

Islam and Multiculturalism: Between Norms and Forms

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Multicultural Discourse from the *Minbar*: A Study on *Khutbah* Texts Prepared by *Jakim* Malaysia

Mohd Roslan Mohd Nor

Abstract

Multiculturalism in Islam is not new but rather began with the advent of Islamic revelation. Respect and inclusiveness has for a long period of time been the subject of discussion. Today, multiculturalism is reflected in several forms including religious sermons (*khutbahs*) delivered during every Friday prayer. *Khutbahs* seek to educate Muslims on many social and moral issues, including living together in a harmonious multicultural society. In Malaysia for instance, *khutbahs* are officially prepared by JAKIM and provided to all mosques located in the Federal Territory and State Religious Departments. *Khatib* normally reads the *khutbah* and delivers it from the *minbar*. This study explores facets of multicultural discourse in the texts of *khutbahs* prepared by *Jakim*. It seeks to identify the type of information transmitted to Muslim congregations during Friday prayers, and perhaps examine various multicultural issues affecting the very process of text preparation. This study uses library research methodology whereby *khutbah* texts related to multiculturalism shall be examined using analytical and critical methods of analysis. This research will highlight valuable evidence on multicultural discourse as perceived and translated by official religious institutions of Malaysia.

Introduction

Coexisting with others of different background, culture and most importantly religious differences is a challenge to everybody. Regardless of the area you live, be it metropolitan, urban or rural, cultural and religious differences will have some effects on the way a person deals with the others. My experience living abroad has shed some lights on my understanding of this matter. From my observation, having a similar cultural or religious background will have advantages in socializing in the society.

Malaysia is a country where religious diversity is a fact that its citizens have to face in their daily life. It is a unique state in Asia in this form of diversity. Islam is a federal religion for Malaysia as stated in its constitution although the country consists of non-Muslims who form a significant number of the whole population. In term of religious division, Malaysia has a unique multi-religious society where about sixty percent are Muslims, twenty percent Buddhist, nine percent Hindus and five percent of other religions including Sikh, Christian and pagans. The majority dwellers are Malays, and ninety-nine percent of them are Muslims, followed by Chinese, Indians, bumiputra of Orang Asli and Sabah and Sarawak. Looking at this diversity, undoubtedly Malaysia is the most multi-religious and multicultural society in South East Asia region and also for the whole of Asia. The life of this multi religious and cultural society has always been portrayed as harmonious and peaceful without any current major problems.

In the world where religious community is increasing, there is a need to address challenges in the modern era on how to live together within a religious community. Major religions in the world include Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Jews, Taoists and Islam is shaping the world religious majority. Hence religious harmony is what is needed the most in order to combat misunderstanding on religious issues among people. Religious issues may become a cause of radicalism among the society. So much has been said about religious radicalism within Muslims community, although one cannot deny that radicalism also exists among other religious community. Such an example is the religious conflict in Northern Ireland where the Protestants and Catholics are involved. Klu Klax Klan is another example of religious radicalism among people in the west. A recent tragedy in Norway, which killed almost ninety innocent people, seemed to be related to religious radicalism as well. In the Central Asia, Al-Qaeda is the most covered story on radicalism. Within Tamil society, Tamil Tigers

is the group seen as fighting its own government. So, the issue is not exclusive only to a particular religion, although it often happened more within a society that profess extreme views on religious, political, social and economic matters.

The question can be asked is how to deal with this situation in the current interfaith societies? Therefore, this paper will attempt to analyze the contribution of Islam in promoting co-existence in multicultural society and specifically will study the role of *minbar* in this matter. It is to examine how the content of *khutbah* and messages on multicultural are delivered to the congregation.

Multicultural Society in Muslim History

From a historical perspective, there are instances of living together in multicultural societies in Muslim history. The basis of that is based from Quranic guide on dealing with 'the others'. During the time of Prophet Muhammad (pbuh), Muslims and non-Muslims were brought together while defending Madinah, the city where he migrated and started a new life after a miserable challenge to Islam in Makkah. He invited religious and tribal leaders to come to an agreement that known as *Dustur* or *Sahifah* Madinah. This document agreed that all those who live and come together to sign the agreement, regardless of their religious background, are recognized as *ummah*. So the word *ummah* is an inclusive word, used to refer to the all nations.

