not only in electing a leader, but a similar mechanism is used to determine joint measures

responding to problems together. In the deliberation, *gotong royong* encourages members of community to actively take part in community life. The decision which they took does not negate the aspect of justice, as *gotong royong* has a teleological aspect, which is the consummation of ethics and welfare

It should be noted that various deliberations in communities indeed had their own way of doing things such that it may raise our eyebrows now. The tradition of the opposition does not take the form of frontal resistance. In the Java community, for example, there is a tradition *mepe*, where people sunbathe outside the palace in the sun as a form of dissatisfaction with the ruling authorities. Other forms of protest refer to the tradition of the archipelago which recognises formal withdrawal from political life as an expression of opposition to the decision that is deemed unfair. Forms of opposition that were not intended to be destructive, but rather part of a power control mechanism. *Raja bijak, raja disembah; raja lalim, raja disanggah*, a traditional saying proclaims: Wise king, the king is worshiped; tyrant, the king is denied. This Malay saying teaches that power should produce policies and virtue, as a fundamental condition for its legitimacy. People have the right to deny arbitrary powers, including disputes or protests against the decision of the king. This tradition has formed a deposit and been adopted in the early practice of democracy in the local

tradition of Nusantara.

Episodes of Indonesian history have included many peaks and troughs. The accumulation of power in the late era of Sukarno and for the most part of the Suharto era included miseducating the people. Public disappointment against the ruling power which was expressed through various forms of protest was faced with threats and bullying. Despotism, in the end, was denied by the strength of the people who wanted improvements in Indonesia. That was the reformasi of 1998 and since then Indonesia has entered a new era of democratisation. This era has another challenge where deliberation should, again, come back to the consummation of ethics and welfare. It is clear that there is a long road ahead and much hard effort to make democracy work for all Indonesians.

**Principle 5: *Keadilan sosial bagi seluruh rakyat Indonesia* (social justice for all people of Indonesia).**

The founders believed that democracy will never be what it is desired to be if social justice is not pursued. The ideal of democracy always takes an equal participation in the state and nation's affairs. Achieving this will always require social justice and welfare.

In the historical context, there is a convergence between the views of Sukarno and Hatta towards social justice. For Sukarno, deliberative democracy should transform quality of

life; therefore, political and economic democracy should be able to realise social welfare. For Hatta, social democracy is a link between political democracy and economic democracy; next to political democracy, economic democracy should follow. This means that democracy does not merely recognise freedom for each of individual, but economic democracy means that the nation should not never leave the needy behind. Here, the state has the obligation of ensuring citizens' basic rights which are met through equitable distribution of productive resources. Hence, the state is obligated to manage productive resources which should then be reflected in social justice and welfare for the public.

The constitution stipulates (article 33):

1. The economy is to develop as and into a joint effort based on the principle of family-hood.
2. Branches of productive resources and measures which are important for the country and have the ultimate stake in the life of society is controlled by the state.
3. Earth and water and natural resources are controlled by the state and are utilised for the greater welfare of the people.
4. The national economy shall be organised based on economic democracy with the principles of togetherness, efficiency of justice, sustainability, environmental awareness, independence, and the

balancing between progress and the unity of the national economy.

For Hatta, article 33 of the constitution is quintessential to the democracy of Indonesia. The article obligates the state to work on the realisation of social justice, the legitimacy of its power being that they must control the most important resources necessary for the life of the people. The state needs to ensure that citizens have equal access to prosperity.

In several periods of Indonesian history, social inequality has been the result of the centralisation of economic power by the few, which then produced exploitation. In the 1950s, group rebellion in several areas was directly related to the situation of unequal distribution of and the highly centralised exercise of economic policy. Those rebellions were then quelled by military repression. Still, the question which poses a direct challenge to the government is that of social justice. The government of the Soeharto period lost control of the economic grip that the big players had and a closed circle came to dominate economic life. The lack of social democracy weakened the capability of citizens to engage in social participation.

Social strife and conflict during the transition to democracy was a reminder that it is, then, a consequence of a policy (of the previous regime) that ignores social justice. The era of openness after 1998 is characterised by strong participation and awareness

of the new identity, but this was not accompanied by the equitable access and utilisation of resources. Also, economic capabilities were still very poor. Conflicts took place over fights for the control of resources. The decentralisation of power, through regional autonomy, became a recipe which was deemed a response for the need for more participation. The awareness of identity is to transform the multicultural background as a positive contribution to the nation. With that decentralisation, citizens are entitled to vote directly for their leaders at the local level; with more power, local leaders need greater resources to finance the run of government and its pursuit for a higher standard of living. This meeting point always poses a reminder to the local government not to take the easy way out on providing welfare, such as concentrating too



The port is important cultural locus where trade and culture grows together, and developing a multicultural life of Nusantara.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

much on the extractive economy of natural resources, or to lag too far in the provision of public service. Recent situations have shown that the decentralised areas (provinces, municipalities, regencies) with the richest natural resources are often the most laden with corruption and have the poorest public services - this is evidenced by looking into the metrics of the “Indonesian Governance Index”.

## E. THE CHARACTER OF NUSANTARA

Indonesia is known as the island nation surrounded by the sea, or the archipelagic nation. In the international field, the Declaration of Juanda is recognised in understanding the archipelagic state of the ecosystem, nationality, and the conduct of governance and commonwealth. Admittedly it is not easy to manage the community of Nusantara (Nusantara as denoted is archipelagic in meaning which the declaration further develops). However, the declaration is not an empty claim, and not without living reference.

Nusantara, which includes “Indo-Malaysia”, had the basic units of society and technology, the organisation of settlements and housing, a voyage which has come into life since 10,000 years ago. This area became fertile ground for the flowering of a civilisation. This can be traced from the tools of their hunting and agriculture, as well as their belief systems. For

comparison, Egypt, around 2631-2611 BC, built the oldest pyramid. That means about 4500 years ago there was already a physical manifestation of human intelligence. Towards the region of “Indo-Malaysia”, there is an attempt to track down how a unit of society made the voyage, journey and expansion of the coverage of life’s requirements. Given the nature of the archipelago, theirs is a remarkable voyage. The characterization “Proto-Malays” and “Deutero-Malays” should be viewed not as a separation between communities, as if the “Proto-Malays” are older or separated by “Deutero-Malays”. This characterization is more in the context of the knowledge which then grew which supported the movement of those people. The wave of knowledge appears in the technology of exploration and settlements, for example, with catamarans (with notable *cadik* or outrigger), adaptable settlements, terracing models (and *punden berundak* or stepped pyramids), houses on stilts/on pillars. This was strongly manifest especially in western and central “Indo-Malaysia”.

Other most “manifest” aspects of the character of Nusantara is a civilisation which revolved around rice. Rice cultivation is estimated as coming from both the South China and Japan-Korea region. Seeing how rice cultivation became very extensive in Asia, civilisation can be traced back by how it was initially grown in Nusantara. History then noted how “civilisations

around rice” formed and deepened the character of Nusantara. This was unusually strong, even if it is compared with the model of exploration and trade, which was already strong and further developing then. Denys Lombard, one of the notable historians on Nusantara, explained this in an assessment of how civilisations around rice contributed greatly to the integration of Nusantara. With all its shortcomings, including the tendency to make the community more stratified and the emergence of *gentry* (social layers that have control towards assets and social life), the “civilisation around the rice” progressively blossomed many centres of civilisation and of economy.

The character of Nusantara grew in their intuition towards their previous generation and their origins, the creation of knowledge and how to build inter-community life. This consolidated and deepened the knowledge of history. This is also owed to the “civilisation around the rice” since the expansion and sophistication of water management, household-based economies and seeds always took from precedents. This interaction then grew into community life.

Here, we can look into the civilisation of Srivijaya in which this inter-community life was built. The Srivijaya developed rice culture with maritime interconnectivity, which then served as a catalyst which supported the growth of civilisation. This included schools, fleets, warehousing

and communication lines. At the prominence of the Srivijaya civilisation, other Asian civilisations related with them, learning and taking the best of Srivijaya. The Khmer civilization, for example, built schools and fleets as a catalyst for their civilisation much like the connectivity of the Srivijaya contribution to civilisation.

In other episodes of Nusantara, the type of blossoming of civilisation such as Srivijaya has another interesting surprise. There are figures which developed the character of Nusantara by managing and processing the world's most important knowledge. Karaeng Patinggaloang, for example, mastered the know-how of the (then) best in engineering, and at the same time fully grasped the depth and value of history and knowledge. He mastered cosmology (and intuition towards the origin of life of Nusantara) as well as being erudite in creating knowledge and its paradigm. Karaeng Patinggaloang was a polymath and polyglot, as well as a prime minister.

If we look into another component in the episode of Nusantara, we can discover schools are the main engine towards social and economic life. Schools in the Srivijaya period, and then Majapahit, produced very diverse types of apparatus and intelligence which played an important role in the ups and downs of the civilisation. These schools had comparative forms and practices in South Asia. In relation with Srivijaya and Majapahit, there

was a school of Nalanda, and school in Tang-era China. I-Tsing / Yi-Jing is a key scholar who connected three schools of Srivijaya, Nalanda (India), and China. His role as the intelligentsia included the transformation of knowledge into civilisation, and also projecting a topographical view of the Hindu-Buddhist civilisation. Amartya Sen made a very interesting note:

*“... Indeed, have enriched interactions as well as Sanskrit spread beyond India's borders over many Centuries. The seventh-century Chinese scholar Yi Jing learned his Sanskrit in Java (in the city of Shri Vijaya) on his way from China to India. The influence of interactions is well reflected in languages and vocabularies throughout Asia from Thailand and Malaya to Indo-China, Indonesia, the Philippines, Korea and Japan. And this applies to China too, where scholarship in Sanskrit flourished greatly in the first millennium, aside from the influences that came via other countries in the region. It is not often Tirrenus event the word ‘mandarin’, standing as it does for a central concept in Chinese culture, is derived from a Sanskrit word, Mantri, which came from India to China via Malayasia”. (Amartya Sen, 2005, the Argumentative Indian, Writings on Indian Culture, History, and Identity, London: Penguin Books)*

The character of Nusantara espouses

an ability to grasp history and the ecosystem which came out of it, and develops a study for contemporary time and for the future. This helps to set a kind of institutional memory, and, at the same time, develops a vision of continuous civilisation. The characters which could be looked into are:

### 1. The cycle of history

Nusantara had several giant upheavals, including those related to natural disasters. The character of Nusantara is the pursuit to look into the impact of those towards civilisations, including the impact on power, resources, and institutions of “commonwealth”. There is an understanding that power needs to be capable of managing those cycles. To a certain extent, this resulted in the role of “oracle”, “futurists” and “wisdom” on the character of Nusantara. This, for example, is shown in “Jangka Jaya Baya” (the oracle of Jaya Baya), *Ilmu Begja* or the logos of thanksgiving (Ki Ageng Suryomentaraman).

### 2. The long-term perspective

Everyday life is often treated as a “cost-benefit relationship”. However, there is a long-term consideration which avoids the trap of exhausting everything in one day, at one time and in one episode of life. Throughout history, the character of Nusantara has been found in the form of values, language, geodesy, governance, and others. These have constantly evolved, regardless of the

ruling regime of the time. Even the most tyrannical ruler cannot offer a smarter or superior worldview than the long-term perspective.

### 3. Interaction

Because of its attention towards cycles and long-term perspective, it becomes understandable that the character of Nusantara manifests in the “exchange of ideas”. There are thousands of information sources and pools of knowledge that are emerging but have not yet been processed. In this case, the willingness to learn and continue to cultivate a process of interaction grows steadily. This interaction towards Hindu-Buddhist, local-traditional and Islamic-Christian civilizations have enabled a real exchange which brings forth more sophisticated knowledge of nature and power.

### 4. Trade and the landscape of Nusantara

In the growth of Nusantara, trade on goods and services brought science and schools in from around the world. In contrast, the systematised knowledge and schools from Nusantara have grown in all corners of the world. In the context of Sriwijaya, the civilisation of Nusantara had a positive interaction with civilisations of India, China and Khmer. Additionally, Bugis traders made a very significant contribution to the spread of spices in different regions of the world, as well as Islamic

civilisation which has become distinct in Nusantara.

World colonialism is not the only explanation of how Nusantara grew. Trails in the history of civilisation show that globalisation was in fact the way of life of Nusantara. It is an open and optimistic view towards the world. This is reflected in the voyage and connectivity of trade guilds of Nusantara. Pramoedya Ananta Toer, for example, in his work of *Arus Balik* (Counter-current), took the context of the attack that the Demak Kingdom made on Malacca (1511). This exposed the elan of civilisation in Nusantara. The attack exposed the long standing connectivity between coastal powers and trade guilds in Southeast Asia. When one power dominated and monopolised the network of voyage and trade, the response was to revive again the confederal setting of the network.

In another context, one may see the knowledge which comes out of Prambanan (9th century). This knowledge was carried forth to the time of the temple complex of Angkor Wat (11th century). This context is interesting because, although Mataram Hindu and Khmer have the nature of “inland power”, the projection of knowledge (civil engineering, surveying, architecture and others) grew and became long standing. Throughout centuries in the era of Khmer and Mataram Hindu, trade had been used as tool, trajectory and the resources of civilisation.

The awareness of living among great civilisations was also shaped by the trade of spices. The trade kept on growing since the Sriwijaya. However, it should be noted that trade is a form of “non-hegemonic”, “non-conquest” international relations. In the landscape of Nusantara, one may observe that each trading power values multi-hubs and multi-cultural relations. When one power wanted to become a hegemonic and monolithic power, they would eventually fail. VOC (the Colonial Dutch-East Indian Company) fell spectacularly in Nusantara. Likewise, the kingdoms of Nusantara which wanted to dominate others did not achieve longevity.

Living among major trading world powers, such as that of Indian, Khmerian, Thai, Chinese and Vietnamese trade (and trade guilds), Nusantara always developed trade as an operational trajectory, meaning it looked into ways which enabled all participating members to operate. Seizing the South China Seas did not happen since trade shaped the relations between powers in the area as a platform for “the prosperity of the interior”. It relates with the fact that many powers were then inland, and always needed a hub and connection in the seas in Southeast Asia. In the course of history, science and schools were greatly developed through this trade.

We also could see the wider context of trade and values which were brought by that. For example, scientists in China and India developed

great learning towards mathematics, literature and architecture. Trade brought this into the socio-cultural life of Nusantara. In another example, Gujarat merchants brought various schools of Islamic civilisation from the Middle East and Central Asia into Nusantara. Not surprisingly then that Nusantara became so enriched in the field. This includes the transformation of how to develop and utilise power. The civilisation of Islam which was brought by them created a more confederal interrelation as opposed to a concentric one. For Nusantara, this contribution was very significant. Monolithic drives repeatedly failed. The Gujarat merchants and the relation with the early communities of Islam in Nusantara brought open socio-governance and confederal rule.

##### **5. Trading as a formation of “commonwealth”**

“Commonwealth” could refer to the meaning of “prosper together” or “public or shared wealth” (which is then articulated as a polity or community). In this sense, trade plays a major role in the landscape

of maritime life in the archipelago. Civilisation which grew along the trade lines extended a relaxed atmosphere towards the growth of many hubs and centres of culture, essentially establishing a confederal view. This resulted in the widespread knowledge, exchange of goods and services, and exchange of ideas flourishing openly. When the VOC imposed themselves into this landscape as the dominant force, then into colonialism, the reaction of communities of Nusantara became very hostile and long standing. The episode of *cultuur stelsel* increasingly became a hallmark on how one power imposed its domination on another. *Cultuur stelsel* is hard-forced farming for narrow interests of commerce, followed by militarisation. The resistance against *cultuur stelsel* reinforced the connection between inland powers with maritime powers. This broke the assumption that “the inland and coastal areas” were not related. Perspectives of “anti-colonialism” strengthened a long standing intuition of “anti-hegemony” and “anti-conquest” which had grown within trade in Nusantara.



