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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explain the dynamics of religious tolerance that occurred in Indonesia, especially in the last decade. Indonesia is indeed one of the most pluralistic societies in terms of ethnic, linguistic, cultural, and religious diversity, in which people from various backgrounds of tribe, race, and religion live together. In terms of religion, there exist in this country the great world religions, namely Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, Buddhism, and Kong Hu Chu. With a majority Muslim population, Indonesia is also known widely as the largest Muslim country in the world. Historically, the complexity of religious identity can bring harmony. In fact, with a diverse character, Indonesia is known as a model of a tolerant country where people from different religious backgrounds can live together in harmony. In this context, Indonesia has a very popular slogan, namely "Bhineka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity). Sociologically, the relationship among religious believers full of dynamics, sometimes full of accommodations that create an atmosphere of harmony and sometimes full of confrontations that lead to disharmony. The pattern of accommodative relationship occurs when the followers of different religions emphasizes tolerance. While the emergence of a confrontational relationship due to internal factors of the religious community itself, such a narrow understanding of religious, exclusive, self-righteous, but is also influenced by external factors, such as economic inequalities and the existence of provocation from the outside. This then causes the various nuances of religious conflicts in Indonesia. Ethnic and religious diversity, on the one hand, it can be a valuable capital for the establishment of tolerance is strong, but on the other hand has tremendous potential for conflict. Potential conflicts among ethnic and religious communities are still quite open. Thus the fact then raises a new problem of the dialectical relationship among religious and sometimes problematic. The problem was indeed a wedge that is long enough, especially in a plural society like Indonesia.

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Introduction

Realizing the function of religion as mercy to all mankind can be done through creation of awareness about tolerance. Religious tolerance is one of the measurements for a civilized nation. The more tolerant a nation is, the higher the level of public civility and civilization that nation. According to Walzer,[1] tolerance as a necessity is required in individual rooms and public places because of one of its goals of building tolerance for peace (peaceful co-existence) among between the various groups of people of the various beliefs, historical background, culture, and identity. Thus, religious tolerance should be able to establish the possibilities of positive attitudes, including; attitudes to acceptance of differences, recognizing the rights of others, respect of other people's existence, and the enthusiastic support of cultural differences and diversity in God's creation. To date, an effort to build a tolerant religious life and peace is still an issue that has not been fully accomplished. A report issued by the Moderate Muslim Society[2] shows that until recent, the practices of intolerance still exist in Indonesia.

In fact, there is a question of how people collaborate through inter-faith relations amidst religious plurality. In this context, there are indications that the plurality of religions in Indonesia has not been positively correlated with the awakening of religious tolerance. In fact, it is not uncommon even give an indication to the contrary: the plurality of religion is often a trigger of social conflict and religious sentiments. The elites comprising of the intellectual elites, the bureaucratic elites, and religious elites, are carrying the discourse of tolerance, exclusivism, and pluralism.

During this time, the discourse of tolerance, exclusivism and pluralism are likely to be very elitist. They "create" and "move" only at the stage of the intellectual elite, the bureaucracy, religion, and the elite of society without roots in the community. The process of creation, maturation, and the spread of the discourse was, more moving around the circle of elite earlier. Therefore, it was limited to disseminating the discourse among the elite, not only resulted in a discourse that is too "elitism", but also makes the discourse that is of irrelevant to the grassroot.

Sincerely, ethnic and religious diversity, on the one hand, can be valuable capital for awakening strong tolerance, but on the other hand has a tremendous potential for causing conflict. A potential conflict among ethnic groups and religious communities is still viable. This fact then raises a new problem of the dialectical relationship between religious and sometimes problematic. It's a wedge issue that is long enough, especially in a multicultural society such as Indonesia.

This fact has attracted the country (read: government) to seriously play a role in building a more tolerant religious life, free of conflict, and appreciate each other. Apart from the various motives, the active role of government in regulating the religious life of its citizens is interesting to observe.[3] However, the reality of religious

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[1] See, Michael Walzer, *On Toleration* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1997).

[2] See, Misrawi, "Laporan Akhir Tahun Toleransi dan Intoleransi, Ketika Negara Membiarkan Aksi Intoleransi" Jakarta: Moderate Muslim Society, 2010. See also, for example, "Laporan Kebebasan Beragama/Berkeyakinan" (Jakarta: The Wahid Institute, 2010).

