

INDONESIAN LANGUAGE AND ARTS

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ABSTRACT

Indonesia is culturally rich. Indonesian art and culture are intertwined with religion and age-old traditions from the time of early migrants with Western thoughts brought by Portuguese traders and Dutch colonists. The culture of Indonesia has been shaped by long interaction between original indigenous customs and multiple foreign influences. In addition to these basic cultural sensitivities, religion plays a large role in Indonesian life and values. Over eighty-five percent of the people in Indonesia consider themselves Muslims, though their practices differ considerably from Islam as it's practiced in the Middle East. This is because of the rich texture of different religious traditions in the archipelago, from Buddhism and Hinduism to Chinese Confucianism to European Christianity to indigenous animist and ancestor worship practices. For many, the name of Islam is only the sheet that covers the shape of their ancestors' and communities' eclectic spiritual practices. The islands of Indonesia have been major trade hubs for over a thousand years, and each island has its own unique mix of religious traditions and practices depending on who decided to set port there. Therefore, while there are a few religious and spiritual practices that are practiced by a majority of the population, the main rule regarding religion in Indonesia is, "Judge not, lest ye be judged." By and large, Indonesians are very friendly people, always willing to strike up a conversation and interested in connecting with foreigners. This can seem extreme to some travellers, particularly for those from Western cities where just looking at someone in the subway can be cause for angry glares. The arts of Indonesia are many, especially Indonesian paintings which are unique works of art. Indonesian culture, especially its architecture has been to a great extent dominated and influenced by the Indian, although European influences have also been particularly strong since the nineteenth century. Traditional buildings in Indonesia are built on stilts with oversized saddle roofs which have been the home of the Batak and the Toraja.

Key words: Indonesian Tradition, Indonesian Arts and Language and People

I. INDONESIAN TRADITION

The name Indonesia, meaning Indian Islands, was coined by an Englishman, J. R. Logan, in Malaya in 1850. Derived from the Greek, *Indos* (India) and *nesos* (island), it has parallels in Melanesia, "black islands", Micronesia, "small islands"; and Polynesia, "many islands." A German geographer, Adolf Bastian, used it in the title of his book, *Indonesien*, in 1884, and in 1928 nationalists adopted it as the name of their hoped-for nation. The government of Indonesia officially recognizes only five religions, they are Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism, Protestantism, and Catholicism. The largest religious group in Indonesia is Islam with almost 86% of Indonesians being Muslims. Indonesia is also the most populous Muslim-majority nation in the world. Indonesia has created many internationally famous celebrated authors. There has also been a long tradition, particularly among ethnically Malay populations, of impromptu,

interactive, verbal composition of poetry referred to as the 'pantun'. The art and culture of Indonesia has been shaped around its hundreds of ethnic groups, each with cultural differences that have shifted over the centuries. Modern-day Indonesian culture is a fusion of cultural aspects from Arabic, Chinese, Malay and European sources. Indonesian art and culture has also been influenced from the ancient trading routes between the Far East and the Middle East leading to many cultural practices being strongly influenced by a multitude of religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam.

According to kuoni (1999:88) argues that "Traditions of Indonesia are traditions, beliefs, values, and customs that belong within the culture of Indonesian people". Indonesia is a vast country of sprawling archipelago with a diverse demographic range of over 300 ethnic groups, and speaking more than 700

living languages. With 202.9 million Muslims (88.2% of the total population as of 2009). Indonesia is made up of 17,500 islands, and thirty-three provinces, meaning that the cultural landscape is also a diverse one, mixing both foreign and indigenous customs (Lewis, M. Paul : 2008 : 11-17) Estimates put the number of different ethnic groups at three hundred or more, and these include indigenous populations such as the Asmat people of New Guinea, and the Mentawai tribe living in the rainforest of an island near Padang. They live a hunter/gatherer lifestyle that is a far cry from the city life of an expat in Jakarta. The largest ethnic group within Indonesia is that of the Javanese people, estimated to make up around 45% of the country's population. Native to Java, their populations can also be found all over the country, as well as in Singapore and Malaysia. The Javanese dialect is spoken, and has two forms - Ngoko, for speaking to familiars, and Krama, which is used when speaking

