

**Development of the Value of the Role of the HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestant)
Church in the Development of Tolerance in Religious Life in the Community of
Semarang City 2000-2010 in History Learning**

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine (1) the history of HKBP Semarang, (2) the development of HKBP Semarang, and (3) HKBP's role in the development of religious tolerance Semarang 2000-2010. The historical method consists of collecting source/data, comparing the source with other sources, analysis, interpretation, and writing resources. The results of this study are: HKBP Semarang has a close relationship with other religions that exist in the surrounding area because not only the Protestant religion that is in the area of Semarang but also some people are Muslims, Hindus, Buddhists, and Catholics. Relationships between people, society, and the environment helping each other among religions will create an atmosphere of harmony among religions with no problem connecting beliefs, mutual tolerance between faiths when other people are doing religious activities, interaction with the environment, keeping all of what is on earth as a form of gratitude to God.

Keywords: *HKBP role, religious tolerance*

Introduction

The Huria Kristen Batak Protestant Church (HKBP) is one of Indonesia's various types of Protestant Christian churches. HKBP is a Christian church that has developed with Batak culture. Comes from the Batak tribe throughout Indonesia. The HKBP Church has a majority of members from the Batak tribe. Therefore, HKBP members live in Dalihan Na Tolu. They are namely prohibiting intermarriage. The HKBP Church accepts the principle of banning intermarriage so that there is no chaos in society. As the Apostle Paul said, everything should take place in an orderly manner (I Cor. 14:40) and neatly arranged (Eph. 4:16). The HKBP Church grew out of the RMG (Rheinische Missions Gesellschaft) mission from Germany and was officially founded on October 7, 1861. Currently, HKBP has more than 3 million members throughout Indonesia. Even though it uses the Batak name, HKBP is also open to other ethnic groups. This church adopts the Batak culture in carrying out its worship procedures. In Indonesia, this church is growing in almost every province, along with many Batak people who like to migrate. The Batak people who are Christians, when they migrate abroad, will need the existence of the HKBP Church as a place to carry out their worship.

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Semarang is one of the cities in Indonesia where the Batak community is developing quite rapidly. Many Batak people have settled/domiciled and raised families in Semarang. In line with this, the HKBP Church in Semarang is also experiencing development. In 1934, the HKBP Church entered Semarang (Roynaldo, 2007).

In Semarang, the development of the HKBP church is in line with the development of people from the Batak tribe in Semarang (Ginting, 2014). As the only HKBP church in Semarang, HKBP continues to experience development. Initially, HKBP entered Semarang in 1960, and this church continued to experience physical development and location changes. HKBP is one of the churches with the largest congregation in Asia and is a forum for Christian fellowship from the Batak tribe, which has dynamics in its historical development from time to time. HKBP is expected to be a driving force for the implementation of ministry and the preaching of the Gospel together with other congregations of God so that all tribes, peoples, and nations in Indonesia and throughout the world receive baptism in the name of "God the Father, His Son Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit" in the development of tolerance in the religious life of the HKBP. The HKBP Church also has factors that can assist in developing tolerance in the community's spiritual life. In this case, HKBP has church teachings based on the Bible. Every Christian submits to the Word of God because that Word is not the Word of man but the Word of God alone. So, for HKBP, the Bible has absolute authority in church life.

Method

Success in scientific research depends on the methods used in the study. This research uses historical methods (Wardah, 2014). Because this research relates to realities that occurred in the past. The definition of historical research methods is a careful and thorough investigation of a problem or to support or reject a theory (Hilbish 1952). Meanwhile, according to Gilbert J. Garragham (1957:33), the Historical Research Method is a systematic set of rules and principles for collecting historical sources effectively, evaluating them critically, and proposing a synthesis of the results achieved in written form (Abdurrahman, 1999).

Results and Discussion

HKBP Semarang has close relations with other religions around the area because not only Protestant Christians exist in the Semarang area, but there are also several communities that are Muslim, Hindu, Buddhist, and Catholic (Susetyo, 2011; Chinatown). This relationship between each other, society, and the environment is mutual assistance between religious

communities so that a harmonious atmosphere will be created between religious communities without involving issues of belief, mutual tolerance between religious communities when other communities are carrying out religious activities, in interacting with the environment, they pay attention to environmental cleanliness, looking after everything on earth as a form of gratitude to God. Apart from that, without the approval of the surrounding community, the church would not have been able to form as it is today.