[3] According to Robin Bush, to date, not less than 74 district and city government has passed a law that regulates the religious life of its citizens. See more, Robin Bush. "Regional Shariah Regulations in Indonesia: Anomaly or Symptom In Greg Fealy and Sally White, *Expressing Islam: Religious Life and Politics in Indonesia.* (Canberra: Australian National University, 2009).

life in Indonesia can't be released at all by the State entity,[1] and then later came out a variety of religious regulations issued by the government. Regulations issued by the government were generally intended to regulate religious life. In the context of inter-religious relations, the regulation was intended to contribute to "reconciliation" during religious disputes among believers, especially those relating to religious broadcasting and the establishment of houses of worship.

To live a comfortable life in multi-religious and multi-cultural places, people still need to do a lot to appreciate each other, so that a dynamic growth of tolerance prevails while individuals maintain their identity. Each member of the community whether is from the minority or majority group, has the same rights and obligations. On one hand the dynamics of religious tolerance showed a tendency of relatively good and positive. Meanwhile, on the other hand, the practice of intolerance still exists despite its relatively low scale. The tug between the will to achieve religious tolerance on the one hand with the tendency of the practice of religious intolerance on the other side has presented an interesting dynamic of religious tolerance to be studied further.

Religious Pluralism

As already known, the Indonesian archipelago—the largest one in the world, which consists of more than 17,800 island, isles, and islets—and its history make Indonesia an extremely pluralistic society. There are diverse ethnic groups—amounting to 656 ethnic groups, big and small—living in the country, having their respective cultures, traditions and customs. Up to the 1960s, there was little interaction among these different ethnic groups, but with the acceleration of economic development that brought about improvement in transportation and communication, greater contact, communication and exchanges were established. As a result, stereotype, perception, and prejudices among various ethnic groups have decreased significantly, strengthening the feelings of Indonesian nationalism. These different ethnic groups speak over 746 different local languages and dialects, even though 726 among them are now on the edge of extinction; but still, there are now 13 languages which survive, spoken by more than one million speakers at least.

According to Azra,[2] Indonesia is indeed one of the most pluralistic societies in terms of ethnic, linguistic, culture, and religions. Age-old local traditions survived when Indonesia proclaimed its independence on 17 August, 1945. Since then the so-called 'Indonesian national has culture gained momentum, competing with and in some ways transcending local cultures and traditions. The government since the time of independence has been trying to strengthen and sometimes to impose a national

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[1] The dynamics of religious life in Indonesia can't be separated from the involvement of the State (government). The relation between religion and state as experienced by Indonesia always have ups and downs. At one point relationships between them took place in harmony as happened recently, but at other times of tension, as reflected by the rebellion in the name of religion in the years 1950-1960. Understandably, the relation between them does not stand alone, but is also influenced by political issues, economics, and culture. In terms of Islam, according to Katerina Dalacaoura, the relation of religion (Islam) and political (state) can't be separated. Dalacaoura mention that *religion and politics are one*. See more, Katerina Dalacaoura, *Islam Liberalism & Human Rights*, (London and New York: I.B. Tauris, 2003), p. 42.

[2] Azyumardi Azra, "Cultural Pluralism in Indonesia: Continuous Reinventing of Indonesian Islam in Local, National and Global Contexts" paper presented at Annual Conference on Islamic Studies, 2010, p. 4.

culture in the name of national unity and integrity through centralized political structure and leadership, legislation, and education-to mention but few.

Indonesian national and local cultural diversity in the last few decades has been enriched by a more cosmopolitan culture resulting from increased globalization. At the same time, the introduction of various new cultural forms found their way into Indonesian society, created cultural confusion, disorientation and dislocation among young people in particular. Global lifestyles like individualism, liberalism, materialism and even hedonism are generally considered as incompatible with local and national culture. But, still since those kinds of lifestyles are so intrusive through instant communication, it is now a public discourse that Indonesian and local cultures are now under threat of global culture.

According to Azra still,[1] without doubt, religion is also an important part of Indonesia; and diversity is clearly reflected in the religious practices as well. According to some latest estimates, the total population of Indonesia is about 235 million people of which 88.2 % are Muslims, 5.87 % Protestants, 3.05 % Catholics, 1.81 % Hindus, 0.84 % Buddhists and the remaining 0.20 are of other religions and spiritual groups. The Indonesian government officially recognizes the six world religions, namely: Islam, Protestantism, Catholicism, Hinduism, Hinduism and Confucianism or Kong Hu Chu.

Until now, pluralism is a heavily debated issue in present-day Indonesia. In the past few years, the media has increasingly reported about different positions in the debates, in response to the growth of religious and social conflicts in the country. Both those who are in favour and those who are against fundamentalist forms of religion have frequently expressed their views. In the Indonesian context 'religious pluralism' does not merely mean the co-existence of different religious groups that tolerate each other's beliefs. Pluralism implies that one actually believes that each of the religions is 'true'. To many Muslims, this is an unacceptable and relativist point of view. It opposes their belief that there is only one God. Even worse, it would demonstrate that each of the religions is equally *not* true.

Other Muslims, however, feel that pluralism is very compatible with the Islamic religion. They argue for a pluralism based on Islamic tradition. At the same time, 'pluralism' as a label has acquired a bad name. It is associated with a new form of Western domination which does not fit the Indonesian context. The groups in favour and the groups against pluralism seem to be much polarized on this theological view. This polarization, which has sometimes become manifest in violent incidents, is visible. Religious based conflicts have dominated Indonesia's social political dynamics, such as the anti-pornography bill controversy, the attacks on churches by Muslims, bible-inspired local regulations in Papua.

A particular case that has drawn attention is the situation of the Ahmadiyah. The followers of Ahmadiyah believe that Mirza Ghulam Ahmad received divine revelation and treat him as a prophet. The Ahmadiyah group is controversial since the mainstream of Islam in Indonesia represented by the Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) does not accept the existence of another prophet after Mohammed. Due to this controversy, followers of Ahmadiyah have been attacked by thousands of people belonging to the Indonesian Muslim Solidarity group. For instance, they vandalized Ahmadiyah area in Parung-Bogor in West Java and set a women's dormitory there on fire.

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[1] *Ibid*, p. 6.

Another case which may illustrate the issue of pluralism is not received by most people in Indonesia is a demonstration against the release of the movie "?" (Read: question mark), which tells the story of religious tolerance. As known, this film appear inspired by many real story about the ups and downs of religious life in Indonesia. This film invites viewers to be more obedient to the faith and beliefs of each other. The film also explains that religion is actually a reflection of a fundamental social process that is discussed in the picture by the displacement of religious figures Hendra and Rica. The film is also apparently intended to invite a plural society to get into an 'area' called 'tolerance'.

However, this film provoked criticism (or the pros and cons), including demonstrations of the Front Pembela Islam (FPI, Islamic Defence Front), it most likely led to differences in interpretation and understanding of the language of the image conveyed by the director. Overall, this film shows the dynamics of tolerance and diversity of religious life as something real and living among the people of Indonesia. In some parts, this film shows scenes of a relatively sensitive, such as religious conversion, or some other scenes that can be viewed as spreading 'virus' of religious pluralism. It also seems to cause the FPI protesters and requested the Government to stop the circulation of this film because it is considered campaigning pluralism.

The emergence of resistance against the film raises many questions. First, some particular Islamic groups in Indonesia were threatened with pluralism understand what they read as rejection of the truth of Islam. Second, the emergence of this action seems also to be based on the emergence of fatwa from the Indonesian Ulama Council (MUI) which forbids pluralism.[1] Third, this action suggests the existence of a phenomenon like "misreading" (misreading) and misconceptions (misunderstanding) of the concept and understanding of pluralism, which is defined as an attitude or perspective for responding to the facts of plurality (diversity). To this day, the fact of pluralism is still a relatively controversial discourse for most religious societies. According to Munawar Budhy-Rahman,[2] pluralism is the one issue that has sparked a debate lasting over time.

The rejection of pluralism in society is a fact that can't be avoided. Since we need to stay with another, to attain a multicultural community that supports; appreciation, respect, and with one another cooperation. According to Subkhan[3], pluralism is not merely point to the fact of the existence of pluralism. However, the question is the active involvement of the reality of pluralism. Religious and cultural pluralism can be found everywhere. Religious pluralism is a demanding every religion not only acknowledge the existence and rights of other religions, but is involved in the effort to understand the differences and similarities in order to achieve harmony in diversity.

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[1] In the MUI fatwa (law opinion) on Pluralism, Liberalism, Secularism, Religion, number 7/Munas VII/MUI/11/2005 explanation of the MUI's perspective on religious pluralism as follows: "Religious pluralism is a notion which teaches that all religions are equal and therefore the truth of every religion is relative: therefore every religion should not be claimed that only true religion while other religions are wrong. Pluralism of religion also teaches that all religions will go and side by side in heaven."

[2] Budhy Munawar-Rachman. *Islam Pluralis: Wacana Kesetaraan Kaum Beriman*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001); *Argumen Islam untuk Pluralisme* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2010); see also Effendy Bachtiar, *Masyarakat Agama dan Pluralisme Keagamaan*, Yogyakarta: Galang Press, 2001).

[3] Imam Subkhan, *Hiruk Pikuk Wacana Pluralisme di Yogya* (Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2007).

Religious pluralism is based on individual solidarity undoubtedly led to some positive implications. First, the understanding of religious pluralism is no longer just a "reality", but rather a "necessity" that can't be eliminated. On this emerging reality for another business that was born from the awareness of interdependence. In this condition, religion motivated to contribute because of the interdependence of religion requires that the inactivity of one religion will affect the results to be achieved. If the growing awareness of the interdependence of religion, religious participation can be maximized. Second, the pluralism of religious intellectuals upholds the principle of solidarity-based take and give. A good dialogue will result in changes to both parties. Third, based on the solidarity of the intellectual, religious pluralism requires freedom from the grip of social and political, including the state.

Religious Tolerance

The dynamics of religious life in Indonesia through a phase plug, especially in recent years, especially after the release of government regulation in the form of Joint Regulation of the Minister of Religious Affairs and Minister of Interior of the establishment of the Forum for Religious Harmony and procedures for the establishment of houses of worship. Since the rule was put in place, the intensity of the interaction among religious believers has increased significantly. Even if the new place on the religious elite level, interaction and communication more fluid and open more frequently. Birth of Religious Harmony Forum (FKUB: Forum Kerukunan Umat Beragama) has become a way for the ongoing atmosphere of social interaction that is more open and dynamic among interfaith leaders.

Various times of religious commemoration, including an *iftar* together, has now turned into a social media point of interfaith leaders come together and interact. Atmosphere of relative harmony of religious life which was, in 2007 a little disturbed by the emergence of the issue of bomb blasts that hit a number of churches in several cities in Indonesia. But, thanks to the fabric of relationships and good communication between interfaith leaders, issues that can threaten the harmony of relations among religious believers can be dealt with together.

Nevertheless, the emergence of issues that the bomb will explode at the celebration of Christmas has led to fears and negative perceptions among the people across religions. Each of these religious people interpret the bombing issue, which can generally be divided into three categories of symbols. First, as a symbol of hatred of one particular religious group to another religious group, giving rise to mutual mistrust between religious communities from one another. Second, the symbol of jealousy, because some ethnic and religious communities view that one particular ethnic and religious communities are economically more advanced, giving rise to social jealousy. Third, pitting symbol, it means that throw the bombing issue, not necessarily made by certain religious and ethnic communities.

After the outbreak of the issue in a church bombing that did not materialize, the interfaith leaders who are members of the Forum for Religious Harmony and the Government made various efforts to defuse the atmosphere by way of an intensive dialogue, build understanding and more cooperation is interreligious. In fact, each before the coming of Christmas celebrations, interfaith leaders has always held a meeting with security authorities to anticipate things that are not desirable. These efforts can be seen as a symbol of the seriousness of the government and religious leaders to create a conducive atmosphere, so that religious communities remain tolerant, peaceful and serene. Through the medium of dialogue and encounter a

variety of routine and intensive, so in recent years the relationship between religious experience a new chapter on the relationship that the more tolerant, harmonious and conducive.

Meanwhile, attitudes and traditions greetings or congratulations among religious believers celebrate the days when the great religious, has become a habit that thrives in the midst of the people of Indonesia. Good Muslim, Protestant, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Kong Hu Chu was used to congratulate each other Eid, Merry Christmas, happy New Year, congratulations Waisyak Day, Happy birth of Prophet Kong Zi, and others. Although true in some religious circles there are different views on the tradition to congratulate them. According to Abdulsyani,[1] person's involvement in the broader based interaction because of his desire to unite with other human beings around him. Because it's human instinct to live with the will and interests are not limited.

There are various things that can become an obstacle to the realization of religious tolerance in society. Various factors are will turn into the attitudes and acts of intolerance are actually going to be prevented so that tolerance can be realized. Factors that could become an obstacle to religious tolerance consists of two barriers, namely, first, the internal resistance, and both external barriers. Internal barriers include: excessive religious bigotry, ethnocentrism, and social prejudices, while the external barriers that is, the emergence of religion and the issue of deployment of provocateurs from outside.

One of the most prominent obstacle to the realization of religious tolerance is the existence of religious prejudice, as shown by the demonstrations against the screening of film "?". Ideologically, religion is one of the most powerful ways to confirm the identity, form the poles of the grouping, "we" and "them." This dichotomy implies a considerable distance. Religious rituals, as one element of the religion, also reinforce the identity and unity of the group, while simultaneously maintaining the boundaries of a particular religious group. Religious groups, according to Mary Douglas,[2] not only protects from external boundaries, but also tends to strengthen the internal boundaries.

Dichotomy of "us" and "them" is in fact as well as the structural framework of cognitive thinking, which in turn gave birth to a highly particularistic perspective, fanatical, stereotypical, and black and white. McGuire[3] call it our way is totally right, theirs is totally wrong. This perspective would lead to an understanding that religion is most valid.[4]

Actually, particularistic view of this kind can be found in many forms. Sociologically, because it is in a community that has the common feature that the identity and character that must be adhered to. While the religious dogma is formed by a variety of inherent truth that is inherently strong (truth claim) in every religion that religion is a religion that had the most valid before God. While other faiths are located on the wrong path. This is what makes a person very easily have a negative or suspicious bias (prejudice). When this suspicion a person has mastered the mindset,

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[1] Humaedi Abdulsyani, *Islam dan Hubungan Antaragama,* (Yogyakarta: LKis, 2007), p. 102

[2] McGuire, *Religion: The Social Context.*(California: Wadswoth Publishing Company, 1981), p. 162.

[3] Ibid.

[4] Charles Glock and Rodney Stark, *Christian Belief and Anti Semitism.* New York: Harper and Row, 1996), p. 20.

then the fears of many other groups that will conduct may lead to the waning of group identity that had been built with very solid would be very easy to light.

As a result, the internal resistance in the form of religious fanaticism, ethnocentrism, and social prejudice and intimidation is the negative attitude held by an individual or particular religious groups are directed to individuals or other religious groups. This attitude is a reflection of one's aversion to others, because of differences in systems of doctrine, value systems and different interests. If these negative attitudes, expressed in daily life, it would appear not displeasing to others. Then the action will be responded back to any other act that is more unpleasant.

In recent years, there were a number of practices and beliefs of religious intolerance, both at national and local level. One case of intolerance to public attention in recent years, among other things, the recurrence of violence against Ahmadiyah adherents in various places, the tragedy that struck the church of HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestan) in Ciketing Bekasi, violence against worshipers Gereja Kristen Indonesia (Christian Church of Indonesia) Yasmin Bogor, as well as violence against followers of Islam sect Syi 'ah in Madura. At the end of 2010, the practice of intolerance also occurred against the HKBP Bethany, Rancaekek, Bandung. The problem then what is the meaning behind the practice of intolerance in Indonesia. Why the practice of intolerance of religion and belief is is still there even though the constitution guarantees freedom of religion or tolerance?

If opposition to the establishment of Muslim non-Muslim places of worship, it does not mean they hate other religions. Even if the Muslim opposition to the establishment of houses of worship to another in the midst of them, it's because they fear the process of apostasy. Apostasy is concerned. However, if the establishment of houses of worship of other religions does not bring such concerns, houses of worship would never be disturbed. Religious tolerance does not mean allowing the establishment of houses of worship is not licensed, let alone stand violates a joint decree of the Minister of Home Affairs and Minister of Religious Affairs, which clearly set procedures for the establishment of houses of worship for followers of religions that exist and are recognized in Indonesia. Many places of worship which were originally residences, homes, and stores (shops), or convention halls, but later transformed into places of worship, was done by certain opposition groups and mostly from the majority of the local people who embraced other religions. Generally, the denial that led to the destruction occurs due to the use of a house of worship, not in accordance with the designation.

Some analysis with respect to the practice of religious intolerance in the society may be mentioned here. First, the practice of intolerance is caused by a misguided mindset still think of 'the others' religious life. 'The Others' or 'other' is more often seen as enemies to be eliminated, rather than a reality that must be treated.

Second, the practice of intolerance triggered by a mentality of divisionism in communities, on the one hand led to the out-burst of religious tolerance among followers of religions and beliefs, which in essence is a strong message of religion and belief , but on the other hand people seem to be so lenient with corrupt practices and manipulation around them that are profitable. In the perspective of sociology, split tolerance is a legacy of people who lived so long in political hypocrisy and political conservatives who rely on permissive tolerance approach, rather than relying on substantial political approach to critical tolerances.

Third, the practice of religious intolerance in the form of violence is a religious implications of the politicization of religious heritage of the new order that has not completely vanished. Religious intolerance was the result of the politicization of

religion by the state against the creation of the label 'official religion' (mainstream) and 'unofficial religion' (religious people) are in fact continued until now.

Fourth, the practice of religious intolerance can still be read as an implication of the lack of religious practice (religious empiricism). The adherents of the religion are still stuck with dogmatic religious practice more intelligent so they do not interpret religious semantic, particularly on the sacred texts available. Truth is simply interpreted the text and forget the context.

The result is a completely rigid religious practices. Everything is measured from the existing text. Once the text of the truth of religion or belief destroyed by others, especially 'new religion', the alleged defamation and blasphemy will necessarily become judgmental confidence sledge hammer 'new' is. So strong religious texts dominate our religious systems result in the context (that man is plural and different religious beliefs run) almost did not get a place. Text defended it out through a variety of ways that deny their own religion from the beginning to give a strong message to the context (diversity).

By looking at some examples of the practices of religious intolerance at the top, it can be said that the problem of majority-minority as a reality is still a Pandora's box, because the majority always be in a position politically advantaged, but feel marginalized by the minority. While minorities have always felt discriminated against by the policies of certain regimes dominated by the majority. Therefore, it becomes important to consider how the path that allows the negotiation of a win-win between the majority and minority in a pluralistic society building.

Conclusion

From the preceding description, can be mapped to the dynamics of religious tolerance in Indonesia stands on two perspectives, namely the perspective of social systems and cultural systems. Perspective of the social system, namely through the inter-group relations, which are intended as a relationship between the member-members of various groups. Intensified inter-group relations, the higher the level of integration between them. Given the inter-group relations can also neutralize the conflict between groups, because each group member will not have a single loyalty in a particular group, but instead their loyalty to double by the groups they belong. Thus, fears of narrow fanaticism, primordial sentiments will also be neutralized because the duality of loyalties which are owned by their respective group members.

Meanwhile, in the perspective of cultural systems, such as Indonesia's multicultural society can be united through general values that apply to all members of society. General values that apply to all members of this community as a glue for the group in society. The stronger the general values that apply to groups in society, the stronger it will glue to them. Common values that stem from the dominant culture of Indonesia is a multicultural society. In this context, the dominant public values that can be used as a reference it is the appreciation of diversity, as symbolized in the slogan of national unity (unity in diversity).

In the context of building religious tolerance in Indonesia, the motto " Bhineka Tunggal Ika" (Unity in Diversity), has become such a common thread or homogeneous platform (or *kalimatun sawa'* in Islamic terminology) that binds variety of different faiths to integrate socially. In the context of religious communities, social integration is the unification process includes all religious groups in social capacity,

rather than belief, into the unity of the social attitude of bringing more than a symbol or a specific group identity.

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