among people who are unknown to each other, or of a higher social status. The Sundanese are another ethnic group, from the Western part of Java, and are the country's second largest ethnic population. Other groups include Chinese and Malay Indonesians and the Madurese people, to name but a few. With this broad range of populations comes just as broad a mix of cultures, languages, religions, traditions and histories. As a taster, Madurese bull-racing, Kerapan Sapi, is a festival that takes place annually on the island of Madura, whilst the traditional Sundanese marriage ceremony involves nine formal stages, and many Javanese people do not typically have surnames. People may identify themselves according to their ethnicity, birthplace or family, and hundreds of languages are spoken throughout the country, however most Indonesians are united through the national language, Bahasa Indonesia, as well as through the national philosophical

foundation of Pancasila.

These five principles come from age-old traditions and are said to define Indonesia's nationhood:

1. Belief in the one and only God
2. Just and civilised humanity
3. The unity of Indonesia
4. Democracy guided by the wisdom of deliberations among representatives
5. Social justice for all the people of Indonesia

Debenham Lucky (2010) argues that "In Indonesia etiquette - methods of showing respect, have been considered as one of the key factors in social interactions". Etiquette varies greatly depending on one's status relative to the person being interacted with. Some key points of Indonesian etiquette include:

1. Hierarchical relationships are respected, emphasised and maintained
2. Respect is usually shown to those with status, power, position, and age

3. Elders must be respected and avoid direct confirmation

4. Saving one's face means one should consider other dignity and avoid them to experience shame or humiliation

5. Openly correcting or pointing one's mistake would cause someone to feel ashamed, and humiliating someone is considered extremely rude.

6. Saying *terima kasih* (thank you) after receiving services or favours demonstrating your good manner

7. To address Muslims by using Islamic greeting *assalamu 'alaikum*, and will receive *walaikum salam* reply

8. When greeting or introducing oneself, smiling, handshake (*salam*) and slightly nod is a good gesture, gently touch your counterpart's extended hands, before finally bringing one's hands back to the chest to demonstrate that you welcome from the heart. The greeted party will then reciprocate this gesture

9. If it is not possible to shake hands with your counterparts, for example addressing

larger crowds with a distance between you, making a greeting gesture by putting your hand together in front of your chest while slightly bowing. It is similar to Añjali Mudrā

10. Some conservative Indonesian Muslims might avoid direct touch with opposite sex including handshake, so performing non-touching salam (anjali) is recommended when greeting opposite sex that are conservative Muslims and always using right hand, when shaking hands, offering a gift, handing or receiving something, eating, pointing or generally touching another person

11. Do not touch the head of an adult, as it is commonly believed that the soul inhabits the head, and the head is therefore sacred

12. One should avoid putting their chin upward, putting their hands on their hips or pointing when talking to other people, pointing toward someone with index fingers are considered rude, pointing

with thumbs are considered more polite and speaking softly but clear with somewhat subdued tone is recommended, speaking too loud are considered rude

13. Conservative and modest dress sense should be adopted, especially by women and when visiting a place of worship, the proper dress etiquette for such places is of utmost importance, when entering a mosque, always remove your shoes and to announce your presence, ring a bell or knock at the door while saying *assalamu 'alaikum* if the host is Muslim, or more common *permisi*.

14. Bathing suit and swimwear are only suitable to wear in and around beaches and swimming pools

15. Women swimwear and bikini are best covered from hips with sarong when coming out from water

16. Wait to be allowed to enter the house, and wait to be allowed to sit in guest room, wait to be allowed to drink, finishing the

whole cup is indicating that the guest wished the drink to be refilled and Food is often taken from a shared dish in the middle. In banquet seated dinner party, you will be served the food and it would not be considered rude if you helped yourself after that. Wait to be invited to eat before you start

17. Do not over stay your welcome, the host will not express any sign of unwelcome since it is considered extremely rude. It is up to the guest to estimate the length of their visit and initiate the farewell. It is better to sit down while eating, yet in some circumstances eating while standing is acceptable, try not to mix and "play" with your food too much, it is considered as not polite and childish.