Humans are increasingly united in establishing relationships between various activities in this life. The Church considers its relationship with non-Christian religions more carefully because all nations are one society and have one origin. God wants all humanity to inhabit the entire face of the earth (Kamarullah, 2005). Everyone also has one final goal, namely Allah.

In its task of developing unity and love between people, even between nations, the church here primarily considers which things are generally found in human nations and which encourage all to face the current situation together (found in the vision and mission of the HKBP church) (Pardede, 2012; Siregar, 2017). Various non-Christian religions inhabit the Semarang area. From time immemorial until now, there has been an awareness of supernatural powers in multiple people's lives, which are present in history and the events of human life; sometimes, there is even a recognition of the highest divine power or the Father. This awareness and recognition permeates the life of society with a deep religious spirit. Meanwhile, religions, which are tied to cultural development, try to respond to these problems with more complex ideologies and more developed language. Thus, humans investigate the Divine mystery in Hinduism and express it with abundant myths and deep philosophical efforts (Rani, 2005). Buddhism in various schools recognizes that this changing world is entirely inadequate and teaches humans how to attain the highest enlightenment with a soul full of devotion and faith. (Wibowo, 2008) .

The religious feeling must develop into a belief that can withstand all criticism attacks, but not by looking the other way or calling for censorship and prohibiting critical reading or scientific interpretation. Religious belief must develop through the intellectual development of each believer and by the level of knowledge. Surrendering to fate and blind destiny is not irresponsible. This picture of God does not make sense. Holding religion to the level of antiquity, forbidding scientific discussion, and fearing dialogue with the results of scientific inquiry are more dangerous for religion than facing the strong winds of modern science with a critical attitude. Facing today's crises with mature faith can benefit the emergence of a fresher, more mature, and more stable appreciation of religion (Nico, 1990: 122).

The Church also respects all religious communities. Every spiritual teaching always teaches mutual respect between followers of other religions. The HKBP Semarang Church, every time it holds significant church events such as Christmas and Easter events, always invites other religious leaders to come to the event; the ones most often asked to these events are Islamic religious leaders because the people of Semarang city are primarily Muslim and Christian. This was done so that a sense of togetherness between followers of other religions continues today.

Diakonia activities cannot be separated from the HKBP Semarang congregation movement (Widyatmaja, 2010). The Social Diakoni Section carries out this activity. Since the founding of HKBP Semarang, the diamond's activities have included visiting the sick, providing health/treatment services, and holding consolation services for those in misfortune. HKBP Semarang also offers financial assistance to congregations in misfortune. Since 1980, HKBP Semarang has also provided unique gifts for orphans, widows, and widowers. These small gifts are usually distributed in December. Since 2005, social diaconate services have been expanded. Every Eid al-Fitr holiday, the Social Diakoni Section collects donations (money and essential food items) to be distributed to Muslim brothers and sisters who are in need and celebrate Eid al-Fitr. At least 200 basic food packages are distributed yearly to those needing them. For HKBP residents who are in need, basic food packages are distributed every time before Easter and Christmas. Church elders distribute bare food coupons to congregations in their area, and the congregation picks them up at the church building complex. Every year, around 1000 packages are distributed.

The Social Deaconry is the lifeblood of the continuity of the church amid its people and community life. The church's existence is at stake with its caring role for others. So far, the church has received much criticism from members of the church itself and sometimes also faces problems in society, such as problems with permits to build churches and the church's previous lack of sensitivity in paying attention to the socio-economic conditions of its community. For this reason, churches, including HKBP Semarang, are improving themselves in response to input and criticism from various parties.

Conclusion

The HKBP Church in Semarang has close relations with other religions around the area because it is not only Protestant Christianity that exists in the area. HKBP Church also has activities or Three Church Tasks. There are four main things the Church can do, namely: (1)

learning church, (2) Worshiping Church (Koinonia), (3) Church that preaches the gospel (Marturia), (4) Church that loves (Diakonia).

The entire HKBP Social Deacon service program is a new spiritual experience for HKBP; every criticism and input is interpreted as an effort to advance the church's role amid society and church members themselves. The results of the reflection in question are efforts to provide short-term, long-term, and sustainable social impact services. Diakonia services would be more visible in the concrete form of the demands of the Gospel, namely, to change the life of society and the church for the better. For example, they are responding to problems of poverty, ignorance, violence, corruption, backwardness, alienation, discrimination, social ills, land and environmental problems, HIV and AIDS issues, and so on. In this way, every direction of Diakonia's service program indeed presents/expresses peace (shalom).

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