Bajawa with beautiful shores, keelokan pantai Bajawa. Bajawa, Flores, Nusa Tenggara Timur is one among many places in Indonesia which has maritime culture with one culture enrich towards others.

Picture: KHOMAINI.







# THE LIFE OF FAMILY: INDONESIAN EXPERIENCES OF LIFE AND VALUES

## **A. PEACE INSPIRATION FROM MALUKU**

Indonesia is an archipelagic nation. This is true with Maluku (also known as Moluccas). For many voyagers and ethnic-groups, including Bugis-Makassars, Javanese, Arabians, Chinese, Madura, they found a true archipelagic encounter in Maluku. Indeed, the story of the “spice islands” came from

this particular area. Then, the fleet of Portuguese and Dutch (in fact, the Tordessillas Treaty found its delineation through, among others, Maluku).

It is also interesting to look into the voyage of Bugis that they “inhabited” the sea of Maluku, and making Aru Islands (as part of Maluku) as a key place for their work. The fact that the nature there is so beautiful adds to



## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values



The Great Mosque of Al-Ghuraba Baiturrahman Bajawa (before renovation) and the Protestant Church of GMIT (Gereja Masehi Injili Timor) Eben Haezer. Both are in close proximity in Imam Bonjol street, Kelurahan Kisanata. This shows a good relation among religious groups in Bajawa, Flores.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

the attraction of this region. It is only logical that Maluku has been the most multi-cultural, multi-religious, and multi-group region of Indonesia. The two major religious groups have been Muslim (Islam) and Christian (both Catholic and Protestant). The Maluku people call *Hail* for Muslim (Islam) and *Sarane* for Christians. The socio-cultural life of Maluku is still bound by tribal and clan lines. Some clans are synonymous with a particular religion. Some, however share a common life with both religious traditions inside. Understanding the context of this socio-cultural life, the people of Maluku have developed a cultural system which can manage diversity, and manage the bad effects, such as conflict. They have some traditions that can draw religious

groups closer, so making the clans thrive. This is through cooperation and fraternal bonding. The notable traditions of this are *pela gandong*, *masohi*, *badati* and *maano* (*Hadi Basalamah*).

This socio-cultural bond suffered a great shock in 1999, when a social conflict broke out on January 19, 1999. With various relations towards the post-reformation era, the spark of identity politics came into life. The form of authoritarian rule was over, but the new democratic process was yet to capture various aspirations. Then, a small quarrel between youngsters of the *Batu Merah* neighbourhood who were Muslim and the *Mardika* neighbourhood who were Christians broke out into strife. This then created a violence unimaginable in previous decades of life. Major conflicts broke out in several phases on a large



The traditional custom of Pasawari Adat Panas Pela, the Amahai Ihamahu is on commemorating and strengthening the social and cultural relation in Seram island. The Amahai is of Seram island, and Ihamahu is of Saparua island (20/9/2016).

Picture: <https://ipji.org/2016/09/30/panas-pela-amahai-satu-darah-satu-gandong/>



The dance of Dansa Tali is performed in the event of Panas Pela (on expressing the close relation between families) among 4 negeri/desa (villages), i.e. Wacai, Soya, Kaibobu and Morella, in the front space of the Mosque of Hausihu Morella, Ambon, Maluku, Selasa (5/8/2014).

Picture: <http://beritadaerah.co.id/2014/08/05/panas-pela-di-pulau-ambon-maluku/>

scale. The tension between the two religious groups kept on. Then came the agreement of the Second Malino in 2002. After the agreement, some places were still in conflict, but on a much smaller scale. Quoting observers, including Bertrand, there was a fundamental finding that no one would think that Maluku and Ambon would become a heart-breaking and vicious conflict between Muslims and Christians inside the family of Maluku people.

During colonial times, Maluku and Ambon (or *Amboina*, as it was known then) was an important centre of trade. The colonial government of the

day created discriminatory policies in providing many benefits for Ambon Christians. They recruited many Christian Ambonese for administration and military. Ambonese Muslims, on the contrary, were more marginalised. They lived in villages and did not have the same level of education compared to Ambonese Christians (Bertrand, 186). In the New Order era, the contrary was the case. The government gave significant access and power to many Muslim groups.

This, then, was recognised by peace figures of Muslim and Christian groups alike. Pastor Jack Manuputty and Abidin Wakano assessed that the colonial government in the past has built a segregation model based on religion in Maluku. This segregation persisted until Indonesia's independence. Grouping took place not only in the villages that are identical to a particular religion, but also in educational institutions and government offices. The outbreak of conflict in 1999 was triggered by this segregation. The government failed to establish an equitable system and social inclusion for both sides. The policy of segregation caused hostility and was considered as marginalising a particular group.

When the conflict erupted in Maluku many people were in shock and did not grasp the immensity of the situation. Many people, especially at the national level, thought that the conflict was a war between Muslims and Christians. Religious leaders in Ambon initially

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

were trapped in this condition since the polarisation, of Muslims and Christians, was such an imposition to their social stance. But local activists tried to keep a distance and argued that the real conflict was not a religious issue. Interfaith figures from around Maluku started to coordinate their efforts to create a meaningful response to the conflict, and to relate with groups in conflict-torn segregated neighbourhood and villages.

Those figures then worked closely with national government in pursuing peace. The result is that now Maluku has become a symbol of tolerance for all Indonesians to follow. Nuncio of Indonesia (the representative of the Vatican) and Antonio Guido Filipazzi both confirmed this. Diversity does not mean conflict of one group towards another. The experience of Maluku is certainly very inspiring for conflict-afflicted communities in the world in which those conflicts are related with differences in religion.

The ability of the Maluku people to want to live together in diversity is supported by active community leaders who set an example of tolerance in education. They reinstated and activated various social forces. For example, tradition itself reportedly was quite famous in Maluku. *Pela Gandong* was an agreement made by two countries (villages) or more. *Pela Gandong* itself is the essence of the word “*pela*” and “*gandong*”. *Pela* is a bond of unity while *gandong* has the

### PELA GANDONG

The tradition of *Pela Gandong* is the hall mark of family relations in Maluku. The neighbourhood or village of different religions, most of the time Islam and Christian), developed local culture relationships which predated the coming of those religions and kept taking all groups in common through the social-cultural space (the neighbourhood and village, alone and with others, often called themselves *negeri*.) One instance is the fraternity of Kailolo and Tihulale *negeri* in Central Maluku on October 2, 2009. Both *negeri* embraced and spoke of their fraternity in front of the Governor of Maluku. They acknowledged each other as brothers carrying up *pela*. The relationship between Tihulale and Kailolo can be traced far back in time. In the second Alaka war, when the Dutch attacked the kingdom Hatuhaha (Hulaliu, Kabau, Kailolo, Pelau and Rumoni), Kapitan Tihulale helped the kingdom Hatuhaha in bringing victory by repelling Belanda. This war was what ultimately bound the *negeri* Tihulale with five other *negeri* namely Hulaliu Hatuhaha, Kabau, Kailolo, Pelau and Rumoni in the family of *Pela*. The family of Kailolo and Tihulale was marked at the time by building a mosque of Nan Kailolo Datu. The *negeri* of Kailolo invited Tihulale to participate in the building effort. The invitation was welcomed by Tihulale so much that they participated in great part by supporting it with manpower and materials. They came with wood and boards which would be used in building the mosque. Conversely when the country Tihulale built Beth Eden Church, Kailolo contributed in great part by providing a lot of ceramic.

meaning of brotherhood. So it is a bond of unity with one brother raised another.

### The Culture of Maluku

As a trade centre in the past, the people of Maluku had received arrivals of great nations for a long time, such as the Arabians, Portuguese and Dutch. Even today, the people of Java, Buton, Bugis and Makassar are key participants and acknowledge the family of Maluku people. Muslims, Protestant Christians and Catholics have become inseparable parts of the Maluku people in the northern, central, south and southeast parts. The long standing family tradition has shaped the relationship of all members of the family. The tradition of *pela* is quite famous. Also, the Maluku people have clan (family) life which is quite entrenched, with the name of clan denoting the cultural presence and role of each.

The *Pela* tradition actually has several types, namely *pela darah*, *pela sirih* and *pela gandong*. *Pela darah* is the hardest kind. This *pela* defines binding prohibitions and obligations. The concord of this is commemorated by drinking blood taken from the finger of the leaders of the group which is trickled into a designated glass. They then drink the water. Through this *pela* they become brothers and sisters forever. The members must not come into marriage. As brothers and sisters, they shall protect and give their hands toward each other. *Pela sirih* is softer

than *pela darah*. This *pela* is established through an oath to help and to protect. The *pela gandong* defines and develops a bond of friendship with the awareness towards family lineage. *Gandong* itself comes from the contents of the uterus.

In the tradition of *gandong*, and various *pela*. It is quite a dishonour to let one member be left not helped by the others. They regard the negligence as a disgrace. Thus, when the village was in need, such as in building houses of worship, the brothers of *pela* will participate in helping out. Besides *pela*, Maluku people also have a family or clan. Those who are part of a particular clan were considered as part of a nucleus family. One clan could have spread into several villages and also could have a different religion. For example, the *Pelupessey* clan lives not only in *Siri Sori*, a Muslim area, but also in *negeri Ouw* (Christian), *negeri Paperu* (Christian) and *negeri Siri Sori Serani* (Christian). Likewise the *Tanamal* clan in *Nusa laut*, *Saparua*, lives in a Christian cultural area. The clan also lives in *Werinama*, *Seram* that are Muslim. They are tied into one clan so that they maintain a shared cultural life and pay mutual visits when there is a big celebration in each home.

There are other traditions of Maluku which represent the symbol and life of togetherness as a community, even if they have different beliefs. Those are *masohi*, *badati* and *maano*. These traditions bind and develop an awareness for Maluku people to always





Tradition of *pela* and *gandong* is a fundamental local genius which forms the fraternity and peacemaking of Maluku of all groups.

Picture: <https://disbudparkabmtb.files.wordpress.com/2008/11/13112008502.jpg>

help each other whenever there is a member who needs help (Toisuta, et al.).

### The role of the peace actors in Maluku

The use and abuse of religion in the Maluku conflicts gave birth to many figures who worked for and inspired peace. They not only managed to end the conflict but also further confirmed that the religious affiliations in Maluku people actually did not teach violence and killing. Bitter conflict experiences reinforced their fraternal bond.

#### ***Abidin Wakano and Jack Manuputty***

Abidin Wakano and Jack Manuputty are important figures who initiated the peace efforts in Ambon (Ambon is an Island in the geographical centre of archipelagic Maluku, and the

provincial capital of Maluku). They initiated a movement called *Gerakan Provokator Damai* (the Movement of Peace Provocateur). Previously, they had also been actively involved in the establishment of the Inter-Faith Institute Maluku (LAIM, *Lembaga Antar-Iman Maluku*). Abidin Wakano is a lecturer in IAIN (Islamic Higher Education Institute) Ambon and in the Indonesian Christian University of Maluku (Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku). Jack Manuputty is a religious leader of Protestant Christianity, a *pendeta* or a reverend. He actively spread the message of peace.

Looking into diversity in Maluku, they thought there should be active social inclusion efforts for entire communities. According to them, since the colonial era, the people of Maluku had been segregated in line of religion, between the lands of Islam and Christianity. In some places, the mix is alive, but in many places, a village is synonymous with a particular religion. Segregation also occurs in educational institutions and government institutions were filled by one particular religious group. These conditions notoriously nourished the seeds of discord and stereotypes against one another.

When the conflict between Muslims and Christians broke out, both of them understood that peace cannot just be born naturally. There needs to be an effort from actors who are committed to take action to prevent awful hostility. With this acute awareness, they then



Abidin Wakano, key figure in peacemaking in Maluku. With Rev. Jack Manuputty, he works to end segregated city of Maluku which was caused by conflict. Both found Kampung Perdamaian, or hamlet of peace.

Picture: [www.malukupost.com](http://www.malukupost.com).

moved and invited communities to participate in creating peace.

They deliberately used the word “provocateur” for their movement to reverse the logic that developed over the years. As if the word has a negative meaning, they used and abused the word for peace. Hence the word can also be used to invite people to build a peaceful situation. That was what they developed through the “peace provocateur movement”.

In their view, peace must be encouraged and provoked. This movement leaned into the fact there are always seeds of peace in everyone, just as there are seeds of violence in everyone. Then, what seeds are stimulated to grow depends on what kind of “provocation” is undertaken.

If the provocation of peace continues, then the values of peace will flourish.

In provoking and cultivating the seeds of peace they actively worked “against” mainstream media that tended to provoke hostility. Language in media should not put groups within the fire of hostility. Through the movement, they are also actively involved in writing stories about various inter-faith encounters, dances, and other cultural works. Essentially they wanted to reinforce the awareness that peace must be created by themselves. So they were trying to actively build this awareness towards all sides.

Reverend Jacky Manuputty now also actively rebuilds the Pela tradition. He rebuilds ties between *negeri* in Maluku, particularly between Muslim and Christian *negeri*. He hopes the riots that occurred in the late 20th century were



Rev. Jack Manuputty, key figure in peacemaking in Maluku.

Picture: [www.satuharapan.com/Sabar Subekti](http://www.satuharapan.com/Sabar_Subekti).

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

the last. He wants Maluku to remain in peace even though they have different religions.

Wakano Abidin, in addition to the work of the Peace Provocatuer Movement, also developed education and training programs of reconciliation and peace in the Ambon Reconciliation and Mediation Center-ARMC, in IAIN (Islamic State Institute, the Islamic higher education). He invited the groups who had been involved in the conflict to knit back peace by exchanging a “live-in” in opposing places. A Muslim is asked to stay a few days at the family home of mostly a Christian and vice versa. Although initially this raised fears, but after staying a couple of days, the participants experience the warmth of the brotherhood. This process successfully heals old wounds.

### ***Josep Matheus Rudolf Fofid***

Josep Matheus Rudolf Fofid is also a key figure in peace-building in Maluku. During the 1999 conflict, he lost loved ones. His father and two brothers died in it. But he tried to understand all of it. To him, the killed and the killer are actually victims. Therefore, he learned not to hold a grudge and hate.

At the time conflict happened, the community was split by the religion of Muslims and Christians. Not only that, humanitarian assistance and the media were also split and this heated the situation. It took time for anyone to understand the situation, and not to



Josep Matheus Rudolf Fofid is survivor of Maluku Conflict who works tirelessly for conflict resolution in Maluku. He works mainly through peace journalism and arts.

Picture: [www.katoliknews.com](http://www.katoliknews.com).

get caught up in the sentiment of the groups.

He then happened to work as a journalist of Suara Maluku. He invited other interfaith colleagues to not get caught up in the sentiments of one group and tried to formulate a code of impartial journalism. The language was chosen carefully so as not to make certain parties increasingly take advantage to spread hatred and hostility even further. He also tried to embrace all parties to be involved in spreading the seeds of peace towards each group. In doing so, he had to face the threat of the warring parties. It was not easy to build trust in the community which was mired by conflict. However, with hard work and the belief that there is always a peace proponent in the Maluku people, the struggle could bear

fruit. The network that he developed to spread the message of love still plays an important role in Maluku.

After the conflict ended, he remained active in the work of peace in Maluku. In his view, the conflict could break out at any time, starting from a trivial matter. Through his efforts, he wanted the people of Maluku to be better prepared and be able to manage diversity. The Maluku people should not be easily provoked to hatred towards others. Because of the commitment in spreading peace, he was given the Maarif Award, an award given by the Maarif Institute, an institution engaged in the field of culture in the context of Islam, humanity and Indonesianness, founded by the former chairman of Muhammadiyah, Ahmad Syafii.

***Sister Brigitta, a catholic nun***

Her name was Sister Brigitta Renyaan. She was one of those who were actively involved in the reconciliation process during the conflict in Maluku. Together with interfaith network, the Protestants and Muslims formed a group called Gerakan Perempuan Peduli (The Concerned Women Movement Group). Sister Brigitta herself was the coordinator of the movement from the Catholic side. The presence and work of the Movement (GPP) helped to reduce the level of conflict and hostility that has occurred in Maluku since 1999. They were very persistent in fighting for peace. Their movement was spearheaded by women.