If we are to look at the time of Caliphates, the *fath* (liberation) of Bayt al-Maqdis during the time of Umar al-Khattab could be an example of the multicultural acceptance and practice among people of multicultural and multi-religious background. It was liberated in Muslim history for the first time in Jumāda first or second 16 AH / 637 CE.¹

From the view of Islamic history, this is an example of prosperous relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims community members which can be put forward to guide the discussion. It provides a picture of the relationship between the different groups of people who lived there.² The document of *al-Uhda al-Umariyyah* or *Umar's Assurance of Safety to the People of Aelia*³ shows that there was a significant document made for the society of Muslim and non-Muslims who lived in Bayt al-Maqdis. Nevertheless, this is very different from the situation now, where the Arabs are oppressed by the Jews who now control the city.

The historians agree that the version of al-Tabari is the longest version of *al-Uhda al-Umariyyah* recorded by classical scholars. The preamble of the version states that:

هذا ما أعطى عبد الله عمر أمير المؤمنين أهل إيلياء من الأمان ، أعطاهم أماناً لأنفسهم وأموالهم ولكنائسهم وصلبانهم وسقيمها وبريئها وسائر ملتها

*This is an assurance of safety given by servant of God (the second Caliph), Umar (Ibn al-Khattab, the Amirul Mukminin, to the people of Aelia.*⁴ *He confers an assurance of safety for their lives and properties, churches and crosses; the healthy and the sick (to everyone with no exceptions); and for their whole religious community.*

When Bayt al-Maqdis was liberated, it became a place where all people regardless of their background and religious status, had a right of access. This is one of the unique characteristics of Bayt al-Maqdis; it is the land

1 Al-Tel, Othman Ismail. 2003. *The First Islamic Conquest of Aelia (Islamic Jerusalem): A Critical analytical Study of the Early Islamic Historical Narratives and Sources*. UK: Al-Maktoum Institute Press, pp. 116-118. There are also considerable discussions on the date of the liberation of Bayt al-Maqdis in Muslim history, such an example is al-Tabari, Muhammad Ibn Jarir. 1988. *Tarikh al-Tabari: Tarikh al-Umam wa al-Mulk*. Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah. Vol. 2, p. 450.

2 Maher Y. Abu-Munshar, 2007. *Islamic Jerusalem and Its Christians: A History of Tolerance and Tensions*, London & New York: Tauris Academic Studies, pp. 88-105.

3 As translated by scholars into English. Please refer to Abd al-Fattah El-Awaisi (2007). *Introducing Islamic Jerusalem*. UK: Al-Maktoum Institute Academic Press, pp. 55-57; Maher Y. Abu-Munshar (2007). *Islamic Jerusalem and Its Christians*, p. 88.

4 The word 'Aelia' in this text refers to Islamic Jerusalem (Bayt al-Maqdis). Aelia is a word introduced by the Roman leaders in order to determine the area from which Jews are forbidden from entering, about 500 years before the advent of Islam. Please refer to Moshe Gil (1997). *A History of Palestine: 634-1099*, New York: Cambridge University Press, p. 71; John Wilkinson (1990). 'Jerusalem Under Rome and Byzantium,' p. 88.

5 Duri, A. Aziz. 1990. 'Jerusalem in the Early Islamic Period: 7th-11th Century AD,' in *Jerusalem in History*, ed. K. J Asali. New York: Olive Branch Press, pp. 126-127.

open to all. Historically, when the Muslims ruled the region, non-Muslims were allowed to reside in it.⁵ The region was an open place for all. Christians and Jews were allowed to reside in it, even though the Byzantine Emperor had expelled the Jews in 135 CE, and prohibited them to enter (Aelia Capitolina) the city of Bayt al-Maqdis.⁶ The Jews since the decree of Byzantine had been under exile for approximately 500 years before the first Muslim liberation of the region in 637 CE / 16 AH. Armstrong argues that, before the time of the Crusades, Bayt al-Maqdis was a place in which non-Muslims could live peacefully and it “was known as a city of *Dhimmis*, because Jews and Christians were so populous and successful there”.⁷

However, in modern days, it is become challenging to all nations in this world where multicultural living needs cooperation, understanding, tolerance and acceptance from everybody. The key to this success is by being just to others. In this regards, the Quran says: “O ye who believe! Stand out firmly for justice as witnesses to Allah even as against yourselves, or your parents, or your kin, and whether it be against the rich or poor... for Allah can best protect both...” (Qur’ān 4: 135).

Allah says in the Qur’ān: “O you who have believed, be persistently standing firm for Allah, witnesses in justice, and do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Be just; that is nearer to righteousness. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is acquainted with what you do.” (Qur’ān, 5: 8)

There are no reasons for any group of people to practice injustice and hatred towards others. In this regard, Muslims are taught to be ‘greener’ to their religious counterparts in order to live together in this world. Harmony among civilizations is the ultimate aim to be achieved. The text of Islam did not prevent Muslims from working with their fellow non-Muslim. In dealing with multicultural and tolerance or acceptance, it cannot be denied that *minbar* plays an important role in encouraging Muslims towards their understanding of living within this plural society.

Minbar – an integral part of the Mosque

In every mosque that is used for Friday prayer there will be a *minbar* that is situated at the front of the mosque. Minbar is normally used to deliver *khutbah* (sermon) during Friday prayers. Many issues and important matters related to Muslims are delivered during the Friday *khutbah* from the *minbar*. In these days, many *minbars* are equipped with sound system that enable the *khutbah* be heard from distances especially for crowded mosques.

Minbar is an important element in mosque architecture. It is one of the main features and a focal point of the mosque interior other than *mihrab*.⁸ *Minbar* is a specially-positioned pulpit, normally with a stepped platform in the mosque where the *khatib* (sermons reciter) stands to deliver *khutbah*.

Frishman and Hasan-Uddin elaborate that *minbar* is always positioned to the right of the *mihrab* and consists of a staircase of varying height, with or without handrails, leading to a small platform which is often crowned by a cupola-type roof, usually in some attractive shape.⁹ Nevertheless, some of the *minbars* are without roof as it was during the time of early Islam. With roof or without, the function is still the same, which is used once a week on Friday and on special occasions of Eidul Fitri, Eidul Adha and during moon or sun eclipse, when all of these involve sermons.

Minbar is considered one of the unique architectural elements which existed since the construction of Masjid Nabawi in Madinah in 622. Compared to other architectural elements such as minarets, *mihrab* and dome; *minbar* was known earlier in the Islamic culture. So, knowing its significance to the building of mosque, *minbar* is central to any announcement that are related to Islam and issues surrounding it including the issue of Muslims and non-Muslims’ relation towards peace and stability of the world.

6 Wilkinson, John. 1990. ‘Jerusalem Under Rome and Byzantium 63BC-637AD,’ in *Jerusalem in History* ed. K. J. Asali. New York: Olive Branch Press, p. 88.

7 Armstrong, Karen. 1997a. *A History of Jerusalem: One City Three Faiths*, UK: HarperCollins Publishers, pp. 298-299.

8 Mohd Sabriaza B Abd Rashid & Azizul Azli B Ahmad, The Formation and Symbolism of Minbar Architecture in The Malay World

9 Frishman, M & Hasan-Uddin Khan (ed.) (2002), *The Mosque*, Thames & Hudson: London, p. 35.

Multicultural in Khutbah Text of Jakim

Khutbah comprises certain essentials (*arkan*) that include praising God and His Prophet, inviting people to piety and read a verse from the Quran. It has two parts and it is separated by a short break in between them when the *khatib* usually sits down. *Khatib* is encouraged to deliver his *khutbah* while standing up in the *minbar*. For those who are not able to stand up, they are allowed to sit on a chair.

Normally in Malaysia, the *khatib* read *khutbah* text is prepared either by the state or federal religious department. At federal level, Jakim is an official body in Malaysia that looks after Muslims Affairs domestically. There are also religious departments at state level which prepared the *khutbah* text for their own states. For Jakim, the *khutbah* text is usually available online which makes it easy for others to retrieve the file, especially for the *Khatib* who is preparing his sermon.

In relation to multicultural discourse, Jakim has prepared several *khutbah* texts on this matter. One such example is a text dated February 4, 2011 in the week that the whole world was celebrating what is called The World Interfaith Harmony Week.¹⁰ The text with the title of “*Islam dan Hubungan antara Manusia* (Islam and Relations between Humankind)” was produced in order to be delivered by *khatib* on that day. It is very inspiring for me to see such important initiative taken in Malaysia, a majority Muslim country, in supporting the world notion in peace and stability of the world by preparing the *khutbah* text in conjunction with the Harmony Week.

Since there was a common acceptance by the world organization, the first week in the month of February has been declared as a harmony week. This declaration has its own impact whereby it clearly promotes the harmonization of the people by accepting differences among them. Malaysia is one of the countries that abide with the agreement at an international level about living in harmony, thus programmes were organized to commemorate that historical-made day.

In term of other religious activities, however, it seems not much has been done in conjunction to harmony week. Apart from *khutbah*, there were not much religious activities that directly shown the effort on harmonization between people of inter-faiths and multicultural. Perhaps it is because the Harmony Week is still a new project towards promoting understanding among different communities worldwide. So, one of the projects among religious communities, specifically among Muslims is to deliver a special *khutbah* to commemorate the Harmony Week in Malaysia.

Analysis of the Text

There were other *khutbah* texts that touched on multicultural and co-existence prepared prior to the year 2011 and before the Harmony Week was first declared. Examining the last three years of *Khutbah* text prepared by Jakim, since 2008 until 2011, it is found that there are nine texts were prepared related to multiculturalism. There

10 The World Interfaith Harmony Week was first proposed at the UN General Assembly on September 23, 2010 by H.M. King Abdullah II of Jordan. Just under a month later, on October 20, 2010, it was unanimously adopted by the UN and henceforth the first week of February will be observed as a World Interfaith Harmony Week. <http://worldinterfaithharmonyweek.com/>.

are as follows:

No	Date	Title
01	04.04.2008	<i>Islam Agama Perdamaian</i> (Islam is a Peace Religion)
02	09.10.2009	<i>Perpaduan Menjamin Kemakmuran Negara</i> (Unity Assures the Prosperity of the Nation)
03	16.10.2009	<i>Toleransi Dengan Orang Bukan Islam Suatu Tuntutan Dakwah</i> (Tolerance with non-Muslims is a Condition of Da'wah)
04	22.10.2010	<i>Kafir Dzimmi dan Kafir Harbi</i> (Non-Believer <i>Dhimmi</i> and Non-Believer <i>Harbi</i>)
05	26.03.2010	<i>Keamanan Nikmat Yang Perlu Dipelihara</i> (Peace Needs to be Maintained)
06	04.06.2010	<i>SPBYDPA Pemacu Islam Secara Wasatiyyah</i> (The King is Leader for Moderate Islam)
07	04.02.2011	<i>Islam dan Hubungan antara Manusia</i> (Islam and Relations between Humankind)
08	01.07.2011	<i>Memelihara nikmat Keamanan</i> (Preserving Peace)
09	08.07.2011	<i>Rapuh Perpaduan Runtuh Keamanan</i> (Weak Unity [lead to] Collapse of Peace)

Although there are nine *Khutbah* texts related to the topic, special focus will be given to the one prepared and delivered during The World Interfaith Harmony Week that had fallen on Friday, February 4, 2011. This is in order to see on how the *minbar* reflects on creating harmonious society.

In the text dated February 4, 2011, it is stated that:

“Islam telah mengatur prinsip-prinsip dasar semua bidang kehidupan umat manusia. Termasuk di dalamnya adalah konsep toleransi dan hubungannya dengan penganut agama lain. Allah SWT menciptakan manusia di muka bumi ini dengan berbagai macam suku bangsa, ras, agama dan etnik. Untuk itu Allah SWT mengajarkan konsep toleransi dengan tujuan untuk mewujudkan perdamaian umat manusia di muka bumi ini.”

Meaning: “Islam has set the principles for all aspects of human life. This includes the concept of tolerance and its relationship with other religions. God created human being on earth with a variety of origins, races, religions and ethnicities. For this reason Allah has taught the concept of tolerance in order to create human peace on earth.”

This is a clear statement on the meaning of religion that is open to accept others within the society. Without focusing on differences but rather on common understanding, people of multi religious and ethnicities background may be able to live their life in harmony.

The discussion in the text is furthered by bringing the Quranic verse:

And do not insult those they pray to other than Allah, lest they insult Allah in enmity without knowledge. Thus We have made pleasing to every community their deeds. Then to their Lord is their return and He will inform them about what they used to do. (Qur’ān, 6: 108).

