
Editorial

Maintaining Indonesian Harmony

A lack of understanding of the differences between local cultures can cause a gap among the people from these cultures, which, in turn, can lead to misunderstandings and even result in conflict. Background of belief systems and problems of various groups should be understood more deeply to solve such conflict. For example, the multi-cultural conflict of Indonesian people today in West Papua, the Moluccas, West Borneo, and Aceh can be more fully understood and possibly be solved by understanding their cultures and belief systems.

The national culture of Indonesia is not yet unified. The positive and negative aspects of local cultures should be identified. The positive aspects can be integrated into national cultures, while the negative can be limited if not diminished. For example, the entrepreneurial culture of Chinese Indonesian people can be understood and integrated into society; the suicide culture of Gunung Kidul people in Southern Yogyakarta may be reduced. Inter-religious conflict may also be solved through understanding of these cultures. We should also understand these cultures in accordance with *their* own understanding of *their* cultures, not simply judging from our point of view. By understanding these cultures, we can begin to solve some of the problems that are now facing Indonesia, i.e., the disintegration of Indonesia as a nation.

Until now, the developmental policy of Indonesian government has not yet fully considered the cultural and social aspects of the society, a policy which is unproductive or even counterproductive. Riots or mobs sometimes diminish the results of development. This is because local cultures are not taken into consideration and local leaders are overruled. The central government, for example, cannot solve the problem of burning the forest because it cannot understand fully the needs and culture of local people and the culture in relation to forestry.

Inter-religious harmony can also be achieved through understanding the culture and belief system of each religious group. By understanding the local culture and belief system, developmental policy of Indonesia would be more fruitful.

Moreover, inter-religious harmony should be promoted in various

places. Such a place as Yogyakarta should be promoted as a model for this, because there has never been mob nor inter-religious conflict in Yogyakarta. By understanding the culture and belief system of people in Yogyakarta from various religious groups, the religious harmony could be known. Peaceful natures of Yogyakarta can be used as a model for solving the inter-religious conflict in Moluccas, for example. In addition, Yogyakarta is also famous for its heterogeneity. It is usually called "Indonesia Mini". Yet, people who live in it can maintain their harmony. This nature can be used as a model in maintaining Indonesian unity. Understanding this can be used to solve the conflict in Aceh.

The aim of this journal is, among others, to promote mutual understanding as well as inter-religious and inter-ethnic harmony among Indonesian society. And starting from this edition, the volume and number of this journal is changed in accordance with international standard. Because this journal has been published since 1962, the present publication is volume 38. (Lathiful Khuluq).