18. Depending on the situation some people may use their hands. Eat or pass food with your right hand only

19. Making sounds while eating is considered not polite, try not make a sound

when slurping or the sound of spoon touching the dish

20. Offer gifts with the right hand only, or better yet with both hands and gifts are not opened when received

Asimonoff (2014) says that "As one of the world's most diverse countries, diversity is a central feature of Indonesian culture. It has 300 ethnic groups; 750 languages and dialects, with several local languages having their own scripts; and numerous religions, as a result of the country's unique history and geography". The importance of diversity is embedded in the nation's motto: *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika* ("Unity in diversity"). Even though Indonesians refer to themselves by their ethnic group and speak many local languages, they are united as a nation by Bahasa Indonesia, the official language of the country.

The majority of people in many cities live in small stone and wood or bamboo homes in crowded urban villages

or compounds with poor access to clean water and adequate waste disposal. Houses are often tightly squeezed together, particularly in Java's large cities. Cities that have less pressure from rural migrants, such as Padang in West Sumatra and Manado in North Sulawesi, have been able to better manage their growth. Traditional houses, which are built in a single style according to customary canons of particular ethnic groups, have been markers of ethnicity. Such houses exist in varying degrees of purity in rural areas, and some aspects of them are used in such urban architecture as government buildings, banks, markets and homes. Indonesian cuisine reflects regional, ethnic, Chinese, Middle Eastern, Indian, and Western influences, and daily food quality, quantity and diversity vary greatly by socioeconomic class, season, and ecological conditions. Rice is a staple element in most regional cooking and the center of general Indonesian cuisine (Koentjaraningrat (1975)). (Government

employees receive monthly rice rations in addition to salaries.) Side dishes of meat, fish, eggs, and vegetables and a variety of condiments and sauces using chili peppers and other spices accompany rice. The cuisine of Java and Bali has the greatest variety, while that of the Batak has much less, even in affluent homes, and is marked by more rice and fewer side dishes. And rice is not the staple everywhere: in Maluku and parts of Sulawesi it is sago, and in West Timor it is maize (corn), with rice consumed only for ceremonial occasions. Among the Rotinese, palm sugar is fundamental to the diet. Indonesia is an island nation, but fish plays a relatively small part in the diets of the many people who live in the mountainous interiors, though improved transportation makes more salted fish available to them. Indonesia is rich in tropical fruit, but many areas have few fruit trees and little capacity for timely transportation of fruit. Cities provide the greatest variety of food and types of markets, including modern

supermarkets; rural areas much less so. In cities, prosperous people have access to great variety while the poor have very limited diets, with rice predominant and meat uncommon. The most striking ceremonial occasion is the Muslim month of fasting, Ramadan. Even less-observant Muslims fast seriously from sunup to sundown despite the tropical heat. Each night during Ramadan, fine celebratory meals are held. The month ends with *Idul Fitri*, a national holiday when family, friends, neighbors, and work associates visit each other's homes to share food treats (including visits by non-Muslims to Muslim homes). In traditional ritual, special food is served to the spirits or the deceased and eaten by the participants. The ubiquitous Javanese ritual, *selamatan*, is marked by a meal between the celebrants and is held at all sorts of events, from life-cycle rituals to the blessing of new things entering a village. Life-cycle events, particularly marriages and funerals, are the main occasions for ceremonies in

both rural and urban areas, and each has religious and secular aspects. Elaborate food service and symbolism are features of such events, but the content varies greatly in different ethnic groups. Among the Meto of Timor, for example, such events must have meat and rice (*sisi-maka'*), with men cooking the former and women the latter. Elaborate funerals involve drinking a mixture of pork fat and blood that is not part of the daily diet and that may be unappetizing to many participants who nonetheless follow tradition. At such events, Muslim guests are fed at separate kitchens and tables. In most parts of Indonesia the ability to serve an elaborate meal to many guests is a mark of hospitality, capability, resources, and status of family or clan whether for a highland Toraja buffalo sacrifice at a funeral or for a Javanese marriage reception in a five-star hotel in Jakarta. Among some peoples, such as the Batak and Toraja, portions of animals slaughtered for such events are important

gifts for those who attend, and the part of the animal that is selected symbolically marks the status of the recipient.