This is clearly can be understood that one cannot insult his or her fellow friends just because they have differences in their belief. In other words, respecting others is the key towards peaceful co-existence.

In more precise and clear statement of this *khutbah*, it is mentioned that:

“Allah SWT mengajar kita bagaimana untuk menghormati dan melindungi hak orang lain. Pengajaran paling penting adalah kita hendaklah berlaku adil terhadap sesama manusia. Atas dasar inilah agama Islam menolak sikap membeza-bezakan darjat ketinggian sesuatu kumpulan manusia di atas dasar bangsa, warna kulit, bahasa, kewarganegaraan dan seumpamanya. Islam menetapkan bahawa menentukan darjat manusia semata-mata di atas alasan tersebut sebagai satu manifestasi jahiliyyah yang menyesatkan. Ingatlah bahawa bumi yang

kita diami ini sejak dahulu hingga ke akhir tamadun kemanusiaan adalah berasal daripada keturunan yang satu. Oleh kerana itu kita sebagai manusia adalah bersaudara dalam status sebagai manusia. Kita di tuntutan untuk saling kenal-mengenal dan melenyapkan perbezaan yang ada sesama kita.”

Meaning: “God teaches us how to respect and protect the rights of others. The most important lesson is that we should be fair to other people. On this basis, Islam rejects the differentiation of peoples’ strata based on race, colour, language, nationality and the like. Islam stipulates that determining the status of human based only on that principles is a manifestation of *jahiliyyah*. Remember that the earth on which we live since centuries ago to the end of human civilization is derived from a single lineage. Therefore, we as humans are brothers in our status as human. We are asked to mutually know each other and to destroy differences between us.”

The text was furthered by Quranic verse:

O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another... (Qur’ān 49: 13).

One of the interesting paragraphs is:

“Di antara butir-butir kesepakatan yang terkandung dalam Piagam Madinah ialah sesiapa yang hidup dan tinggal di wilayah Madinah, baik Islam atau pun bukan Islam, dengan syarat tidak berbuat zalim, maka hendaklah mereka dilindungi dan diberi keamanan di bawah kekuasaan Islam yang suci.”

Meaning: “Among the details of the agreement contained in the Charter of Madinah is that those who live and reside in Madinah, whether they are Muslims or non-Muslims, provided that they not doing cruelty let them be protected and be granted peace under the authority of Islam.”

In order to achieve stability in multi- cultural and multi-racial society, there must be some kind of ‘social contract’ or agreement between parties involved. However, it should not stop only at the agreement, but most importantly how these parties can abide with the rules and regulations stated in that document. As have been mentioned previously, Islam has shown that negotiation in producing agreement happened since its early era during the time of Prophet Muhammad (p.b.u.h). The obvious simple example is the ‘constitution’ or Charter of Madinah, known in Arabic as *Sahifah Madinah* and also known as *Dustur Madinah* which was penned in 622 AD.

One may claim that Charter of Madinah is a well working model of guideline drawn in order to live together in multi-racial society. There are 47 items in this document,¹¹ which among others may be simplified as below:

- i. agreement of brotherhood between *Muhajirin* (those migrated to Madinah from Makkah) and *Ansar* (Madinah people)
- ii. the state of non-Muslims living in Islamic environment in Madinah
- iii. public declaration that Madinah is a Muslim territory
- iv. acknowledge that Quran and Hadith are two core sources in Islam
- v. Prophet Muhammad is the head leader
- vi. Cooperation of all people Muslims or non-Muslims to defend Madinah from enemies and outsiders’ attack

It should be noted that the other agreements or assurances towards non-Muslims have different concerns however they do not differ in major principles. What are these principles? From *Sahifah Madinah*, one may notice that the most important key principle is to give assurance of safety to live in any particular territories governed by Muslims. This is in addition that so long they can abide with the rules and regulations outlined in the agreement, otherwise they would be driven out of these territories.

The fact that this kind of document exists, shows that Muslims should treat their non-Muslim fellows with kindness, consideration and beneficence. In the situation that their non-Muslim fellows do not do any harm to them, thus they have to exhibit good manners. This is what has been mentioned in the Quran and Muslims need to follow this clear guideline from Allah. In the Quran, Allah says:

“Allah forbids you not, with regards to those who do not fight you for your faith, nor drive you out of your homes, that you should deal kindly (*tabarruhum - birr*) and justly (*tuqsitu – qist*) with them.” (Al-Mumtahinah 60: 8)

The reality that this verse use the word ‘birr’ and ‘qist’ has clearly shows how the attitude of Muslims should be upon non-Muslims. The word ‘birr’ also been used in the Hadith to ask believers to deal kindly with their parents (*birr al-walidayn*). In explaining this verse, Al-Tabari (d. 310 H) says that it means you need to be just with your mercy upon them (non-Muslim).¹² Meanwhile Al-Qurtubi (d. 671 H) gives an wider meaning by stating that this verse asks Muslims to be kind towards non-Muslims until they die, and to give some money to them in the face of relationship. (*تعطوهم قسطاً من أموالكم على وجه الصلة*).¹³

From this verse, it is clear that *al-birr* includes giving money to the people, and it is not then unusual for al-Qurtubi, although it is unique, to suggest that giving money to non-Muslims as parts of building relationship especially for the needy.

The *Khatib* was prepared to spell it clear to the congregation that:

“*Seharusnya umat Islam memahami tuntutan keadilan dan sikap bertoleransi ini. Namun, toleransi yang dimaksudkan bukanlah berarti kita mengakui doktrin keyakinan mereka kerana di dalam persoalan akidah Islam tidak sama sekali berkompromi dengan kesyirikan. Toleransi yang dimaksudkan oleh Islam ialah di dalam muamalah harian di samping akhlak baik yang dihayati ketika berkomunikasi dengan penganut agama lain.*”

Meaning: “Muslims should understand the demands of justice and tolerance. However, tolerance here does not mean that we admit the doctrine of their faith because in the question of Islamic faith, there is in no way to compromise with the polytheism. Tolerance meant by Islam is dealing in daily transactions, as well as good morals that are internalised when communicating with other religions.”

There is still a kind of reminder being thrown to the congregation that they are warned not to simply accept other religions belief because they totally differ with the belief system of Islam. However, the encouragement is on the social life that involves their daily contacts at workplace, business center, company, institution or even at religious functions.

Within the text, questions were posed to the congregation. This is a good feature of the text which tries to invite the congregation to communicate by using their mind to think on some related matters. The question asked as follows:

“*apakah kita telah melaksanakan seruan Baginda SAW agar sentiasa bermuamalah dengan baik terhadap sesama manusia walaupun berbeza antara agama. Apakah kita telah mencontohi akhlak Baginda SAW ketika berurusan dengan bukan Islam yang berlandung di bawah pemerintahan Islam?*”

Meaning: “Have we implemented the Prophets call to always deal well to each other despite the differences in religions. Have we have emulated Prophet’s character when dealing with non-Muslims who seek refuge under Islamic rule?”

In this particular part of the text, we can notice that there is an attempt to relate respecting others as one of the piety acts practiced by the last Prophet of Islam which should be an example to all Muslims. By asking such question, the congregation may think of the best way for them to deal with non-Muslim in the best manner as possible. This means that there is always an encouragement for Muslims to befriend non-Muslims and there is no reason to cut this relation as the world recognized the existence of all nations. In a way, asking such question to the congregation may be understood as there was not enough effort that has been taken in term of building and strengthening interfaith relation. Therefore, such questions are important to reflect deeply in order to find the solution to the current situations of religious or secular society in this world. It is also a point of contemplation for all.

¹² See Al-Tabari’s exegesis on verse 8 of Surah al-Mumtahinah.

¹³ See Al-Qurtubi’s exegesis on verse 8 of Surah al-Mumtahinah.

Conclusion

Multicultural discourse is not something unusual for the Muslims in Malaysia as it is discussed quite openly in the society. The fact that there were *khutbah* texts prepared on the topic show this idea has not been taken for granted. There was specific emphasis on the subject especially for the Khatib to deliver in his *khutbah* on the *minbar* during Friday prayer when the world was celebrating Harmony Week. In fact, because it does confirm the basic teaching of religion, hence the encouragement to deal with non-Muslims rightly and justly has been emphasized by the federal religious department. The message from that *khutbah* was delivered to the congregation more widely within the country. Thus it trigger the consciousness of people towards respecting, accepting others in co-existence of multicultural and multi-religious society.