Sister Brigitta Renyaan, one of key figure in the resolution in Maluku conflict. With others, she founded Gerakan Perempuan Peduli (The concerned women movement group) which gather persons from all religious group in Maluku, mainly muslim, protestant, catholic.

Picture: Istimewa.

Most of them were mothers. Women and mothers were the ones who suffered most in the conflicts in Maluku, and elsewhere.

In the conflict in Maluku in 1999, and since, Sister Brigitta and friends of the communities articulated the importance of interfaith movements in stopping the violence. Their actions certainly were not without risk. They had to face the threat of terror and killing by certain parties in conflict. But she was not daunted by the threat. She kept working to deliver and promote peace.

She once explained that when the Maluku conflict broke out in 1999, there were so many women and children

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

who fell victim. They were the most vulnerable group. She felt strongly for the need to stop that. Through GPP, she built interfaith communication in stopping the violence and for the protection of rights of women and children. Gathering mothers in a conflict situation was certainly not easy. The work of the interfaith network was fundamental since the conflict itself wore the name of religion, so there is a need to revive the message of peace of the religion. Therefore, before gathering, they usually promised each other to meet in secret so that no one else knew, since the hostility was based on religion (Islam and Christianity) was so pervasive then.

On facing all difficulties, she never lost her energy. On working out the peace building work, she actively went to various parties who were considered important in reducing conflict. The work established communications with the governor, the army, police and parliament (either provincial or city-districts) to stop the conflict.

Sister Brigitta herself was born in Langgur, Maluku Tengah. She became a nun at the Order of Putri Bunda Hati Kudus (The Daughter of the Lady of Sacred Hearts), Ambon City since 1975. She chose to share the love of life with others by becoming a nun. In the order, she forged faith in the form of love of humanity. So when there was a conflict which abused the use of religion, she fought this abuse. She then built an interfaith community in

promoting a vision of peace between fellow human beings. After the conflict ended, she remained active in various social activities. She accompanied the women and children who were victims of conflict and natural disaster. In that effort, she was active in three charities, namely Yayasan Kasih Mandiri Ambon (The foundation of Love Self-Help Ambon), Yayasan Astidharma (the Foundation of Astidhara) which works to support children and education, as well as the Gerakan Perempuan Pedulia (the Movement of Concerned Women). The Batumeja region was never lonely. Until late at night, her door was always open for anyone who needed help.

### B. "KNITTING" THE PEACE IN POSO

In the historical record of Poso, conflict was actually almost non-existent within the inter-religious groups. Although the people of Poso had different religions, before 1998, major conflicts due to religious differences was unheard of. Then, it was quite surprising when a major conflict based on religion broke out in 1998. The life of Poso communities, both Muslims and Christians, were tied into the life of *mosintuwu* (*si* = shared, *tuwu* = life, a shared life and die). In this shared life, it is part of life that communities from different religions share and celebrate in the religious of each other. Then, they helped each other in those celebrations (Agustanty, 205-206).



H. Sofyan Faried (Muslim figure of Poso) shook hands with Protestant Rev. Damanik (Christian figure of Poso) in the momentous occasion of the signing of Malino Declaration 20 December 2001, in Malino. The declaration is to transform Poso conflict and to establish mutual recognition towards each member of Poso society.

Picture: Istimewa.

Demographically, the spread of Islam in Poso is concentrated in the coastal areas. Islam in general was brought by traders from Bugis and Ternate. Christianity is more concentrated in the uphill areas. In economic life, Muslim groups usually worked as fishermen and fish traders. The Christian groups grew vegetables and sold them.

The Poso conflict in 1998 was proliferated out of competition of local elites who happened to come from the two different religions group. In December 1998, when the tenure of Regent Arif Patanga was about to expire. Two figures wanted the job. They were Damsyik Ladjalani and Yahya Patiro. Both were from the same political party, Golkar. However, Damsyik, who was incidentally Muslim,

was supported by the PPP (Partai Persatuan Pembangunan, a political party which espoused the value of Islam), while Patiro who happened to be Protestant, was supported by the PDIP (Partai Demokrasi Indonesia Perjuangan, a leading nationalist party) and Christian figures. The race for the regent election by two figures who had different religious supporters started to inflame religious sentiments. After that, the feud then shifted to religion.

Ultimately they both then failed, because DPRD I (provincial House of Representatives) chose another candidate, namely Muin Pusadan who was incidentally a Golkar cadre, the enmity between the two leaders did not subside. This happened when the governor should choose a Sekwilda (a minister counsellor in the provincial government), the number two in an area. Both wanted this position. Because of the potential for conflict was huge, the governor ultimately did not choose either. But the situation was difficult to control. Mutual provocations resulted in conflicts between Muslims and Christians (Hasrullah, 21-22, cf. also Agustanty, 212-214). To stop the conflict between warring parties, local and central government took the initiative to gather the traditional leaders in Poso. They held a meeting entitled *rujuk sintuwu maroso*. Through the meeting, they called for the importance of living together and agreed on ending the conflict. Symbolically, the traditional meeting that they held was *motambu*

*tana*, namely the sacrificing of a buffalo and the burying of its head. The burial of the buffalo head is treasured as part of the burial disputes of the past. After the burial procession, warring parties were also asked not to bring up what happened in the past (Agustanty, 235-236).

For some, the traditional meeting was considered less representative because it did not involve religious leaders and migrants who had an important role in the Poso conflict. Significant progress in the effort to pursue the new peace was pursued when religious leaders strived for another peace building effort, which became the declaration of Malino 1. Before inviting the leaders of religious groups, staff of the People's Welfare ministry secretly (then then minister was Jusuf Kalla) selected religious figures who represented the groups in Poso. Finally, 10 people from the Muslims and 10 people from Christian groups were gathered. A secret meeting place was then prepared for each group. After several meetings, each party agreed to end the conflict.

Although the deal was criticized by some parties for not involving groups of victims, the Malino 1 agreement was considered a success in conflict resolution. The situation was much more conducive for a peaceful life to gain traction... Small clashes did occur a couple of times, but it had been reduced significantly. One important progress of the Malino 1 declaration was

the handover of homemade weapons by the warring parties (Agustanty, 239-242).

Some observers regarded the Malino 1 agreement as more effective than the Malino 2 agreement for the Ambon conflict. One explanation is that the warring parties in Poso were active in the implementation of the points of agreement signed in Malino 1 (Tomagola, 306-307).

### **The arrival of Islam and Christianity in Poso**

Referring to history, Islam came to Poso via the Bugis group who worked as traders and sailors. The territory in which they lived was generally the coast. Therefore until now Muslims in Poso have generally lived in coastal regions. In addition to the Bugis, the sultanate of Ternate also contributed greatly to the spread of Islam in Poso. It happened that approximately in the 17th century the spread of Islam was in several ways, among others were the political approach, preaching peacefully, education and marriage. The spread of Christianity in Poso could not be separated from an evangelist named Albert Cristian Kruyt. The spread was initiated in 1892 and supported by evangelists from the Netherlands. He was also assisted by N Adriani, also an evangelist, and Papa I. Woente, a tribal chief in Poso. Because of their long-standing work, Christianity was finally accepted and embraced by many tribal communities

in Poso. The work of Kruyt was mainly through education. Therefore the role of education of Christians in Poso was generally better than the Muslims who had already been there in Poso. (Hasrullah, 73-75)

### **The Knitters of Peace in Poso**

As in Ambon, conflict in Poso posed a strong influence to society so much so that groups formed that were yearning for peace. They were tired of conflict and of suspicion against others. There are two figures to mention here without diminishing the role of other leaders. They are Budiman Maliki and Lian Gogali.

#### ***Budiman Maliki***

When the Poso conflict broke out, Budiman was a student at the University Tadulako, Palu. His hometown was then categorised as conflict ridden so his family was evacuated to a safe area. In Palu, he also met many displaced groups. Observing this condition, he was so moved that he felt something must be done.. He later joined Jaringan Relawan Penanganan Pengungsi Poso (The Volunteer Network for Poso Displaced). The volunteers were responsible for the care of the needs of food, health, education and post-trauma healing. The support was not only for Muslim groups but was also for Christian groups. The humanitarian action of this network refused to be inflicted by religious sentiment. All of the displaced were helped, regardless



Budiman Maliki, the key figure in supporting victims and survivors of Poso conflict. He managed to gather resource by his own in working on this particular work. He also found LPMS/Lembaga Penguatan Masyarakat Sipil (The Institute for empowerment of civil society).

Picture: [www.metrosulawesi.com](http://www.metrosulawesi.com).

of their religious background. The conflict that lasted from 1998 started to subside in 2001 when the agreement of Malino 1 was signed.

A peace agreement stood already, and the conflict was still there but just on a much smaller scale. In post-conflict time, problems began to emerge. A stalled economy, destroyed buildings and the need for the education of children was affected by the conflict and for their recovery from the trauma of conflict.

The relations between the conflicting groups of Muslims and Christians, needed to be recovered. After the conflict, suspicion against

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

each other was not totally gone. Budiman, along with fellow activists later founded the Institute for the Strengthening of Civil Society (LPMS, Lembaga Penguatan Masyarakat Sipil). Through LPMS, he tried to establish peace and to build trust between Muslim and Christian groups. They invited them to participate in post-conflict works. They worked on post-conflict management training, discussions and also undertaking a community-based economy. The targets they put as the focus were for the grass roots, not the elites. To work that effectively improved the economic condition of the communities, they helped farmers through the program on accelerating the cocoa-based economy.

### **Lian Gogali**

When the Poso conflict erupted, Lian Gogali was actually not in the area. Then, she was a student at Yogyakarta. Precisely because of the conflict, the life of her family back home was uncertain. Their homes were burned and their belongings looted. Because of these conditions, she did not receive the costs necessary for her education in Yogyakarta.

When conflict started to subside, in 2003-2004, she was interested in studying the roots of the conflict in Poso. She interviewed persons and groups who were from the area of conflict and displacement. From the interviews, she took notice that the women had had a real and strong role



Lian Gogali, the founder of Sekolah Perempuan (School of Women) and Institut Mosintuwu in Poso; among key figure in the peacemaking in then-conflict ridden Poso.

Picture: YouTube.

in knitting peace together in Poso.

She had heard the story of a mother who had to walk kilometres away to sell fish to people regardless of their religious affiliations. Indeed, this was a dangerous job in that very situation. Because of the conflict, Muslims who generally sold sea fish and the Christians who sold vegetables could not interact. They were suspicious of if their goods were contaminated or poisoned. This mother, indeed, could work and gain confidence in a difficult place and time. She really did sell in order to support the family. In effect, however, she worked for the early stages of reconciliation. For Lian, this action was a breakthrough in an atmosphere full of suspicion.

From that experience, she later

founded a school called the Sekolah Perempuan Mosintuwu (School of Women Mosintuwu). For her, women have an important role as an agent of peace. At school, she ran educational programs for all women, Christian and Muslim. She addressed a deep seated misunderstanding of and towards each group. To enable a more interactive process, she sometimes invited Muslim women to visit the church and vice versa. This kind of interaction opened many ways to resolve the tension between groups. In addition to education on tolerance, this school also provided a program of cooking and organic farming.

In an effort to heal the trauma, Lian made available a mobile library program called Project Sophia. This library travelled to 24 villages to encourage children to read books. She hoped to recover persons and groups traumatised by conflict and to learn how to open themselves towards each other.

### **C. DIVERSITY AS TREASURE, AN EXPERIENCE OF KALIMANTAN,**

In Kalimantan, West Kalimantan in particular, there are two major groups inhabiting the area, the Dayak and Melayu. Adding to those two groups were the Chinese and Madura who had a decisive role in social life. There are others, like smaller groups of Java, Batak, Sunda and Sulawesi. Inter-ethnic relations between groups in West Kalimantan

was quite vulnerable and easy to spark a conflict. This is evident from some inter-ethnic tensions, skirmishes and open conflict which occurred in the region. In the colonial period up to the beginning of independence, Malay groups were at the top layer of the social stratification of West Kalimantan. Malays had decent work, great power and wealth. The Dayak tribe, for some time, became marginalised. In the late 50s, Kalimantan Barat began accommodating representation with the establishment of the province of Central Kalimantan. Tjilik Riwut, a Dayak leader, became the first governor of this province. But unfortunately, this good trend would be then reversed when the New Order regime took power (starting circa 1966). With the developmentalist ideology, the Dayak were pressured back into their own inner area and villages (Rosdiawan, et al, 31).

In the history of relations between groups in West Kalimantan, there had been some conflicts, ranging from small-scale to wide and terrible. For example, the conflict between Dayak and Madura or between Malays and Madura are the ones which are commonly known. The conflict between Dayak and Madura which started in December 1996 originated in Sanggau Ledo. The conflict between Malays and Madura occurred in 1999, starting in Parit Setia (Rosdiawan, et al, 36-40).

In general, inter-ethnic conflict comes from an ordinary criminal

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values



Two persons of Dayak Kenyah is on hunting. The forest, the respect for nature, and sharing life are fundamental in the life of Dayak tribe.

Picture: [www.beritagar.id](http://www.beritagar.id).

matter. The matter then later grows into inter-group conflict because identification and identity often dominates the narrative and emotion. Of course this is possible because there is a prejudice that has been built before. In the case of inter-ethnic relations in West Kalimantan, each group has their own prejudices towards each other. This prejudice was hardened when conflict broke out between groups (Rosdiawan, et al, 45-46).

In the life where acculturation gained poor ground, inter-group conflict in West Kalimantan was added by the issue of unjust policy on natural resource. There are three economic

sectors for natural resources in issue, namely the oil palm plantations, plantations for industrial purposes (with their derivative products), mining (particularly gold) and forest products (wood). The Dayak communities regard the land and forest as theirs because it had been under their control, even before Indonesia existed. What is more fundamental for the Dayak is that the land and forests are the basis for their life, both cultural and economic. Utilisation of the forest has been undertaken based on their cultural wisdom. The Dayaks believe that everything has a spirit so that the ways and means on utilising it

are undertaken with rituals. These rituals are fundamental and not to be breached. If and when this wisdom is violated, the relationship between human and nature will be disrupted. As for outside of the Dayak communities, such faith is regarded as a barrier to economic activity and the acceleration of development which was being promoted at that time. In essence, policies on natural resources and economic development was regarded unfair and less empowering by the local population. There was also the persisting problem which often caused tensions between groups, that of the distribution of political positions. The central government paid so little attention towards the relations between groups in society that at some level, it bred resentment that led to social conflict.

### **Madura in Sambas**

According to Parsudi Suparlan, a noted Indonesian researcher, people of Madura had come to live in West Kalimantan since 1892 or since the end of the 19th century. Before the Second World War, their presence and lives in the region were socially and economically not very significant. That was because they were small in number and because of their low social position. Their work was generally as unskilled labourers. During the course of time until before the riots of 1999, the Madura already lived in almost all corners of the Sambas district, in

villages, hamlets and towns. They lived in groups with fellow Madura. Although clumped, they lived in neighbourhoods along with other groups, especially the Malay and Dayak.

The Madura activity centre is a place of praying. If their number was less than theirs it was still a place of praying in a small community set, called *langgar* or *mushalla*. However, when theirs become big in number, then the centre would then become mosques and religious boarding schools. Dedicated towards the centre of activities, they are less inclusive towards other groups. The place of praying was filled exclusively by the Madura. The language of communication was also the language of Madura. Clerics and imams in mosques and schools were also Maduran. In fact, the Madura in Sambas have a tendency to pray in congregation in the mosque belonging to the Madura, whose sermon was conducted in Madura.

### **The conflict of Sambas and its trigger**

On understanding the conflict between Madura and Dayak, a cultural approach suggested a serious problem at the level of inter-group relations, culturally, the two ethnic groups had a culture of violence that has had great potential for conflict. From the available data, between 1962 and 1999, there were 11 small riots between the Dayak and Maduran people. The greatest and most widespread conflict took place during

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

1996-1997 which started in Sanggau Ledo. Unlike the frequent conflict between Dayak and Madura as was often the case, the conflict between the Malays and Madura was actually rather rare. The incident of the “Parit Setia” event, which was the trigger of the open conflict was a relatively rare event. This incident happened because of a dispute between the two groups which could no longer find a solution (Suparlan). Up until the present time, the people of Madura Sambas have been displaced and cannot return to their *kampong* because the resolution process has not been completed.

Specifically regarding the conflict between Madura and Dayak, Jacques Bertrand has a fairly good analysis. According to him, there are several explanations that never surfaced in the conflict reading. The first is a cultural explanation. These two ethnic groups are considered as the ones with a tradition of violence so that the potential for conflict was high. The Dayak ethnic group had a tradition of *kayau* (headhunting), when one’s honour is overrun. Although this tradition had long been abandoned, during the 1996-1997 conflict, this tradition was revived partly unintentionally. The Madura, on the other part, have the *Carok* tradition. This act is also performed when one’s honour is harassed (Bertrand, 77)

In view of the Dayak, the Madura was a group that does not give respect to the values of Dayak and local

customs. According to Bertrand, this reason is most often cited in explaining why the Dayak and Madura often clashed openly in West Kalimantan, especially when it was compared to other interrelations in the region (Bertrand, 78).

The second explanation, also considered to be possible, is by explaining the acts of provocation. The years between 1996-1997 were the years surrounding the last election of the New Order. There were certain parties which aimed at provoking conflict between those two ethnic groups. Acts of provocation may indeed exist, but this explanation is considered difficult to sustain when it cannot expose how the conflict had been so easy to inflate.

The third explanation is with a socio-economic explanation. This explanation was considered less relevant because among settlers in West Kalimantan, Madura was not a rich group. In general they were poor, roughly equal to the Dayaks. Most of them were rickshaw drivers, porters, drivers, labourers and small traders. (Bertrand, 79)

Jacques Bertrand tried to analyse further about the conflict by showing the condition of the Dayak who experienced a long process of being marginalised, especially since Indonesia’s independence. The culmination of the marginalisation process took place in the time of the New Order through its developmentalist policy. With the ideology of

development, the New Order regime saw the Dayaks as backward. At least there are two policies which made them become more and more like foreigners in their own homes. The first was the standardisation concept for the Dayak village. Because of this policy, the concept of *rumah betang* belonging to Dayak was deemed unfit and then rearranged to fit the format of the village in general (the format of the village in discussion usually confers to a pattern where a region was already undergoing a long process of agriculture rearrangement many times over, just like in Java). This change unravelled the basic structure of Dayak culture which was based on *rumah betang*. The semi-nomadic foresting and farming patterns were also considered inefficient.

The second is the policy of license towards the forest initiated by the New Order government for corporates and cronies of the government. This increasingly made the Dayak considerably weakened in the ecosystem which they lived. By the time they lived through this process of systematic marginalisation, they witnessed a massive migration process of Madura into West Kalimantan. As explained above, economically, in fact Madura was not extremely rich, so that socio-economic reasons were considered less relevant to explain the conflict between Dayak and Madura.

From this description, one may well see that there was a process of

marginalisation experienced by the Dayak along with a loss of political representation. This of course raises their collective disappointment and dejection. But as a group, they were not able to resist the power of the state which was very dominant and repressive at that time. In that situation, they saw the Maduran as not too many in number and who were incidentally often involved in disputes against them. This situation gave a reason for the Dayak tribe to vent their frustration on the Maduran people.

### **Knitting Peace in Kalimantan**

The pursuit of fostering peace and harmonious conditions among groups in West Kalimantan is related to two important things: the first involves the community in the formulation of policies; the second erodes prejudices and stereotypes that exist in society.

In the first, we might see a slight improvement of the formulation of policies based on the interests of the community itself. On the second level, the government obviously wants the inter-group relations in society to become harmonious. Various attempts were made including revitalising local values in each group. This effort was driven by government and non-government organisations. It should be noted that when there was a conflict between Dayak and Madura, not every Dayak went to attack the Madura. Then, most of the Dayak were willing to take the risk to protect the Madura

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

in a time of confusing and frightening conflict. On this experience, we can see the figure of a female Dayak Bakate 'Sanggau Ledo named Paleng.

She said: "At that time, this house was filled with Madurse who were displaced. In the afternoon, we were busy feeding them when we then ate what was left for us. In the evening, we also took them (the displaced) to go to the forest retrieving their belongings which were left there, although we were also afraid of becoming victims by being killed by fellow Dayaks. "(Rosdiawan, 67)

This experience shows an important fact that there are always ones who believe that violence and conflict should be avoided. People like Paleng, who also helped the Dayaks who were under attack by fellow Dayaks, did notice that there are cultural differences which must be addressed. The conflict is not the solution for that. Persons like Paleng are still many and actively knitting peace in Kalimantan.

After the conflict took so many lives and much attention, each side felt compelled to put an end to that conflict. Together with the government, they worked on consolidating peace. In this effort, there was a strong understanding of all walks of life about the importance of ending the conflict. Towards the conflict between Dayak and Madura or between Malays and Madura, all groups were eager to end all the unrest and conflict. Each group also looked into their own on how to regard



The rite of Singer Manetes Hinting Bunu in the city of Banjarmasin. This symbolic act and pray is to make peace out of conflict towards those who are in that situation.

Picture: Istimewa.

other groups. They tried to be fair, and not rush into generalisations.

### Dayak-Madura harmony in the village of Retok

So far, after more than 15 years, we no longer hear of major conflicts in Kalimantan. Governments and communities have learned from past experience. But when we talk about the potential conflict in Kalimantan, the potential is still quite large considering some fundamental problems which are not thoroughly resolved. But that does not mean that peace becomes difficult. We could see some of the efforts made by the communities in knitting peace between ethnic groups and other type of grouping in Kalimantan. It should be noted that on interrelation of groups anywhere, we did not see a conflict between the groups in total terms - ethnic A opposing B, and all total A then opposing B. Not this way. Hence

we fully understood that all Dayaks did not definitely become hostile to the Madura. There was always a part of the group that “came out” of hostilities. They are actually active in the efforts in combating hostilities. They were knitting peace.

This is one of those stories. A village called Retok is where the mutual understanding between ethnic Madura and Dayak lives well. The lifeblood of the village is Retok River, linking one area to another. Therefore in that area there are several transport businesses managed either by the Madura, Dayak and Chinese. The majority of Retok is Madura and secondly Dayak. Another residual fraction is Chinese. The village consists of four hamlets, hamlets of Retok Kuala, Babante, Acin and Memperigang. Their economic life relies heavily on natural products and local farming such as rubber, corn, pineapple and others. Retok settlement patterns of rural communities are still based on ethnic groups. From searching the parents of these communities, the first occupiers of the village of Retok is known as the Dayak tribe in the late 19th century and was then followed by the Madura which were newly arrived in the 1920s. But because there was a fairly massive migration, the number of Madura increased significantly to become the majority. Coexistence between the two ethnic groups stayed relatively intact because there was a strong commitment to understand each other and to understand each culture.

For the Dayaks, traditional values play a very important role. The essence of these values is that they believe in the balance of relations: between human beings, the relationship between human and nature, and the relationship between human and the Creator (Jubata). The indigenous arrangement demands that humans maintain this balance. Therefore if there is a breach of this balance, communities demand compensation through traditional rites. Acts that violate the balance are considered as an act of “littering” so they will need to be “purged”. The cleansing process is done through a ritual led by a Dayak leader. Those who are considered of breaking the balance are also asked to be responsible by performing a penance of “traditional sanctions”. The values of Dayak are accepted by Madura. The Madura are willing to confer the traditional sanctions system applicable in the Dayak community. This can be seen in some cases. Those who are considered responsible, either of the Dayak or Madura are required to pay penalties or compensation for actions that are considered littering. In traditional rituals, they pray together hoping that they were always spared from evil.

An important contributor to the process of cohesion is their ability to understand each other. Most Madura can speak Retok Dayak and vice versa. This ability helps them to perform social inclusion as well. In addition to

the exchange of language, they are also able to distribute political power wisely. For example, although the Madura became the majority, they always give power to the Dayak head of the village. At least, this has been going on since 1972. In an effort to avoid conflict, they also actively select people from each groups who they want to stay in the village Retok. They will not accept ones who are considered difficult to control because of the potential disruption towards the cohesion which has been built (Atok)

#### **D. HARMONY IN THE PROVINCE OF NORTH SUMATERA**

The riot of Tanjung Balai which occurred on Friday, July 29 around 23.30 pm until the early hours of Saturday, July 30 2016 began when a mother of ethnic Chinese, Meliana, demanded a mosque near her home tone down the volume of the speaker. Apparently, these acts gave rise to the anger of some people who do not accept the protests. Initially, this anger could be alleviated by the local leaders and the local police. However, a few hours later a violent mob appeared burning and damaging several buildings of monasteries, temples, and private vehicles. These events led to 15 buildings consisting of monasteries, temples, and private homes being burned and ransacked, seven of which were heavily damaged.

Many said, including local residents of Tanjung Balai themselves, that this

violence was actually not a religious conflict. Economic disparities had been the main cause. Religious elements became merely a trigger. Some mention that the attitude of the ethnic Chinese in Tanjung Balai was arrogant and did not respect other ethnic Muslims. Residents who had long harboured anger took actions when ethnic Chinese residents protested the mosque loudspeakers. They considered this as a concrete manifestation of the arrogance of the “newcomer”.

The Indonesian National Commission on Human Rights took another conclusion. Mother Meliana requested to tone down the speaker’s volume was considered a reasonable manner. Demand was expressed to the mosque management and mediation with the existing wards. Meliana had already apologised for this request. In a press release, the Commission considered that in fact these events would not happen if there was no distortion of information spread by free-rider. The information which was spread was that the Chinese were prohibiting adzan and protesting the mosque loudspeakers. The provocation through social media was spread in the community to ignite ethnic and religious hatred. This then infuriated locals who then vandalised and burning buildings.

Previously, Buddhist ethnic Chinese and Muslims of Tanjung Balai were also experiencing unrest. On May 30, 2010 and June 29, 2010, several organisations



The Vihara (Buddhist Shrine) of Tri Ratna Tanjung Balai (before the Buddhist statue was removed in October 2016) in Asahan, Tanjung Balai Sumatera Utara.

Picture: [www.jadagram.com](http://www.jadagram.com).

in the name of “Gerakan Islam Bersatu” “Islamic Movement Unite” staged a demonstration to the office of Parliament and Mayor of Tanjung Balai. They urged the government to take the Buddha statue out of the Tri Ratna temple on the grounds that the existence of the statue did not reflect Islam in Tanjung Balai and could disrupt the harmony of society. Again, the main reason behind it was allegedly not religion, but a socio-economic competition. The Tanjung Balai community felt being dominated by the Chinese in the social and economic fields. When a Buddhists Chinese community put a high rise Buddha statue, rising over the government built monument Tanjungbalai, they

perceived this as the arrogant ethnic Chinese showing their dominance. Therefore, the residents demanded that the statue was taken out. In time, this statue was never taken out. Only after the 2016 riot of Tanjung Balai the Tri Ratna temple and monastery was damaged - a joint decision involving the city government which took out the 6-meter Buddha statue.

### Violence against Ethnic Chinese

The ethnic Chinese experienced repeated violence in Indonesia, both before and after Indonesia’s independence. In the 20th century, there were incidents of violence occurring in 1916, 1946-47, 1966, 1980, 1996, and 1998.

The socio-economic competition was often cited as the main cause of violence against the ethnic Chinese. They are a minority, but economically they are more capable than the majority. However, the reality of the socio-economic competition alone is not enough to explain the violence. In fact, not all Chinese are rich, and the ethnic violence that targeted them was not limited to the wealthy alone.

The institutionalisation of both the formal and informal continually toward the ethnic Chinese is more explanative for this violence. The ethnic Chinese are considered non-indigenous. Regardless of their diverse origins, the language used, the number of generations since their arrival in Indonesia, or mixed marriage with the non-Chinese, they

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

are still regarded with a single category: Chinese. The term always connotes non-indigenous, or newcomer.

The institutionalisation of Chinese as a separate group seems to play a major role. Starting from colonial times to the various periods of Indonesia's independence, there are a variety of regulations, laws, and institutions of representation that is meant to distinguish the Chinese people from other groups. Even the birth of Indonesian nationalism itself is variably related to the distinction with the colonial government-sponsored Chinese institutions. At that time, various organisations, such as the Sarekat Dagang Islam (the Muslim Merchant Union) were formed as a means to fight against traders and domination of the Chinese. The differentiation of merchants then spawned into a wide range of negative stigma against the ethnic Chinese, such as a sense of loyalty and the ambiguous nature of their businesses as if this impoverishes local communities.

Stigmatisation was then exacerbated by the New Order (Order Baru) era. On the one hand, the New Order perpetuated the marginalisation of ethnic Chinese. Various regulations and policies were adopted to make the movement of the Chinese difficult. They were given a special code in their identity cards, which clearly identified them as Chinese. Indonesians of Chinese descent were completely prohibited on becoming civil servants and to serve in



A person prayed in Kelenteng Sam Poo Kong, Simongan, Semarang.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

the military, especially for top positions. Discrimination also occurred in the field of education. Although unwritten, access to Chinese students for entry into public universities was very limited. Policies that were created by the New Order, though different in application, had the same characteristics with the policy of the Dutch government, which split society.

This splitting was exacerbated by the way the New Order kept a small segment of very rich Chinese businessmen abreast. The components of restrictions against the ethnic Chinese and New Order policies in the mobilisation of foreign capital in the country's development through patron-client relationships with Chinese businessmen had created a class of giant wealthy business conglomerates. The barons grew up under the protection of the authorities. There

arose a general perception that the Indonesians of Chinese descent had dominated the Indonesian economy. This assumption was then worsened by the anti-Chinese sentiment. This fuelled resentment among segments and groups of Indonesians.

The Indonesian financial crisis in 1997 aggravated this situation. The peak occurred in the May 1998 riots, where many ethnic Chinese fell victim. No matter how much provocation played a big role in making anti-Chinese sentiment become violent, this event was a result of the discriminatory policies of the New Order. The Chinese continued to be treated as an outsider, and non-indigenous. When the regime created economic injustice by conspicuously keeping a small segment of wealthy Chinese in the financial machine, the anger against the regime transformed into violence against the ethnic Chinese.

The fall of the New Order regime and anti-Chinese riots that followed made many Indonesians aware of the dangers of segregation towards the integrity of the nation. In addition, tensions against ethnic Chinese began to lower when Chinese conglomerates of the New Order regime were brought to justice in corruption cases. At least, this step removed one of the major resentments against ethnic Tionghoa.

The fall of the New Order became a step to fix a variety of common rules. For the first time, since 1950, the Chinese had the opportunity to

engage in political activities in order to defend their rights. In the open, they demanded the abolition of discriminatory practices.

The government of the reform era tried to engage this demand. The government then took steps to eliminate discrimination against ethnic Chinese. The use of the term indigenous and non-indigenous was abolished. Religious practices and celebrations previously banned could return to public celebration. The Chinese Lunar New Year (*Imlek*) was even declared as a national holiday. The most important thing was through MPR (People's Consultative Assembly, the then highest deliberation body) on adopting a constitutional amendment in November 2001 to replace the requirement that the president must be a "person of origin" with the requirements of citizenship vetting. The provision was also made by the government to re-use the term "Tionghoa" to replace negatively connoted "Cina".

Steps taken by the government during the Reformation did not completely eliminate the practice of discrimination against the Chinese community. However, much has changed. Social and political space is now wide open for the Chinese. Racial violence against ethnic Chinese in post-May 1998 almost did not happen. If anything happens, as in the case of Tanjung Balai, this will soon become a national concern and directly handled by pemerintah.

### **Ethnic Tionghoa in the province of North Sumatra**

The North Sumatra province is an area with the greatest percentage of Chinese ethnicity compared with other areas in Indonesia. Since the Dutch East Indies, there have been permanent settlements of ethnic Tionghoa, for example in Bengkalis, Tanjung Balai, Siantar, Binjai, Tebing Tinggi. At that time, North Sumatra was known as East Sumatra Land of Power Malay Kings.

Until the 19th century, the majority of the population of East Sumatera consisted of Batak Karo, Simalungun Batak and Malay. They were what was known as natives of East Sumatra. Immigrants from China had already been there since the beginning of the 7th century AD, in some ports in East Sumatra. There were already Chinese merchants, particularly in the Aru, Kota China, and the island of Kampai.

In the mid-19th century, there were large amounts of immigration of ethnic Chinese. At that time, the Dutch colonial plantation was developed in this region. At first, local people were not willing to work on the plantation. Therefore, the Colonial government brought in workers from outside the region, mainly from southern China and Java. The East Sumatra region was then inhabited by multi ethnic groups. From then on, the East Sumatra economic system has characterised the plantation. The main characteristic of the plantation economy is as a wealthy area, as well as being dependent on

other regions to meet their basic needs. The dependence relates with the increasing population and the lack of agricultural land. In this case, the ethnic Chinese merchants played a major role.

Meanwhile, the Chinese labourers who had completed employment contracts with the colonial Dutch East Indies began their attempt to settle in cities, and gradually worked as merchants, shopkeepers, small farmers, fishermen and sellers of used goods. In 1920, the settlement of Chinese merchants appeared in several major cities, among others Siantar and Medan. Most shops and trade in the city were dominated by the Tionghoa group.

The groupings made by colonial rule and the post-independence Indonesian government segregated many ethnic Chinese from the others. They lived in enclaves and *kampung* with one single ethnic group, especially in business areas and in urban areas. They preserved Chinese culture and language or dialect related to their native village in mainland China. This made ethnic integration with the local community difficult to gain ground.

### **Interaction of inter-ethnic groups of Sumatra Utara**

In general, North Sumatra is inhabited by diverse ethnicities and is regarded as having good interaction among groups. Inter-ethnic violence, especially since the Reformation, rarely took place. Siantar, for example, has



The then vice governor of the province of North Sumatera, H. T. Erry Nuradi officiated the leadership of Pengurus Daerah Generasi Muda Indonesia Tionghoa Sumatera Utara (GEMA INTI SUMUT/The Local Leadership of Tionghoa Youth of Sumatera Utara)

Picture: Istimewa.

been named as the most tolerant city of Indonesia in 2015 by the Setara Institute. Another city in North Sumatra with similar qualities is Sibolga. Two towns in North Sumatra are considered successful in building the togetherness of multicultural society.

However, what about other cities in North Sumatra? Does there being a minimum of inter-ethnic and religious conflict make it a reference point that the North Sumatra region, particularly in the eastern part, can be regarded as an area which upholds the value of diversity? Though never in open conflict, experiences of conflict in interethnic relations nonetheless occur. Public opposition to the Buddha statue in the Tri Ratna Temple and group protests against the mosque loudspeakers that led to the burning

of a number of places of worship in Tanjung Balai showed that ethnic tensions are still there.

As it is shown in research (Hikmat Budiman, 2012), most urban communities in North Sumatra still viewed Chinese ethnic groups as being exclusive. They prefer to live in their own neighbourhood. They still use their mother tongue in communication, even when they are in public places. This makes other ethnic groups feel uncomfortable. In social activities, the ethnic Chinese tend to avoid activities that are considered not profitable to their ethnic group. If one is involved, involvement is usually only in the form of financial contributions.

As noted above, the long history of segregation policies both by the colonial and Indonesian government contribute to the remoteness of the ethnic Chinese from other ethnic groups. Segregation caused mutual suspicion so each ethnic group maintained a distance towards each other. The ethnic Chinese, a group that is always perceived as a non-native, then built a “fortress”. They focused on the economy, the only area in which they were still relatively free, and strengthened the bond among themselves. This is what made them look exclusive.

The change of policy in post New Order does not diminish this inter-ethnic tension. The ethnic Chinese are already strong in the economic field. Their dominance in the field of trade is hard to match by other ethnic groups,

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

especially by the ones who enter late into the field.

Some research on the city of Medan, for example, shows that the harmonious ethnic relations in the city is more because the population is relatively balanced. This position allows parties to choose to maintain a peaceful atmosphere thereby avoiding the conflict that will hurt all sides.

But that does not mean there is no attempt of some parties to work on inter-ethnic assimilation, to seek a more inclusive society. Looking to the bitter experience of the anti-Chinese riots in 1998 many people realised how destructive the violence caused by ethnic hatred could be. Therefore, this resulted in a combination of many efforts made by the government and society.

North Sumatra alone had a long history of ethnic assimilation. A century ago, the city of Medan had a character of Tjong A Fie, a non-Muslim Chinese businessmen who was successful because of his ability to relate to people from all walks of life. He was known to be very generous to everyone. He was close to the Deli Sultanate and dedicated great contributions to the construction of mosques. One mosque he happened to contribute in building was Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok which until today is still a symbol of assimilation between Malays and ethnic Tionghoa.

In the present day, there is the figure of a doctor named Sofyan Tan. He is



The Old Mosque of Gang Bengkok Kesawan.

Picture: Istimewa.

an example of how difficult life as a Chinese person can be whom are not wealthy. Learning of the discrimination and the impact it posed, he builds awareness through educational pluralism. According to him, education is the key when society wants to build a community which is not afraid of diversity.

### Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok

Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok (old mosque of Bengkok Alley) is one of the three most historic mosques in the city of Medan. This mosque has a roof with the shape of a Chinese praying place (kelenteng). The mosque was built by Chinese non-Muslims. Until now, the building became a symbol of assimilation among ethnic Chinese with Malays. Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok is at Kampung Kesawan, a village in the city of Medan which has many old buildings with historical multi-ethnic life. The road of Ahmad Yani, the location of this mosque, is also

known as Jalan Kesawan. First, in the 19th century, almost all of these areas belonged to Haji Mohammad Ali, who was called Datuk Kesawan. Datuk Kesawan donated land (*tanah wakaf*) to build the mosque. The man who built that mosque was a wealthy merchant of non-Muslims, Tjong A Fie. The building process was carried out in 1890. Then, it encountered some controversy. However, it eventually received the permission from the Sultanate of Deli. The construction then continued. Once completed, the management was handed over to the Sultanate mosque Masjid Lama Deli.

The architecture had a mix of Chinese architecture, Persian, Roman, Middle East, with ornaments of Malay. The shape of the building, especially the top is similar to a temple. The roof is curved and there are four and a half meter thick pillars that support the entire building. At the top of the pole, there is a statue of citrus and grapes, one of the characteristics in Chinese architecture. Also there is a stupa shaped just like one could find in Hindu-Buddhist temples.

Entering inside, everything is different from the outside. There is a pulpit made of wood typical of the Middle East. The pulpit has 13 storied steps, used as a sermon before Friday prayers. Middle Eastern culture is also referenced to at masjid gate. The culture of Malay is seen in the dominance of yellow and green as well as a number of ornaments. On

the ceiling of the mosque there are ornaments called 'hanging bee'. These carvings are made of wood, shaped like a sort of coloured yellow curtain.

Unlike other general mosques, Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok did not have an Arabic name. Named Gang Bengkok because this is the first mosque to be in such a location, a bent-shaped alley (bengkok could mean "bent"). The alley now has become a big bustling road passable for vehicles. It is called "lama" (long ago) because it was built long ago, when the Sultan of Deli, Sultan Ma'mun Al Rashid, reigned over the area.

The mosque did not have ornaments of Arabic calligraphy. Both in terms of builders, the name which is used, and the mix of cultures in the architecture and ornamentation are strong signs of harmonious inter-ethnic relations in the city of Medan, especially between the Malays and Chinese. The differences are not an obstacle for them living together and having mutual help. During the riots in May 1998, the mosque was once the refuge of ethnic Chinese. At that time, the condition of Medan was already tense. There were rumours around on attacks against ethnic Chinese. In this village, the ethnic Malay helped the ethnic Chinese, who were brought to Kesawan and provided refuge in the Masjid Lama Gang Bengkok. Until today, this historic mosque continues to maintain its meaning as the symbol of togetherness and inter-ethnic brotherhood. Ethnic Chinese



dr. Sofyan Tan.

Picture: [www.tempo.co](http://www.tempo.co).

groups did not hesitate to join on caring for this mosque.

### **Sekolah Pembauran or the School of Assimilation**

One of the efforts on preventing conflicts in a multicultural society is through education. This is realised by Dr. Sofyan Tan. He founded the “Sekolah Pembauran” (School of Assimilation) as a means to create awareness towards participants to live together in diversity. The educational institution of this school is named Yayasan Perguruan Sultan Iskandar Muda (the learning foundation of Sultan Iskandar Muda who reigned over the first Muslim Kingdom in Nusantara) by him. The school was established in 1987 and emphasised multicultural education. Each participant learns about the values of tolerance, compassion and diversity. Thus, they can appreciate the differences in society. The school motto is on actualising the Indonesian motto “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” (Unity in Diversity). The school provides a place of worship for all religions in Indonesia. The disciples are facilitated

in conducting worship and religious observance according to their respective beliefs. Also, the school seeks interaction and cultural exchanges to get a mutual understanding among students that Indonesia is a pluralistic nation and that differences are a fact of life.

Those from a lower economic community can also go to this school. Sofyan Tan as the founder was aware that jealousy is still a major issue in building harmonious inter-ethnic relations. The program of “Anak Asuh Silang” (exchange fostering), Subsidi Berantai (chaining subsidy), and Bantuan Sosial (social assistance) involves the wider community. By this program, the school strives to provide the widest opportunity for those unfortunate to go to school.

Yayasan Perguruan Iskandar Muda was established by Dr. Sofyan Tan by learning from his bitter experience when he suffered discrimination. Because of his oriental eyes, he had to repeat the state exam in medicine several times to graduate (and to gain medical license). This happened because he was not from a wealthy family. Sofyan Tan spent a great deal of time as a teacher to finance his school.

Living in poverty and discrimination inspired him to fight for ethnic assimilation. He later founded the school and brought more multicultural education. This step was bold. He himself did not have the money to pay for the school. Funds for the establishment of schools were from

bank loans. Through the school he founded, he also intended to accommodate the students who could not afford their education. His friends saw his actions as crazy and unwarranted. How could the poor lift others out of poverty, they said? In fact the school is still standing until now, and accommodating thousands of students from diverse backgrounds in promoting assimilation. For this work, Sofyan Tan, who is also a member of the House of Representatives, was awarded the Maarif Award in 2014.

## **E. INTER-RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN BALI**

Ledakan bombs rocked Bali in 2002 and 2005. The world suddenly was shocked. Bali is known as the last paradise, the island with cultural and religious activities, and one of the centres of world tourism experienced terror events that claimed hundreds of lives.

It is then interesting that the Balinese community had an unexpected response to the event. They were indeed frustrated that the bomb not only resulted in the loss of life, but also the damage to the economy of Bali where many of them relied on tourism. Tourism in Bali brought a lot of dollars year round. Harmony in the multicultural Balinese life was also briefly disrupted. Suspicion of the majority of Balinese occurred because the bomber was carrying the name of Islam in action. However, the violence

did not spread everywhere. Instead of looking for who was at fault, the Balinese firstly performed a sacred ceremony to cleanse life, nature and the universe. Impurities make the universe imbalanced.

In history, Bali is not without violence. Bali experienced political tensions. In post-independence Indonesia, political parties in Bali as well as in other areas often collided. This situation peaked in the mid-1960s. At that time, mass killings took place claiming hundreds of thousands of alleged communists. In fact, for the Balinese themselves, the incident was a big question mark. They stabbed fellow Balinese. In fact, the Balinese is known to be very religious, polite, unpretentious, and so steadfast in their doctrine to promote harmony and alignment. For hundreds of years, Bali proved themselves as capable of managing differences. While Hindus constitute the majority, other faiths and religions exist very well together for example, Islam, Buddhism, Christianity, Catholicism and Confucianism. Until now, inter-religious harmony exists without anyone feeling marginalized. Diversity does not cause problems and friction, especially if there are two worship ceremonies of different religions with identical timing, e.g. *Nyepi* which falls on a Friday or on the day of Eid. However, the people of Bali are able to resolve this issue through dialogue so that the two ceremonies can continue.

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

Local wisdom makes Bali take care of the harmony in a multicultural society. Bali Hindu teachings emphasise good harmony in the relationship with the Creator, with fellow human beings, and with nature. Bali itself is in symmetry with Hinduism. The teaching permeates into all aspects of life and has become the ethos of the people of Bali. As a result, they are able to integrate people of different cultural and religious backgrounds. In a context of recent incidents, this harmony proved very fundamental. Both religions have many conflicting rituals which could cause conflicts. However, the people of Bali with their local wisdom proved able to resolve any issue.

### Bali as the last Heaven on Earth

Bali began to attract the attention of tourists since a century ago, precisely when the Dutch shipping company KPM (Koninklijk Paketvaart Maatschapij) brought the promotion of Bali to attract European passengers to visit the island. The island's size is not large (5632.86 km<sup>2</sup>) or approximately 0.29% of the total area of the Indonesian archipelago. Bali then became one of the favourite tourist destinations in the world.

The nature is very charming, the culture is very unique, and its population were kind, making this island very famous in the world. Not surprisingly, the magazine "Travel and Leisure" accolades the tourist island of Bali as the second best after the Galapagos Islands in Ecuador, or the

best in Asia. This achievement is not the first time. Bali became one of the three major world's best tourist island versions of "Travel and Leisure" since 2009. So famous is Bali in the eyes of the world, so many people think of Bali is an independent state and not part of Indonesia. Some people who come to Bali were surprised when they arrived at the airport, they were greeted by Indonesian immigration authorities and not Balinese. This fact indicates that in the eyes of the world, Bali is more famous than Indonesia.

### Multicultural society

Hinduism as a majority religion of the Balinese is another anomaly in majority Muslim Indonesia. In Hinduism in Bali, local elements became more prominent. Religion and tradition are



The Great Mosque of Ibnu Batutah and The Catholic Church of Maria Bunda Segala Bangsa (Mary, Mother of all nations) in Kompleks Puja Mandala, Nusa Dua, Bali is the vivid symbol of inter-religious harmony in Bali.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

indigenous lands became a pleasure, so that people could no longer carry out their important rituals. The intrusion of the tourist business into sacred areas became the concern of some people of Bali. Nevertheless, there is an optimistic view since the people of Bali have been able to withstand the changes caused by tourism. According to them, the commercialisation of art and souvenir production does not lead to stiling value. Instead, it spurred the artists to continue to create. Maintaining the sacred while continuing to create new products to be offered to the tourist world.

### The value of tolerance in Hindu Bali

The value of Hindu Bali is an integral part of life in Bali. The value also became the foundation for the



Mosque, Catholic Church, and Vihara stands side by side in the Kompleks Puja Mandala, Nusa Dua, Bali.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

community to build a harmonious society and a tolerant attitude towards other religions. One of them contained in the Book of the Rig Veda X 191, 2-4 which is freely interpreted “*Hendaklah bersatu padu, bermusyawarah dan mufakat guna mencapai tujuan dan maksud yang sama, seperti para Dewa pada zaman dahulu telah bersatu padu. Begitu juga, bersembahyanglah menurut caramu masing-masing, tetapi tujuan dan hatimu tetap sama, serta pikiranmu satu, agar dikau dapat hidup bersama dengan bahagia*” (“Be united, deliberate and make consensus in order to achieve the objective and purpose of the same, like the gods of ancient times have united. Likewise, pray in your own way, but the goal remains the same and your heart, and your mind stay the same, so that you can live together happily...”

In the concept of Tri Hita Kirana, the value of awareness is expanded, not just with our fellow human beings, but also in relation with God and nature. Balinese Hindu philosophy teaches that human happiness can be achieved when people are able to maintain harmonious relationships in three ways, namely in relation to *Parhyangan* (elements Godhead), *Pawongan* (human), and *Palemahan* (elements of nature). In other words, humans can achieve happiness if he serves God, loves their fellow human, and participates in conserving nature. This concept became the main capital of Balinese society in ensuring a tolerant life in keberagaman.

The concept of Tri Hita Karana later gave birth to the concept of *nyama braya*, namely the harmonious and peaceful life in the fraternity. The behaviour *menyama braya* is a manifestation of the Balinese Hindu teachings of *tat twam asi* (you are I), a guidance which teaches that people shall always love each other. These values can then be the basis for building tolerance and harmony in multicultural society.

Other values related to the value of tolerance is *Desa Kala Patrayang*. This value illustrates the versatility of the Balinese. This concept also explains how the practice of Hinduism in religious activities is not the same for every region. The scriptures can be the same, but the way of practice varies as tailored to the *desa* (place), *kala* (time), and *patra* (state). This explains, while rooted in the same Hindu, each region in Bali has different religious practices.

There is the value of *karma phala* concerning the law of causation. With the philosophy of this value, the Balinese people are led to think straight, because what they are experiencing right now, in fact cannot be separated from what was done before. What they will experience in the future depends on what they do at this moment.

Balinese values of *karmaphala* provide a way to look into disaster, as a warning to themselves that something was not right. There are deviations. These deviations are a result from a

disturbance against natural balance. Facing the disaster, they do not look for who is at fault or to blame. All they do is hold a ceremony as a form of putting that balance back.

### Integration of socio-cultural sphere

Integration of the socio-cultural sphere was so manifest in the relations between the majority Hindu communities with the Muslims in Bali. The history of Islam in Bali began hundreds of years ago. In the sixteenth century of Hindu kingdoms in Bali, such as Gelgel in Klungkung kingdom, the kingdom Pamecutan (Badung), and the kingdom of Buleleng had many companions and soldiers recruited from the Muslims. Soldiers were recruited from the Muslims alongside soldiers with Hindu roots. They faithfully served the Hindu kingdoms. As a form of appreciation for the dedication of Muslim members of the force, the Kingdom provided a special permit and a special residential area for Muslims. Gelgel and Kapaon, for example, is a land administered by Hindu kings for Muslims to live. Until now, the two villages have mostly Muslims of generations. They live and interact with the wider Hindu community. The Hindu-majority also often “engage” or invite Muslims to be involved in their activities, whether they be religious or other activities. This is the manifestation of respect and acceptance towards the Muslim group in Bali.

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

Those relations also gave birth to various traditions as a way to strengthen their relationship. Among these are the *ngejot* tradition. The term *ngejot* in Balinese means giving. This is a tradition of giving food to the neighbours before the fasting religious season (of Muslims). Religious believers will celebrate the coming of the season by giving Balinese traditional foods, called *jotan*. This Balinese giving consists of a menu of, mainly, *nasi campur* (rice mix with many herbs, meats, vegetables), *ayam betutu* (traditional chicken cuisine with herbs and spices, known as key spices and herbs of Bali), and *jukut ares* (vegetables from banana stems). In addition to food, there are also cakes and snacks, such as *jaja kukus*, *jaja uli*, *begina*, and *tape ketan* (half-fermented sticky rice). In the day of Eid, Muslims in some regions of Buleleng performed the *ngejot* tradition, delivering food, snacks or fruit to Hindu neighbours. Similarly, the Hindu community in Buleleng, when Galungan, Kuningan, or other festivals, perform *ngejot*, delivering food, fruits or snacks to the Muslim community.

The essence of *ngejot* is not only sharing the food before the feast, but also sharing the happiness. When delivering *ngejot*, people will congratulate those who have the feast. In this case, *ngejot* is a local tradition of celebrating diversity in Bali. The difference is not considered as a limitation, but as a means of extending

and sharing happiness. If the time of religious celebration falls on the same day or moment, the problem will be solved by dialogue and they will take decisions that do not cause harm toward both sides. For example, the celebration of *Nyepi* Day, which falls on a Friday. So, they invented a system so that Muslims can still carry out the Friday prayer without disturbing Hindus in performing worship *Nyepi*, namely (1) worship on Friday in the mosque implemented without loudspeakers, (2) for Muslims who are forced to pass through traditional villages on the road to perform Friday prayers then *pecalang* (*pecalang*: the persons tasked as traditional guard) will give way.

It is quite rare that *Nyepi* and *Idul Fitri* take place at the same time. This happened in 1994 and 1995. Both celebrations were well celebrated by each other giving way to the other. Muslims voluntarily did not perform the *takbir* parade and did not use loudspeakers. The Hindu community, on the other hand, made way for Muslims using lights in the mosque and in their home when the Muslims performed *takbir*. The people of Bali also care for and help the celebrations of Islam. For example, Muslims are welcome to use Badung Square, located in the city of Denpasar to pray at *Eid al-Fitr* and *Eid al-Adha*. Traditionally, Badung Square is usually used exclusively by Hindu communities for the celebration of their great religious

days and mass social ceremonies.

The organisation of everyday life too, although strongly associated with Hinduism, gives room for the Muslims. Banjar Adat *sima* has a tradition of *sima karma*, which is an event to absorb the aspirations of the community in the form of suggestions and feedback to criticism, which is held once a month regardless of the background of the participants. Those who come into the dialogue forum of *sima karma* participate freely regardless of religious background differences.

Coexistence also takes place in the Subak organisation consisting of Hindu and Muslim farmers as has happened in *subak Pancoran, Tegalinggah, Pemogan, and Banyubiru*. *Subak* is a traditional Balinese irrigation organisation and the tradition is a key part of Hindu rituals. Of course, when Muslims became members of Subak, an adjustment was made so that they can carry out their religious rituals according to the origin of their religion.

In the realm of culture, cultural exchange is common. In the field of art, for example, there is *geguritan Ahmad Muhammad* (*geguritan* is a traditional lyrical forms with arranged rhyme, notes, and style, rooted in Java-Bali-Hindu-Buddhist tradition). This piece of lyrics (*kidung*) is not only important for Muslims, but also for Hindu community. Particularly in the village Pamogan, *Kidung Ahmad Muhammad* is an important performance during the Melasti ceremony as an integral



The tradition of Ngejot in Bali. Ngejot is highly respected custom on giving food to neighbor in time of holiday or traditional fest or rit.

Picture: Istimewa.

part of New Year's Day (the Hindu religious calendar) or the great day of *Nyepi*. Hindu community in the village *Pamogan* make special offerings made traditional cakes. At the time of the offering dedicated, lyrics of Ahmad Muhammad was performed by traditional singer. After that, the offering was covered with a white cloth, shaped like a dome. Dome reminiscent of the dome of the mosque. In the context of Hindu values, the dome could also mean as the universe.

The exchange of culture also occurs in the tradition of naming. The Balinese Hindu community has a distinctive marker which is based on birth order in giving the name of a person. The name shows the order of the birth, first, second, third, and so on. The culture of Bali gives the name as a marker in four

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

numbers (it could be more). Wayan/Gede/Putu (first born), Nengah/Made (second born), Nyoman (third born) and Ketut (fourth born). The Muslim community in *Pegayaman* also give names along with Bali's tradition of naming. There is also a tradition of *Nyapar* in the Muslim community in Bulling, for example in the village of *Pegayaman*. *Safar* or *nyapar* is held annually on the Wednesday of the last week of the month of *Safar*, in the afternoon. The community goes to the beach to chant, *dhikr*, and pray. Then they have lunch together. This tradition is an expression of gratitude to God for all the good luck which has been bestowed. They then also pray for safety, as well as conduct activities to repel bad luck. Muslims in Bali, not only in *Pegayaman*, still believe that *Safar* was the unlucky month or months of the disaster. In the Hindu tradition, religious activities are conducted on the coast of *Melasti*.

There is also an influence of Hindu culture on the traditions of the *Maulud Nabi*. When commemorating the birth of Prophet Muhammad, Muslims in *Buleleng* Bali make *bale sujiyang* then parade, then place it inside a mosque. *Bale sujiyang* reminds us of *ogoh-ogoh* of Hindus which are marched ahead of *Nyepi* (*ogoh-ogoh* is a big *piñata* or doll with the devil character, which is then burnt).

There are many other traditions of the people of Bali which depict the harmony of Hindus and Muslims,

including the tradition of *megibung* in *Karang Asem*, the offerings of *banten selam* (Islam offerings) in a ceremony of *Sugihan Jawa*, and the ceremony of *Ngusaba Dangsil* in *Bungaya* involving *Nyama Selam* (Islam) at the peak of the proceeding.

### Bali Bombing, the challenge to peace

The Bali bombings occurred on October 12, 2002 (the first Bali bombing) in the *Sari Club*, *Paddy's Pub*, and the *US Consulate*. The death toll reached as many as 202 people, with about 209 injured. In addition, 4 buildings collapsed, 20 buildings were heavily damaged, 27 cars were severely damaged, and 7 motorcycles heavily damaged. The second Bali bombings occurred on October 1, 2005 in three places, namely *Rajas's Cafe* *Kuta Square*, *Menega Café* and *Nyoman Cafe Jimbaran*. This bombing killed 23 people, injuring 196.

The Bali bombings caused direct consequences to the island of Bali. Tourist visits decreased by almost 80% in post-events. This happened because some countries, such as Japan, the UK, USA, Singapore, Taiwan, and Australia imposed a ban on travel to Indonesia, particularly Bali for safety of their citizens. The term "before the bomb" was then popular, referring to the heyday of tourism in Bali before the Bali bombings.

In social life, rifts emerged between community groups and other group

suspicion abounded. This is evident from the news about the investigation into some schools and places. Social harmony was disrupted.

### Responses to Bali Bombings

The Balinese understood that terrorism also directly caused harm to them since many Balinese fell victims. Hence, the Balinese condemned these terrorist acts of violence, but, at the very same time their responses differed from that of Western society (Birgit Brauchler 2009).

Responding to the terror that occurred in 2001, President Bush insisted that this violent act was not just attacking the United States, but the values of civilization and urged the world community to unite to banish this crime. Western society mostly understood this as a war of Good against Evil. And, that crime could only be countered by a force of arms. Human values could only be maintained through a “holy war” against the extremists. This view departs from the understanding of monotheism where God exists as the Creator of goodness alone. Everything bad comes from Evil, which is the opposite of kindness. This understanding of Theodicy was to be the basis for acting in a “holy war” against crime, including the blanket term of terrorism itself.

The Balinese Hindus have a different understanding. The Balinese Hindu community does not recognize the concept of God as creator of all

goodness, neither absolute crime nor war as well as salvation at the end of time. The act of *leak* (devil figure in Bali Hindu culture), for example, is not understood as a transcendent evil that has been controlling the human mind, but as a human being banal in gesture, like the attitude of envy. The strength of the *leak*, which is used to commit crime, is neutral in moral terms.

This understanding is framed in the ritual drama of *Calonarang*. In this drama, Rangda brought a catastrophic plague and destruction to society, and should be balanced through a contest by Barong. Both are played by dancers wearing masks and costumes. An important point in this sacred battle is that this fight is not intended to destroy Rangda as the embodiment of evil or to rescue Barong from disaster, but as a balance of the two opposing forces



The traditional rite of Melasti is in the set of Nyepli, in the New Year of Saka Calendar.

Picture: [www.balimediainfo.com](http://www.balimediainfo.com).

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

for the continuation of human life.

Rangda and Barong are the strength of the world. Despite being contradictory, they are both necessary for the balance of the world. From the standpoint of Hindu Bali, Rangda is as sacred as the Barong. Rangda cannot be named as a criminal in the monotheistic view. Both are sacred and become the object of this ritual.

This view is the basis of the attitude of the people of Bali towards the terrorist bombings. Brauchler mentions Bali ethics as ethically cosmo-centric. Unlike the anthropocentric ethic that emphasises humans as the subject and agent of the action, the ethos of Bali puts human responsibility within the scope of the universe, and as a whole in which human actions become part of it. The implication towards the Bali bombing case is that the resolution of the case is not limited to the subjective actions of man; to forgive or punish the perpetrators of terror alone, but extending human's relationship with the universe. Humans have a responsibility not only limited to our fellow human beings, but are also responsible for maintaining the balance of the natural universe.

Instead of making a counterattack, the people of Bali held a ritual of purification, and the declaration of peace took place in almost all areas of the island, especially in Kuta, the location of the bombing. For the Balinese, the first step that had to be taken was to restore balance through



The Hindu traditional rite of Melasti in Bali represents a thanksgiving and respect to nature and universe. This is with putting offering to the sea.

Picture: Ida Bagus Putra Adnyana, Bali: *Ancient Rites in the Digital Age* (Indonesia: BAB Publishing, 2016), h. 1.

a variety of religious ceremonies. In essence, when the power of “evil” shook the balance, the solution was not to destroy the evil forces of violence which would only add to the problem. All they did was to strengthen the “good” through various rituals to restore balance.

This makes the Balinese unlike other regions. In Java, Maluku, Sumatra, and Sulawesi, violence in the name of religion would provoke reprisals. The majority of the Balinese did not succumb to it. Indeed, there were sparks of retaliation, but only by a small group which was quickly addressed because it did not have the support of the wider community. The attitude of the Balinese was quite surprising, given

the magnitude and the impact suffered by the people of Bali by two large-scale bombings.

To strengthen the power of “good” also means introspection towards themselves. Responses of the Balinese to disaster come as a sign that they have been out of dharma so that the “ungood” became dominant and that life was out of balance. Calamities are a sign for them to return to the dharma. The rituals were performed to realign any irregularities so that life could come back into balance. With this, peace would return.

### The Muslim village of Pegayaman

Pegayaman is a Muslim village on the island of Bali. This village is in District Sukasada, Buleleng exactly nine kilometres south of Singaraja,



The tradition of Megibung where people eat from single traditional plate or leaf plate, literally putting the participants surrounding the plate, talk and discuss, and eat together. The tradition is of Islam community in Karangasem, and was firstly form the Hindu King of Karangasem circa 1692. This represents a harmony between communities of different religions in Bali.

Picture: [www.menara-fm.com](http://www.menara-fm.com).

North Bali. The Balinese call the people from there *Nyama Selam*. The Balinese of rural communities call Islam as *selam* as it is unusual for them to say the word beginning with “Is”. The community of Muslim Pegayaman is not a new immigrant population - they are originally Balinese people. The religion of Islam has grown in this area since at least 18th century AD. Since this time, an established harmonious relationship has existed between them and the Hindu community of Bali.

They have absorbed much Balinese Hindu culture and acculturation has occurred in a smooth manner. As in the use of language, social order, and the tradition of naming, the Pegayaman community are like the Balinese in general. Acculturation is also evident in their religious art. In the Maulud day, there were art performances of Pegayaman performed in commemoration of the birth of the Prophet Muhammad SAW, namely *burda*. In this performance, sholawat is sung with drumming music. Percussion instruments were used such as a kind of tambourine (*rebana*), but this version being slightly larger because his body is made out of tree trunks of the coconut tree.

*Sekeaa* (arts community) of *burda* wore traditional Balinese clothes, just the same as the clothes people outside Pegayaman wore. They wore a headband (*destar*), or the Balinese term, *mekancut* while songs are sung in Arabic. The tone of sholawatan is similar



Barong and Randa, a key drama in the drama-rite of Calonarang. Both most commonly are played by dancer (often with trans-state) with mask representing rich symbols.

Picture: Ida Bagus Putra Adhyana, Bali: Ancient Rites in the Digital Age (Indonesia: BAB Publishing, 2016), h. 119.

with *Kidung Wargasari* which is known among the Hindu Balinese. In the middle of sholawatan, there is also a dance performance, with clothes and motion in tune with the traditional arts of Bali. The dance is *tari selendang* (shawl dance), *tari tampan* (dance of plate), *tari perkawinan* (marriage dance), *tari pukul dua* (dance tick twice).

The main jobs of Pegayaman residents is farming. In the time of the coffee harvest, the population around Pegayaman - the Hindu Balinese - come down to Pegayaman to be involved in the harvesting. They work together regardless of any differences. The community of Pegayaman also organises *Subak*, the governance of Balinese irrigation. They

undertake it complete with its religious ceremony. Outside Pegayaman, the Subak organisation has been integrated within Hindu ceremony. In Pegayaman, the ceremony is undertaken in a manner consistent with their beliefs. The community of Pegayaman also has *sekeaa manyi* (association of harvesting rice) and *sekeaa malapan* (association of coffee picking harvest). The spirit of mutual help in building a house and mosque is very strong and consistent with the Hindu community in their neighbourhood and in all of Bali. Only the daily clothes they wear distinguishes them from outside Pegayaman Bali, the skullcap (*kopiah*) for men and veil (*kerudung*) for women.

There is another unique culture, and just like the Hindu community, this Muslim community of Pegayaman also has a tradition of *Nyepi*. If *Nyepi* is celebrated by the Balinese Hindu every new year, Muslims Pegayaman implement *Nyepi* to welcome Ramadhan. *Nyepi* aims to cleanse the heart. The procedure for its implementation is similar to the usual penance undertaken by Muslims in Java. Its uniqueness lies in the recitation of shalawat with Hindu songs. Here, synergistic religion and budaya come to life.

### Ibu Gedong Bagoes Oka

The mother Gedong Bagoes Oka (Ibu Gedong Bagoes Oka) is remembered as a scholar and spiritual Hindu leader who fought for human values

through non-violent action. She was an interfaith activist who believed that religious differences cannot be used as an excuse for not respecting humanity. In 1976, Ibu Gedong founded the Gandhi Ashram in Candidasa Village, on the east coast of Bali, and spent most of her time managing the ashram. The Ashram of Ibu Gedong provides education for orphans and children from poor families. In addition to the local community, the ashram is also a place for foreigners of all ages and religious backgrounds to deepen their religious beliefs in a meditative atmosphere.

Daily activities in the ashram are common such as prayers, yoga, meditation, and a simpler form of the sacred fire Vedic ritual, *agnihotra*. Disciples at the ashram also have the opportunity to learn sacred literature in the library of the ashram. There are also activities of carpentry, weaving, treating, tailoring, agriculture and culture in this ashram. With the spirit of *svadeshi*, Ibu Gedong dedicates various work and projects, aiming to grow the collective farm community.

From her deep reflection and meditation, Ibu Gedong came to the conclusion that Hinduism in Bali was greatly influenced by Balinese culture which is filled with complex ritual systems and a tight caste system which she wanted to address. Therefore, Ibu Gedong made a renewal of Hindu teaching towards becoming more democratic and tolerant. Hinduism, according to Ibu Gedong, is an eternal and



Barong and Rangda. Both is the key symbol of what constitute a life: good and bad. Rangda, traditionally referred as witch, presents what bad in society. Barong (often with different style, including of Dragon, Tiger, Pig) presents a prompt response to what goes bad in society. The golden colour of Barong represent omnibus good, as this could be found in Chinese culture.

Picture: [www.anacaraka.co.id](http://www.anacaraka.co.id).

universal religion (*dharma sananta*), mainly because it is based on the Vedas and the Vedanta. That is the case since the values are also enshrined in Holy Bible and Al-Qur'an.

Ibu Gedong tirelessly dedicated an understanding towards the public on Hinduism which emphasised religious and spiritual values, and was not to be entangled by meticulous ritual issues. She replaced the symbols in offerings with long *puja*. However, she never denounced the Balinese Hindu tradition, as do many young Hindu thinkers.

In addition to manage the Gandhi Ashram Candidasa, Ibu Gedong still takes time to occasionally teach English at the University of Udayana. She also gives lectures on Hindu spirituality in various forums, both domestically and abroad. Regularly, she comes to India by invitation of the Gandhi Peace

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

Foundation. In 1994, she received the International Bajaj Award from the Bajaj Foundation in Bombay for tireless efforts to spread the teachings of Mahatma Gandhi. In 1996, she founded the Gandhi Vidyapith Bali Ashram in Denpasar, a special ashram to educate students in the local universities on Gandhi. Later, Ibu Gedong also established another ashram in Yogyakarta. Those who come to this ashram are not only Hindus, but also Muslims and Christians. Ibu Gedong is known as a tireless fighter for inter-religious harmony. She managed to build a constructive relationship based on an open mind with various leaders from various religions, including Gus Dur, Romo Mangunwijaya, Dr. Th. Sumartana, and Dr. Eka Darmaputera. Together with them, she has been fighting for the values of peace and humanity. For her, religious differences should not be a source of conflict because the core of every religion is actually doing good. So, if people actually believe and practice their religion seriously, they will be the real heroes of humanity.

### F. RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE IN YOGYAKARTA

Daerah Yogyakarta (DIY) has a long track record in managing concord and harmony among religious believers. The province is populated by 3.5 million people with different religious backgrounds, beliefs and ethnicities. Various sites and relics of the past



Banten Selam (sesajen Islam) or Islamic tradition offering in Bali is a key attribution in the traditional rite of Sugihan Jawa. This rite expresses a harmony of Hindu and Islam in Bali.

Picture: Ida Bagus Putra Adnyana, Bali: *Ancient Rites in the Digital Age* (Indonesia: BAB Publishing, 2016), h. 8.

have been a silent witness to the rich heritage of the past, both in terms of culture, customs, religion and beliefs (many Buddhist, Hindu, traditional beliefs and early Muslims have important sites in Yogyakarta since long ago). Nevertheless, Yogyakarta is not an area completely free of the distractions of conflict and the threat of disintegration. Various conflicts with backgrounds in religion have indeed appeared to disrupt the harmony of life in the region. However, long experience of coexistence have soon overcome the problems that have disturbed Yogyakarta. In fact, the expertise of citizens and government officials of Yogyakarta City - one of the areas in Yogyakarta DIY- in maintaining peace and harmony in daily lives have enabled this city to become attributed as the City of Tolerance.

To be awarded the City of Tolerance



The Jami' Mosque of Safinatussalam is among oldest mosque in Bali, which is in Desa Pegayaman (village of Pegayaman), Sukasada, Buleleng. The Muslim in this village lives with cross-cultural symbols, absorbing local and Hindu culture.

Picture: [www.pagayamanvillage.blogspot.com](http://www.pagayamanvillage.blogspot.com).

by the Yogyakarta Alliance for Peace Indonesia/ *Aliansi Jogja untuk Indonesia Damai* (Aji Peace) in March 2011 was not without reason. Yogyakarta is regarded as the cultural heart of Java, known as the city which is faithful on maintaining the values and traditions of Javanese culture. Some of the principal values of life and ethics of the people of Yogyakarta are living in harmony, mutual respect and tolerance. The “rukun” (living together in harmony) refers the state of harmony, calm and serene, without strife and contention. This is the reason for such an award.

However, a variety of dark notes continuously eroded the peace and harmony that took place in this area. Referring to the record of Unity in Diversity National Alliance/*Aliansi Nasional Bhineka Tunggal Ika* (ANBTI), throughout the year 2015 until March

2016, it was found that various cases of intolerance appeared. For example, the forced closing of the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (GpDI) Semanu and the Pentecostal Church in Indonesia (GpDI) Playen when the two praying places actually had a building permit (IMB), the rejection of the celebration of Easter in the Adiyuswo Java Christian Church (GKJ) Gunugkidul was accompanied by persecution against interfaith activists, intimidation and violence against discussions about the Shia, intimidation against LGBT, and the dissolution of interfaith discussions. Another example might also be the closure of the boarding school of Transgender Al-Fattah in Celenan, Jagalan Village, District Banguntapan.

Intolerant actions that occurred after 2011 continued until mid-2016, with the numbers of those cases increasing quite alarmingly. In 2015, ANBTI recorded about 13 cases of intolerance occurring in DIY. Various groups were concerned about the rising levels of violence due to a lack of decisive action from government officials.

Other findings came from the research of The Wahid Institute (Wahid Foundation). From the data released in 2014, Yogyakarta ranks second in the most intolerant cities in Indonesia. A total of 154 cases of intolerance and violations of religious freedom were noted by the Wahid Foundation throughout 2014, 21 events occurred in Yogyakarta. A year later, in 2015, the ranking of the city Yogyakarta as an

The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

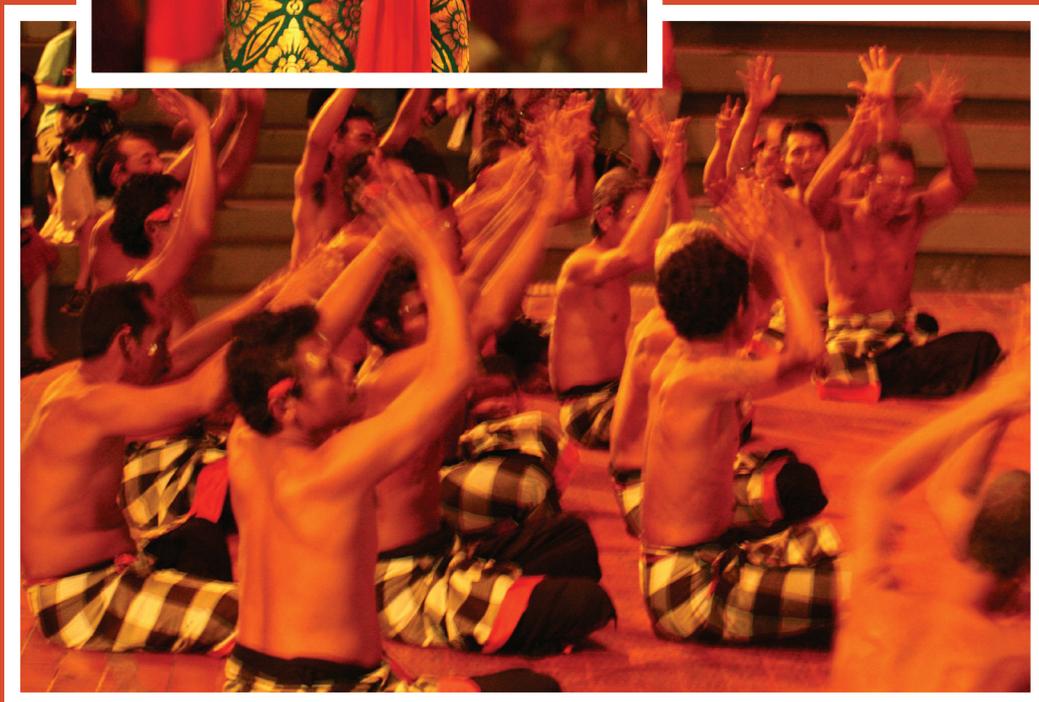


Janger dance of Bali.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

Kecak dance of Bali.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



intolerant place dropped to number four. Of the 190 violations recorded by Wahid Foundation, 10 occurred in the “city of university”.

This research does not necessarily bury the attribution of most tolerant City to Yogyakarta, but indicated that much work needed to be undertaken seriously by government officials and all communities of the Yogyakarta Special Region, and putting forward real action. The Governor of Yogyakarta, Sri Sultan HB X, called for the open embracing attitude (inclusiveness) of the community of Yogyakarta as this is ingrained in Javanese culture as the main social capital of Yogyakarta on strengthening democracy in public life. Sri Sultan encourages the Yogyakarta community to continue to build Yogyakarta as the main actors dedicated to tolerance, as this is symbolised in the Javanese philosophy “*hamemayu hayuning bawana*” or making the beauty of the world even more beautiful. In a broader sense, the Sultan invited the entire community to always take care of the balance between the small universe, the microcosmos (human) with the large cosmos/ universe. This balance is manifested in human life as always upholding ethics and truth. On that basis, it is important to continue to instil the values of diversity as early as possible, especially on the younger technology savvy generation so that the value of diversity can be explored wisely.

In addition, the protection of

minorities needs to be ensured so that everyone in Yogyakarta has a sense of safety and comfort in everyday living.

### **Tolerance experiences in everyday life in Yogyakarta**

Yogyakarta is an area that has long been known as an area which excellently preserve the values of diversity and tolerance in Indonesia. Cultural and religious diversity remains a benchmark though lately has been undermined by various acts of intolerance. The experience of the community of Yogyakarta shows a long standing coexistence of many groups with different backgrounds living in harmony and concord in Yogyakarta.

During the war of defending new independence (known as “*revolusi fisik*”) during 1946-1949, Yogyakarta embraced communities from various areas which sought refuge, or to be refreshed from the war effort (Yogyakarta then became the capital of Indonesia during that period). The region was very open as a place of encounters between various ethnic and religious, civil and military groups. Indonesian values grew as it encountered independent figures and many groups defending the new nation. Such encounters and engagements grew a family atmosphere and kinship. There were leaders of the new nation, including Soekarno, Ali Sadikin, Mohammad Hatta, A.A. Maramis, Muhammad Yusuf, Mr. Assat, and A.R. Baswedan. Each of them belonged to diverse ethnic and religious

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

backgrounds. There was also K.H. Wahid Hasyim (of Nahdlatul Ulama), Ki Bagus Hadi Koesoemo (Muhammadiyah), Mohammad Natsir (*Persatuan Islam*), Shah Muhammad Sayyid Al-Jaeni (Ahmadiyah), and I.J. Kasimo (Catholic). Referring to these encounters, the leaders across faiths and ethnicities were more concerned with unity than segregation or group-centrism. They were more eager to work together to realise the beauties of the nation rather than creating ugliness. They understood the traditional Javanese lyrics of *holopis kuntul baris* that has the meaning of working together, putting aside ego and individual interests for broader common interests.

Another example is the discovery of the Palgading temple in Sleman. The discovery of historic sites in the village Sinduharjo in 2006 proved the fact that Nusantara in the past experienced the goodness of multicultural life when religious people could coexist in a harmonious atmosphere without fear and threat. Administratively, the temple is located in the hamlet Palgading, Sinduharjo Village, District Ngaglik, Sleman. Precisely about two kilometres east of the Office of *kecamatan* (administration under county level). The Buddhist temple complex of Palgading is in the middle of residential areas with an extensive site, approximately 1 hectare wide.

Harmonious relations among religious groups can be traced back with the discovery of the Kimpulan



The people's parade welcomed the 62<sup>nd</sup> Indonesian Independence Day in Plengkung Gading, Alun-alun Selatan, Keraton Yogyakarta (Arc Gading, South Piazza, the Sultan's Place).

Picture: KHOMAINI.

temple. This temple is found not far from the location of Palgading, near the campus of the Islamic University of Indonesia, which is a Hindu temple. Kimpulan temple was discovered accidentally on December 11 2009.

The site of Palgading refers to the heyday of the Hindu and Buddhist religions in the archipelago, precisely since 9-10 century AD. The site shows the structure of the rocks that formed a small stupa. Then it was strengthened by the existence of the Awalokiteshwara statue in that temple. The Awalokiteshwara symbolises a worship of Bodhisattva in Buddhism and is also known as the god of love, god of compassion and the Buddhist guardian deity in the pantheon Mahayana.

That is the harmony in Yogyakarta. Although time was buffeted by various acts of intolerance in some recent years, until now Yogyakarta is still referred as a barometer for other

areas in Indonesia in managing the harmony and togetherness among religious believers. This reference is to continue that the community of Yogyakarta be alive and well. It is important to make reference to the optimism in Yogyakarta, and in the whole of Indonesia in that ethnic and religious groups could live together, and indeed they do, under many and all circumstances. Of course, living in harmony does not impose any forms of uniform thoughts, actions and habits, especially any imposition against a small group in society. Therefore, uniformity could potentially cause conflict and social unrest in society. Living in peace and harmony means, life in mutual understanding and mutual respect between friends and neighbours, as well as the area between the village and between groups of different religions, thoughts and beliefs. Yogyakarta has lived this local wisdom for hundreds of years, notwithstanding the challenges ahead.

### **G. MANAGING DIVERSITY IN THE LAND OF PAPUA**

The discussion on Papua is often accompanied by discussions about the various conflicts that go with it. Before 1969, the area was known as West New Guinea. Indonesia knows the area with the name of Irian Barat (West Irian), and later changed to Irian Jaya since the opening of the Freeport mine in 1973. In the era of Abdurrahman Wahid that area was informally called Papua, and

formally in 2001 to Papua. However, the several groups in Papua until now still use the term West Papua for various reasons for their fight.

Regarding the conflict, there is usually discussion about the economic issues and politics in Papua. Those two areas of discussion are the reasons which are used by the local nationalists by calling for improvements to their lot. In addition, there are also conflicts between tribes and indeed violence occurs using religious reasons. These phenomena tend to draw the imagination of Indonesians as to quip the “Bumi Cendrawasih” (the earth bird of Cendrawasih, the other call to Papua) as being a ‘moody’ and ‘creepy’ region. Contrary to that, it is undeniable that there are various experiences and stories of peace in Papua.

Invariably, the tensions and unrest often happen because of small things. This represents a vulnerability of Papuans as they live with other communities from Indonesia living in Papua. Against all odds, some leaders rise above the waves of challenge. Papua witnessed the movement of Papua Tanah Damai (Papua, Land of Peace) which promotes a shared space for all Papuans and for all communities to care about Papua. This movement hosted a series of engagements and initiatives initiated by ethnic leaders, religious leaders, academia and common persons. The commonality between them is they see Papua as the space for peace to grow.

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values

In crisis and vulnerability, individuals like Mama Yosepha (Yosepha Alomang) and Pastor John Jonga are very prominent in working at addressing this vulnerability. The vulnerability has many names: backwardness, violence-laden life of families, temptation to make shortcuts, endless paternalism of strong actors in Papua and many others. Mama Yosepha is active in Mimika, especially working for Amungme tribe. Pastor John Jonga works across Papua for cross-community initiatives. Both promote the non-violent approach and interfaith dialogue. Their exemplary lives are a lifeline itself for Indonesia, building Indonesia to become more civil and more embracing. Both have been awarded the Yap Thiam Hien Award, a human rights award in Indonesia. Mama Yosepha was awarded this in 1999, and Pastor John Jonga in 2009.

The experience of living together is also revealed with the life of the residents of Kampung Wonorejo, Papua. There is one example that can be brought to show how Papuans manage diversity in the region. Wonorejo village is a village located in the boundary area between Papua and Papua New Guinea. Residents of this village come from the island of Java, Sulawesi, and West Nusa Tenggara (NTB) and came as transmigrants living with different cultural backgrounds, customs, and different religions. The situation of community in Wonorejo society is one of a tolerant life with those around them.

Wonorejo community members with all backgrounds have a shared value in the spirit and strength to maintain a peaceful situation.

Inter-ethnic interaction that occurs in Wonorejo manifests in the process of knowledge transfer. For example, the interaction of women migrants from Java and Papua women in food processing, such as the processing of cassava into cake from Javanese women to Papuan women, and vegetables by processing banana trees were studied by Javanese women from Papuan women. The community of Wonorejo gives examples of the importance of shared space. This space can bridge cross-ethnic relations and interreligious life in everyday life. The diversity is transformed through the adaptation and transformation of creative activities.

Inter-ethnic relations also come into life via art activities such as in the *Kuda*



Hindu Temple of Palgading in Desa Sinduharjo, Kecamatan Ngaglik, Kabupaten Sleman. The temple is among most-recently found, which is in 2006. It is guessed that many places around mountain of Merapi and other mountain in Central Java has temples with similar structure and symbol.

Picture: Istimewa.

*Lumping* of East Java and Papuan Bakar Batu which is celebrated by involving all citizens. Other practices such as *gotong royong* (mutual help) in building houses of prayer, which involves all citizens, regardless of background and religious background.

Harmonious relations can also be seen in religious occasions like Eid and Christmas. These big days are celebrated together, followed by the tradition of mutual visits and congratulation. Here, religious leaders, traditional authorities and local governments have an important role in managing the diversity of life. This serves to spread the values of diversity and tolerance to each ethnic group, and avoids the spread of offensive material, thereby strengthening the link between religious communities.

While there has been remarkable success and an example of diversity in



The chair of Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama Papua (The forum of Inter-religious Dialogue of Papua), Lipiyus Binilek (center) is the community leader and the leader of Gereja Injili Di Indonesia (GIDI). He presented some accounts from the closed meeting with the Indonesian President, Joko Widodo, in the Presidential Palace.

Picture: [www.beritadearah.co.id](http://www.beritadearah.co.id).

Papua, tension and conflict does not necessarily disappear from this region. Tensions and conflicts are usually triggered by jealousy. The settlers often controlled most of the sectors of trade and agriculture. When tensions emerged, religious leaders, traditional authorities and government officials tried to address the issue so that the conflict does not spread.

As the conflict of Tolikara in 2015 shows. Before the mosque arson in Karubaga, Tolikara, Papua, according to a study of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia in the field, local communities have a tradition of visiting each other on religious holidays, especially on the day of Eid and Christmas. However, exclusivism shown in the congregation of the Evangelical Church in Indonesia (GIDI) resulted in a ban on the Muslim Eid prayers held in the place of Makoramil Karubaga with the use of loudspeakers. They prayed in a field because Muslims in Tolikara were prohibited by the GIDI to build a mosque, and were only allowed to build a small mosque without speakers. Unrest ensued since there was no resolution to this situation.

Besides the issue of religious exclusivism, the economic gap between indigenous people and the migrants has also been a trigger for conflict. Based on the demographics of the region, Muslims in Tolikara generally came from South Sulawesi, especially from the Bone regency and worked as merchants. From the findings of the

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values



Women worked the traditional cake for their family.

Picture: KHOMAINI.



Women took care the process and production of traditional cakes.

Picture: KHOMAINI.

study, the majority (approximately 80%) owners of kiosks are Muslims, like the sellers of groceries and of other basic necessities. With that profession, immigrant communities were able to master the sources of their economy. This fragile situation could be infiltrated with political inflammation which could quickly turn into conflict.

Identity is prone to be used as the trigger for conflict, especially when the level of economic empowerment is unequal. Looking at the experience in other areas, it should be the government officials, together with community members who are working together to develop the area and the economic empowerment of the locals.

### **The philosophy of “satu tungku tiga batu” (one stove three stone)**

Events of conflict and violence in Papua is an irony of its own because the indigenous Papuans have a recourse mechanism of managing problem, conflict, or war between

them, called “One Stove Three Stones”. This stems from the philosophy of the life of Fakfak, West Papua, and was adapted to other areas in Papua since it has the same spirit. This saying describes the life principle of Papuans in maintaining the balance and unity of life, such as through a high regard to the importance of inter-religious harmony in the region, namely Islam, Christianity and Catholicism.

The saying “One Stove Three Stones” was taken from the cooking habits of local people who use a stove with rocks as the jib. The ‘Stove’ symbolises shared life. The ‘Three Stones’ is a symbol of the three religions, Protestantism, Catholicism and Islam that live there. The community of Papua believes, if the balance is maintained as stable, all the problems of life can be overcome with a good resolution. The saying of “One Stove Three Stone” also means a harmonious synergy between the three elements of Papuan life, namely the



The mosque youth ("remaja masjid") of The Mosque of Kampung Pasir Putih, as in line following Catholic priest in the opening mass of Temu OMK Se-TPW Fakfak 2015 (the 2015 gathering of youth in the area of Fak-Fak in the Diocese of Manokwari-Sorong in the Catholic Church of St. Yosep Brongkendik.

Picture: Jeje Hindom.

### Indigenous, religious and government.

The intelligence of traditional and religious leaders in Fakfak three centuries ago has allowed for a living harmony which is inclusive of different religions and customs which exist in the land of Papua. In everyday life, they practice tolerance in mosques built along the shoreline of Kampung Patimburak (100 kilometres away from the town of Fakfak). The monumental idea of this building is on combining the buildings of a Mosque and a Church. The building and ornaments of the mosque have become a symbol of tolerance since the mosque was established in the 1700s. From this simple saying, one could hope that the harmony that exists in Fakfak could spread throughout the regions in Papua and be able to inspire the nation's children to maintain religious harmony in the country.

### H. GUS DUR (ABDURRAHMAN WAHID)

Actually, it was felt somewhat improper that this work dedicated one entry on the character of Gus Dur, in the absence of other figures. In general, we have covered many of the characters in the discussion in chapters and sub-chapters that have been presented in this book. Also, the work of "Mata Air Keteladanan" (the fountain of exemplary figures) (Latif, 2014, Mizan) provides extensive details and tracks exemplary Indonesian figures. However, it seems, Gus Dur is too important so he has been given a specific part. There is a simple reason for this. Gus Dur is a national figure, known as the hero of diversity Indonesia, a leader of world peace, and a President of the Republic of Indonesia.

There is a long reason that this figure provides an optimistic face of Indonesia with his ability to manage all the diversity of Indonesia, while providing a high appreciation of religions and beliefs. Simultaneously, Gus Dur was present in some period of historical importance, the early '70s, '80s, and the transition period from authoritarian regime to reform era. Gus Dur or Abdurrahman Wahid, was already showing strong signs of high leadership with the ability to engage discourse on science and on world events, with his sensitivity toward historical transitional events. Gus Dur carried values of Indonesianness as the marker of humanity. His writings and his actions when he led the

## The life of family: Indonesian experiences of life and values



Abdurrahman Wahid (1940–2009) of Gus Dur was great Ulama and 4th Indonesian president (1999–2001). He was famous defender of minorities in Indonesia.

Picture: [www.rmol.co](http://www.rmol.co).

Board tanfidz of Nahdlatul Ulama (the executive chair of the Nahdlatul Ulama, after Congress Situbondo 1984) was on building various spaces for Indonesia and managing growing aspirations of the grassroots. His acts were then under intense pressure from the New Order regime (e.g., reflected in Congress Cipasung 1994).

Gus Dur continually chose to call for Indonesianness, with the risk of him called being wishy-washy. Partly due to his intelligence, and in part because of Indonesia's vast relations, he promoted unlikely initiatives, unpopular then, but which have echoed beyond his time.

In fact, when the demands of “reform” that called for the stepping

down of President Suharto, Gus Dur, along with several other leaders, presented themselves as an “honest broker” and “bullet proof vest” for history to undergo a peaceful transition. There was the understanding by him that this historical transition should not have been a violent incident.

When Gus Dur became president himself, he took the steps to embrace individuals and groups which were under repression during the New Order. This steps raised resentment, then and now. Because Gus Dur himself was in a repressed situation during his Chairmanship of the NU (Nahdlatul Ulama). His step reflected his determination as the bridge of the nation, and was not to be bullied by partisanships or group-centrism. More than that, his attitude toward the Chinese community also became very strong with the assertion of the fact that the Chinese people are members of the “the House of Indonesia”. His other steps proved his determination. Gus Dur received the faithful of Parmalim (a traditional belief group of mostly ethnic Batak Toba). This event was important because the President received and recognised a traditional beliefs group (and not a monotheistic religion). This gave a breath of fresh air in the inter-ethnic relations of Batak, both monotheistic and traditional belief groups. Surely, Indonesia has this fresh air coming into generations of life to come.



# CONCLUDING NOTE

Living within extraordinarily rich diversity means that one lives with many extraordinary opportunities, yet many threats. There is also the temptation to aim for popularity, and also aim for an insular life. With extraordinary intensity in social relations on a global scale, a multicultural nation, as of Indonesia, has to face the explosion of pluralism from the inside, but also diversity from the outside. The global pursuit toward peace is always coupled with opposition and antagonism. Identity politics is on the rise in the world, posing a persuasion towards narrow identity life based on ethnicity, language, and religion.

All founders of Indonesia were acutely aware of this challenge, which existed then and after their physical lives. The proclinator, Sukarno, was

extremely determined to foster the rich diversity of Indonesia to become a united nation enjoying a rich common wealth. He set out this vision in the framer's deliberation, i.e. in the official proceeding of BPUPKI May-June 1945. This awareness was also shared by peace promoters and activists in Aceh, Papua, Maluku (Moluccas) and Poso. They were highly attentive to the need for humanity to be the foundation of nation building. Every life claimed in conflict, or when persons are tortured as a means of one dominating another poses a shame on Indonesia. Every vulnerability being exploited as the target of social political bullies and campaigns is a degradation of the spirit of independent Indonesia.

We then could look into the moral message by Cak Nur (Nurcholish Madjid), a religious leader and prominent fighter for humanity. He

treasured diversity and differences as the grace from the Creator. This would be meaningful when both are framed into a national ethical commitment in the constitutional democracy.

Unmanaged diversity and differences could only become a notorious space for a “zero-sum-game” life of nation. This condition amounts to a stunting of the leadership of the nation. Cak Nur draws this explanation, as follows (in “Indonesia Kita” (Our Indonesia), 2004):

*“All the founders of our nation are pioneers in exploring best ideas for the state and the nation of Indonesia. However, as I posited previously, all those ideas are yet to be realised fully. Part of the realisation, especially in the form of the Republic of Indonesia, is fundamental capital for us, as a treasure from national patriots, the founders of our nation. On the other hand, part of what is unrealised, like the national development for common goods with justice and honesty, keeps posing a serious crisis for our time. This is caused by the immaturity of us as a young new nation, as once Bung Hatta (the other proclimator) explained, the best ideas ever conceived by our founders did not come to life, as this was halted by the stunting mentality of the leader of our time....”*

The essence of Indonesia is the essence of the act of loving. This is

clearly explained in the Alinea IV of the Preambular of the Indonesian constitution. This is explained as “...to protect all Indonesians, the blood life of Indonesia....”

To protect is comparable to taking care and providing the best education for children, where the protection is fundamental in the formative years of those children. Along the growth of life, the way to protect the children also is performed differently and with different sequencing.

In the following part in the Alinea IV, we found “...to advance the common good...” which reaches a broad-based pursuit for the life of Indonesians growing justly and into prosperity. The following we take note of is “...to make our nation agile...” This means that love grows with an intergenerational perspective. The founders choose the word “cerdas” (agile) over smart. “Agile” assumes and promotes categorical capability, i.e. to capture and absorb knowledge and process it into life, including incorporating other new sets of knowledge. “Agile” is also a process of two ways of alternating exchange. When “smart” may be measured through a numerical frame, “agile” then is a process of collective life, of togetherness. A “smart” kid clearly has cognitive individual achievement, but not necessarily in his/her social and community life. This is how the founders come into the formulation of being “agile” incorporated into Indonesianness.

Since Indonesia exists with other nations, Indonesia is then also bound by shared humanity, and drawn into a global life of solidarity. The following in Alinea IV states “...to participate and contribute to world order based on humanity, eternal peace and social justice...” This reflects the experience of the founders themselves. Other nations including India, Egypt, Australia, Syria, Ukraine and others have their role to uphold the independence of Indonesia within the moral world. And vice-versa, Indonesia embraces the emancipatory pursuit of Algeria, Tunisia and Sri Lanka, which was prominently enshrined in the Asia Africa Conference 1955.

The character of Indonesianness is primarily and fundamentally part of their ecosystem. This ecosystem is exposed as a wide open sea sprinkled with islands and this character reflects Indonesia. The sea absorbs and cleanses many ingredients, making it better, and does not litter the environment. The character of the sea is in its ability to embrace/ frame the allowance of different kinds/

sizes of water expanses and its various ingredients.

The character of Indonesia reflects a fertile soil, as the result of volcanic eruptions and ingredients. The fertile soil receives all kinds of plants, as long as the plants conform to the ingredients and components of the soil. The character of Indonesia is in its capability to receive and to grow others, while maintaining the soil as continuously fertile. In this context, cultures and ideologies of the world come to Indonesia. As long as those can live with the soil of Indonesia, surely life will grow, the plant and the soil together.

With this character, loving Indonesia is a big, wide and intergenerational deal. The baton on loving Indonesia is passed from previous generations, from the founders to future generations, for thousands of years to come. Mohammad Hatta, one of the founders and first vice president of Indonesia, is known as saying that Indonesia is big and wide, so, loving Indonesia must be a big and wide deal.



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