II. INDONESIAN ARTS

Koentjaraningrat(1985) argues that “Indonesian culture has been shaped by long interaction between original indigenous customs and multiple foreign influences. Indonesia is central along ancient trading routes between the Far East and the Middle East, resulting in many cultural practices being strongly influenced by a multitude of religions, including Hinduism, Buddhism, Confucianism and Islam, all strong in the major trading cities. The result is a complex cultural mixture very different from the original indigenous cultures. Indonesian art-forms express of cultural mix”. Wayang, traditional theater-performed puppet shows, were a medium in the spread of Hinduism and Islam amongst Javan villagers. Both Javanese and Balinese dances have stories about ancient Buddhist and Hindu kingdoms, while Islamic art forms and architecture

are present in Sumatra, especially in the Minangkabau and Aceh regions. One of the many pleasures of living in Indonesia is having the opportunity to learn about and collect Indonesian arts and handicrafts. The diversity evident in Indonesia's 300 plus ethnic groups is reflected in the diversity of its art forms. Just as every ethnic group throughout the archipelago has its own language/dialect, cuisine, traditional dress and traditional homes and they have also developed their own textiles, ornaments, carvings and items for daily use and special celebrations. The rich cultural heritage of art and handicrafts is one of Indonesia's true national riches. Indonesian art forms can include designs traced back to early animistic beliefs, ancestor worship, Hindu or Buddhist influenced motifs brought by Indian traders, Chinese or Islamic symbols and beliefs. Foreign influence on Indonesian art forms was brought about by centuries of exposure to other cultures through trade. Immigrants from China,

India, the Arab world and later Europe traveled to the archipelago in search of the unique spices grown in Indonesia. These traders settled and brought with them rich artistic traditions which influenced the development of local art. Traditional art, music and sport are combined in a martial art form called Pencak Silat. Western culture has influenced Indonesia most in modern entertainment such as television shows, movies and songs. India has notably influenced Indonesian songs and movies. A popular type of song is the Indian-rhythmical dangdut, which is often mixed with Arab and Malay folk music. Despite the influences of foreign culture, some remote Indonesian regions still preserve uniquely indigenous culture. Indigenous ethnic groups of Mentawai, Asmat, Dani, Dayak, Toraja and many others are still practising their ethnic rituals, customs and wearing traditional clothes. Performance arts are diverse and include: Javanese and Balinese gong-chime orchestras (gamelan) and shadow

plays (*wayang*), Sundanese bamboo orchestras (*angklung*), Muslim orchestral music at family events or Muslim holiday celebrations, trance dances (*reog*) from east Java, the dramatic barong dance or the monkey dances for tourists on Bali, Batak puppet dances, horse puppet dances of south Sumatra, Rotinese singers with *lontar* leaf mandolins, and the dances for ritual and life-cycle events performed by Indonesia's many outer island ethnic groups. All such arts use indigenously produced costumes and musical instruments, of which the Balinese barong costumes and the metalworking of the gamelan orchestra are the most complex. Best known in Indonesia is the Javanese and Balinese shadow puppet theater based on the *Ramayana* epic, with its brilliant puppeteers (*dalang*) who may manipulate over a hundred puppets in all-night oral performances accompanied by a gamelan orchestra. Bali is best known for the diversity of its performance arts. Despite the fact that Bali draws visitors from

around the world, and its troupes perform overseas, most Balinese performers are villagers for whom art complements farming. Handicrafts also developed from the usage of every day household items which were decorated and used for ceremonial purposes. Witness the wide variety of uses of natural woods, fibers, bamboo, rattan and grasses. Natural and chemical dyes, beads and other natural ornamentation are used to decorate these items, many of which have developed over time into distinctive art forms.

Many expats take advantage of the opportunity of living in Indonesia to learn more about its culture, or to begin a collection of art objects or handicrafts that they enjoy. We go through early days of explorations, through the thrills of discovery and learning, to hunting down particular items you want and acquiring true finds. Often expats are able to acquire things in Indonesia that they wouldn't have been able to afford at home where import

duties and retail mark-ups make the prices skyrocket. In addition, the purchase of various handicrafts is often associated with special memories, wonderful memories of vacations, the tukang and the fun of searching for the right piece. Indonesian art forms are rich in symbolism. The mythical naga or dragon; the mamuli pendant - symbol of fertility from Sumba, the tree of life, the mythological beast Garuda (also a national symbol found on the Panca Sila symbol), all have special meanings in Indonesian traditions, myths and beliefs. Exploring the origins of these designs and what they mean is fascinating. The war between good and evil, ancient stories of love and warfare, nature and the heavens - all have special meanings to Indonesians throughout the archipelago. Gods, demons and knights abound in Balinese carvings and in other areas where Hindu influence predominated at some point in history. Plants, animals (mythological and real) and geometric forms are also widely used and represent specific meanings in

particular art forms. Motifs drawn from nature - leaves, flowers, mountains, water, clouds, animals often represent religious or mystical symbols related to early forms of animism, then later to Hinduism. Islamic prohibitions against showing the human figure or other living creatures stagnated the development of many art forms in areas where Islam was strong. Certain motifs were favored and even restricted to the royal families, especially in batik designs for the Surakarta and Yogyakarta royal families (one of which is called the broken keris). These symbols depicted simple, natural objects that were important to the lives of Javanese, such as the leaves of the aren palm or the fruit from the kapok tree. Traditional colors of navy blue, cream, brown and black used in batik have given way to a myriad of colors utilizing modern imported dyes. Handicrafts and art objects range from every day items which are unique to Indonesia, to one-of-a-kind collector's items, with a very wide range in between. What you will buy

and/or collect depends of course on what you like. To introduce you briefly to the wide range of items available we've covered some of the more popular below: The diversity in Indonesian textile forms is astounding and is yet another representation of its rich cultural heritage. Indonesian textiles include hand drawn and stamped batik, the design of which takes months to create; double weave ikat from the islands of Nusa Tenggara, ship cloth from Lampung, silk Bugis sarong from Sulawesi, gold-painted Balinese prada fabric; shimmering kain songket from Palembang utilizing silver and gold metallic threads weft in woven cotton or silk ikat; and Tapis weavings from Lampung. Weavings from the 27 provinces utilize different materials, methods, colors and designs. Primarily formed on back looms, weeks or months are spent creating intricate designs for everyday use or ceremonial wear. These weavings are primarily known by the different techniques that are used to create the

distinctive designs. The symbolism of the various ethnic groups is evident in the variety of textiles. Color, shapes and their arrangements all have special meanings. Certain designs can only be worn by women or men, or only by the members of the royal family or nobility. Special textiles are worn or exchanged in life cycle or rights of passage ceremonies celebrating birth, circumcision, puberty, marriage, childbearing and death. Textiles play an important role in many traditional events and ceremonies. Written records dating to the fourteenth century document the importance of textiles in the social and religious lives of Indonesians. The highly distinctive traditional dress, or *pakaian adat*, best shows the diversity of uses of textiles throughout the archipelago. The even more elaborate bridal dress displays the best of each province's textile and ornamental jewelry traditions. Puppets have been used for centuries in Indonesia to tell the stories of the ancient epics, the Ramayana and the Mahabharata, as well as

ancient myths. Modern stories also utilize this ancient art form for contemporary audiences. Puppets fall into two major classifications - wayang kulit - the leather or shadow puppet of Central Java, and wayang golek - wooden puppets of West Java. There are several varieties of wooden puppets. Some expats enjoy collecting the same character by various artisans, or all the characters in a scene or story, or just characters that strike their fancy. Traditional toys can be found throughout the archipelago and forays into the provinces will undoubtedly turn up many simple toys made by villagers for their children. These can be purchased at local pasar, roadside stands or near popular tourist destinations. Ceramics made their way to Indonesia over centuries of trade with China dating back to 205 BC. Ceramic items range from everyday common vessels and plates, to fine ceramic pieces that became heirlooms passed down from generation to generation. Modern reproductions of these

antiques abound so take the time to learn the difference between a genuine antique and a modern reproduction. One of the richest art forms in Indonesia reflects the Indonesian woman's desire to ornament her traditional dress, which wouldn't be complete without various items of traditional jewelry. Ormentation used with traditional dress is rich in symbolism and design. From modern designs in 22 karat gold, to intricate filigree silver jewelry from Yogyakarta, using precious and semi-precious stones, or modern plastic, wood or ceramic, there are many designs, materials and price ranges to choose from. Many expats indulge their love of a particular type of jewelry buying opals or silver jewelry until they have built up quite impressive collections. Antique jewelry (both authentic and reproductions) is a favorite of expats. Antique trade beads, or their reproductions, are very popular. The present day culture of Indonesia is an outcome of the interplay of age-old- traditions from the time of early

migrants and the Western thought brought by Portuguese traders and Dutch colonists. The basic principles, which guide life include the concepts of mutual assistance or "gotong royong" and consultations or "musyawarah" to arrive at a consensus or "mufakat". Derived from rural life, this system is still very much in use in community life throughout the country. Though the legal system is based on the Old Dutch penal code, social life as well as the rites of passage is founded on customary or "adat" law, which differs from area to area. "Adat" law has been instrumental in maintaining gender equality in Indonesia. Indonesian art forms are greatly influenced by religion. The famous dance dramas of Java and Bali are derived from Hindu mythology and often feature fragments from the Hindu epics such as Ramayana and Mahabharata.

III. LANGUAGE AND PEOPLE

The official language of Indonesia is 'Indonesian' or 'Bahasa Indonesia'. It's universally taught in schools and is spoken

by nearly every Indonesian in business, politics, national media, education and academia. The Indonesians also speak several hundreds of local languages like 'bahasa daerah' as their first language. The official language of Indonesia is known as Indonesian or 'Bahasa Indonesian'. Indonesian is a standardised dialect of the Malay language and was formulated at the time of the declaration of Indonesian independence in 1945. Malay and Indonesian remain very similar. Although the official language, in reality it is most of the population's second language. Due to the sheer size and fractured, island make-up of the country most people speak regional dialects such as Minangkabau or Javanese. These will usually be spoken at home and in the local community but at work or at school Indonesian is used.

James Neil Sneddon (2004: 14) says that "Indonesian is a standardized register of "Riau Malay", which despite its common name is not the Malay dialect native to Riau, but

rather the Classical Malay of the Malaccan royal courts". Originally spoken in Northeast Sumatra, Malay has been used as a lingua franca in the Indonesian archipelago for half a millennium. Although it might be attributed to its ancestor, the Old Malay language (which can be traced back to the 7th century), [missing text and/or ungrammatical use of "although" conjunction] the Kedukan Bukit Inscription is the oldest surviving specimen of Old Malay, the language used by Srivijayan empire. Since the 7th century, the Old Malay language has been used in Nusantara (Indonesian archipelago), marked by Srivijaya inscriptions and in other inscriptions of coastal areas of the archipelago, such as those discovered in Java.

Sneddon, James (2003) argues that More than 700 living languages are spoken in Indonesia. Most belong to the Austronesian language family, with a

few Papuan languages also spoken. The official language is Indonesian (locally known as *Bahasa Indonesia*), a variant of Malay, which was used in the archipelago, borrowing heavily from local languages of Indonesia such as Javanese, Sundanese and Minangkabau. The Indonesian language is primarily used in commerce, administration, education and the media, but most Indonesians speak other languages, such as Javanese, as their first language. Bahasa Indonesia is the official language of Indonesia. It was the Malay language mainly spoken in the Riau islands and was later influenced by the local languages, cultures, and foreign languages that came with trade and other religions that were brought to the country. Bahasa Indonesia developed into a language independent of its roots, the Malay language. Even though Bahasa Indonesia has become the lingua franca, the local languages and dialects are still spoken by many Indonesians. To preserve the local cultures and languages, the

Indonesian government, through its Ministry of Education, established policies for the local government to teach subjects relevant to the local cultures.

Trade contacts carried on by some ethnic peoples at the time was the main vehicle to spread the Old Malay language, as it was the communication device among the traders. By that time, the Old Malay language had become a lingua franca and was spoken widely by most people in the archipelago. Indonesian (in its standard form) is essentially the same language as the official Malaysian and Brunei standards of Malay. However, it does differ from Malaysian in several aspects, with differences in pronunciation and vocabulary. These differences are due mainly to the Dutch and Javanese influences on Indonesian. Indonesian was also influenced by the *Melayu pasar* (literally "market Malay") that was the lingua franca of the archipelago in

colonial times, and thus indirectly by other spoken languages of the islands. Malaysian Malay claims to be closer to the classical Malay of earlier centuries even though modern Malaysian has been heavily influenced, in lexicon as well as in syntax, by English. The question of whether High Malay (Court Malay) or Low Malay (Bazaar Malay) was the true parent of the Indonesian language is still in debate. High Malay was the official language used in the court of the Johor Sultanate and continued by the Dutch-administered territory of Riau-Lingga, while Low Malay was commonly used in marketplaces and ports in archipelago. Some linguists have argued that it was the more-common Low Malay that formed the base of the Indonesian language (Bambang Budi Utomo: 2008). Bahasa Indonesia is not as difficult to learn as many other foreign languages; for example, verbs aren't conjugated as in English and French. Bahasa Indonesia also uses the same alphabet as English, making it much

easier to learn when compared to other Asian languages where tonal differences and pictograph written languages are common.

Indonesians do not like conflict. Friendly, outgoing and peaceful are the norms for interaction. Indonesia is a collectivist society that puts greater importance on the group rather than on individuals. This is the society's way of life, and it is manifested in the form of mutual assistance ("gotong royong") and consultations ("musyawarah"), which occur before arriving at a consensus ("mufakat"). The collectivist culture is also evident in the people's long-term commitment to their family and extended family. The members of society form strong relationships in which everyone takes responsibility for the members of their group or clan. Indonesia does not have social security systems or welfare systems for every citizen; nevertheless, its collectivist culture ensures that citizens take care of one another when needed

(Asimonoff (2014)). Ninety-five percent of over 300 ethnic groups in Indonesia are of native Indonesian ancestry. The ethnic groups in Indonesia, in order of size, are as follows: Javanese, which makes up nearly 42% of the total population; Sundanese, 31%; Malay, 3.7%; Maduranese, 3.3%, and others, 26%. The Javanese live mostly in Java Island, but due to government transmigration programs, millions have migrated to other islands throughout the archipelago. There are also ethnic Chinese populations, which make up 1% of the total population. Indians and Arabs live mostly in urban areas (Kathleen M. Adams (2006)).

III. CONCLUSION

Indonesia is a country full of diversity, home to numerous different ethnic groups, languages and religions. However a common language and the national motto of 'Unity in Diversity'. The Indonesian constitution or state philosophy, *Pancasila*, provides freedom of religion, although religions other than

the official six are considered beliefs and are not legally practised. Nor is atheism recognised, and blasphemy can lead to imprisonment. Indonesia is home to the largest Muslim population in the world. Most identify as Sunni Muslim and are only moderately religious, at least in comparison to some Muslim countries in the Middle East. Nevertheless, Indonesia has always been a conservative, traditions-based society. For instance, it is considered shameful and impolite for women to walk around in skimpy clothing, especially in cities like Aceh, home to the Grand Mosque and perhaps the most devout, traditional Muslim city in Indonesia. Even in cosmopolitan areas like Jakarta and Bali, women wearing short shorts or miniskirts and halter tops will often be mistaken for prostitutes and will be bothered, especially at night. When entering a mosque, men should be sure to be wearing long slacks and shirts that cover their arms. The crafts of Indonesia vary in both medium and art form. As a

whole the people are artistic by nature and express themselves on canvas, wood, metals, clay and stone. The batik process of waxing and dyeing originated in Java centuries ago and classic designs have been modified with modern trends in both pattern and technology. There are several centres of Batik in Java, the major ones being Yogyakarta, Surakarta, Pekalongan and Cirebon. Indonesia is rich in handicrafts. Various forms of handicrafts practiced are: woodcarvings for ornamentation and furniture, silverwork and engraving from Yogyakarta and Sumatra; filgree from South Sulawesi and Bali with different styles of clay, sandstone and wood sculptures. These are but a few of the handicrafts found in Indonesia.

Women should cover up as well, and should invest in a kerchief or shawl to cover their hair. A man should also never shake hands with a Muslim woman unless she extends her hand first. As far as homosexuality goes, it's unfortunate but if

you go outside of the cosmopolitan cities, you should try not to be overly affectionate in public. People are polite enough to mind their own business, but you may get strange or nasty looks and comments if you engage in public displays of affection. Indonesia also has significant numbers of Christians. Protestant and Catholics population are the majority, with other Christian groups existing as well. The Hindu demographics in Indonesia, see the majority living on the island of Bali. Buddhist Indonesians are located throughout the country, and are ethnically identified as Chinese Indonesians. The Islam practised in Indonesia is predominantly of the Sunni tradition, and is more concentrated in areas including Java and Sumatra. Those who adhere to the Shi'a tradition number around one million. Despite a large percentage of the population following Islam, Indonesia is not an Islamic state, although some groups have called for this over the decades. Protestantism is more

concentrated in the provinces of Papua and North Sulawesi, whilst most of the population of the island of Flores are Roman Catholic. Buddhism is mostly practised around Jakarta, by Chinese and some indigenous Javanese peoples. Hinduism meanwhile, known formally as *Agama Hindu Dharma* and followed by most of the population of Bali, differs somewhat from the Hinduism practised in other countries in that the caste system isn't applied. The sixth religion mentioned, Confucianism, has had a changing position in Indonesian religions, losing its official status in 1978, to then have it reinstated from 2000 onwards. Other religions in addition to those officially recognised are practised around Indonesia, but citizens must affiliate themselves to one of the six on identity cards etc. There is a small Jewish community, and Animism and Kebatinan are also practised. The constitution gives freedom of worship according to religious belief,

although the first principle of Pancasila, the Indonesian state philosophy, is of the belief in one supreme God.

Patience is a virtue in all cases, but nowhere is this more important than in Indonesia, where the trains may not run on time, where shopkeepers may not understand the notion of "hurry up," and where if you take out your camera and start taking pictures of people, you may end up standing in one place for half an hour while you chat, take pictures, and promise to send them overseas. Go with the flow of things when you're traveling; Indonesia is not a place to visit with a complex itinerary packed full of things to do. It's far too hot for that anyway. If you are stopped by a police officer and feel that you are in the right, or if you feel that you've been short-changed by a vendor, don't get angry. Be humble and calm as you explain yourself. In Indonesian culture, the fact that you're not okay with a situation is spoken by your calm refusal; you don't need a show of anger to make

your point. Similarly, aggressive postures including putting your hands on your hips or puffing out your chest are considered in poor taste.

Indonesia has an estimated 17,508 islands, but only 6,000 islands are inhabited. It comprises five main islands, which are Sumatra, Kalimantan (“Borneo”), Sulawesi (“Celebes”), Jawa (“Java”), and Papua (the western half of Papua New Guinea). With a population of 246,864,191 people, Indonesia is considered as the fourth most populous nation, and 58% of its people live in Java Island. The large population also brings about the diversity of cultures, ethnicities, religions, and languages that are found in everyday life. