

CATHOLIC STUDENTS AND DEMOCRATIC DEVELOPMENT IN INDONESIA (A PSYCHOLOGICAL PERSPECTIVE)

1. DESCRIPTION OF THE ISSUE

In the 1996 and 2005 decade, Indonesia experienced fundamental political and economic changes. A highly centralized authoritarian regime was replaced by an emerging democratic system ("Indonesian Transitions" Henk Schulte Nordholt, 2006). Youth activists and youth organizations have played an important role in initiating social change in Indonesian society. Anders Uhlin (2002) in "Towards an Integration of Domestic and Transitional Dimensions of Democratization" recognizes that, "without the mass protests organized by students activists and other society actors Suharto would probably have been able to stay in power" (p.8).

Since Suharto fell, Indonesia as a whole is moving toward greater democracy. However, social conditions of nation remained volatile. Inter-ethnic unrest continues. The most dangerous riot was the killing between Muslims and Christians in Maluku. More than a thousand people were killed there during the year 1999 (See History of Modern Indonesia 1200-2004 "*Sejarah Indonesia Modern 1200-2004*" by M.C., Ricklefs, 2008). In "Roots of Violence in Indonesia" Freek Colombijn and J. Thomas Lindblad (2002) state that Indonesia is a violent country. Violence has a long history in Indonesia. Benedict R.O'G. Anderson (2001) in "Violence and the State in Suharto's Indonesia" states that Indonesians are familiar with modern state's presumptive monopoly claims to the "right to violence".

The first systematic examination of violence in Indonesia since *reformasi* was made by Varsney, Ashutosh and Panggabean (2005). *Reformasi* was a political movement spurred by an economic, political, and human rights crisis that led to the fall of Suharto and the authoritarian New Order regime. In "Patterns of collective Violence in Indonesia (2005) they use media reports to show that there was a dramatic increase in violence between the years of 1997 and 1999, and demonstrate a high level of violence through 2001. Within the category of ethno-communal violence, inter-religious violence has led to the greatest number deaths. The most deadly Muslim-Christian strife took place since 1998. Varsney, Ashutosh and Panggabean found that, "youth clashes are the single most important trigger, or spark, for group violence in Indonesia. Their study finds that 40 per cent of lives lost in violence resulted from riots precipitated by youth clashes. They conclude that, regardless of the roots of this violence, the question must be asked: "Can something be done to absorb Indonesia's youth in more productive channels?" (Varshey and Panggabean, 2005). When Indonesia is

becoming more democratic on the one hand, but on the other hand is still claims to the 'right violence', how youth are socialized towards or away from habits of democracy and civil society?

Professor Lipset (2003) who, in his insightful essay on "Religion and American values," reported that "democratic and religious values have grown together" (in Elstain J.B, (2009), "Religion and Democracy"). According to Hefner in his book "Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia" (2000), religious organizations "affirm democracy, volunteerism, and a balance of countervailing powers in a state society" thus promoting habits of democracy. Mass-based religious organizations are well suited to conduct programs of democratic education because they well established structures and networks. But this time the church and Catholic universities in Indonesia also are experiencing confusion in the finding an appropriate format of cadres forming for Catholic youth. In particular, there is the phenomenon of dramatically decreasing the involvement of young Catholics in the activities of Catholic religious organizations. In general, there was a decrease youth involvement in political and social activities which may also be one indicator of decline in their concern for the nation and society issues.

2. PRINCIPAL QUESTIONS

This research will describe how and to what extent Catholic Students are developing habits of democracy amongst Indonesia's Catholic youth? How they have developed democratic habits and values in Catholic youth and the activities that they carry out toward democratic socialization (in a nation that still has little understanding of how modern democratic government works)? How democratic ideas and religious tolerance are applied and practiced by them?

What factors that make them want to get involved or not involved in the activities of the Catholic religious organization? Why catholic youth participation in the activities of religious organizations and political-social activities tend to decline? What steps required by the Catholic youth to improve their role in advancing the process of Democratization in Indonesia?

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is case studies and phenomenology studies. The case studies will involve two Catholic student organizations, including Catholic Student Association of the Republic of Indonesia (PMKRI or *Perhimpunan Mahasiswa Katolik Republik Indonesia*) and Catholic Youth (*Pemuda Katolik*). *The first organization*, PMKRI is a Catholic organization that stood on May 25, 1947 at Yogyakarta-Indonesia. The organization

functions as a development organization and struggling organizations of Catholic students (and also not Catholic students) that based on *Pancasila* (is the Indonesian state ideology), imbued catholicity, and encouraged student affairs. *The second organization*, Catholic Youth is national youth organization that was established in the Republic of Indonesia in 1945. Catholic Youth aims to increase the participation of Catholic youth in the national and state based on *Pancasila* illuminated catholicity faith to advance the Catholic Church and the Republic of Indonesia. This research will describe how and to what extent two Catholic Students Organization and are developing habits of democracy amongst Indonesia's Catholic youth.

The phenomenology studies will involve 'individual members' of the organizations and also Catholic students who are not members of these organizations. My criteria for choosing individuals were that they active participants in one of the targeted groups, or they are Catholic students as non-members of the targeted groups. By using psychological perspective, this research attempts to reveal the organizations 'individual members' and Catholic students in general (non-member) experiences, concerns, and values on democracy in Indonesia. Finally, a sample of professionals, politicians, and scholars who observe each of the two of these organizations and Catholic students are interviewed to gauge outsiders' perceptions of how well they promote habit of democracy.

The research stages are: *the first year* is the case studies that involve two Catholic student organizations, including PMKRI and Catholic Youth; *the second year* is the phenomenology studies that involve 'individual members' of the organizations and also Catholic students who are not members of these organizations; *the third year* is interview to a sample of professionals, politicians, and scholars who observe each of the two of these organizations and Catholic students in Indonesia. In this last year is also stage of the overall data analysis and finishing of final report.

Interviews will be used to collect the majority of the data. The interviews are primarily hold in two cities in Indonesia. Jakarta is chosen because it is the capitol city and the hub of these groups and their affiliates. Yogyakarta is chosen because these groups are known to be active here.

4. ANTICIPATED RESULTS

The anticipated results of this research are: (1) This research is expected to give a picture of how Catholic youth are socialized towards or away from habits of democracy and civil society in Indonesia?; (2) This research tries to answer the question: (a) why there was a declining of catholic youth involvement in the activities of religious organizations and political-social activities in Indonesia today; and (b) what steps required by the Catholic youth to improve their role in advancing the process of Democratization in Indonesia?; (3) This research is expected to provide input on the church and Catholic universities in

Indonesia to search an appropriate format of cadres forming for Catholic youth in Indonesia to promote democracy in this country.

5. ACADEMIC CONTRIBUTION

Studies of the Catholic youth involvement in the development of democracy in Indonesia is still very limited, especially when compared to the already many studies on the involvement of young Muslims. If there are any studies about them, the studies put them as objects of the church or institution policy. There is no study yet that explores the perspective of Catholic young people themselves and their psychological experience of everyday life in promoting democracy in this country.

This research intends to explore the dynamics of Catholic youth involvement in promoting democracy in Indonesia with a psychological perspective. It is hoped that this research will give academic contribution on the relevance and contribution of the Catholic youth in promoting democracy in Indonesia.

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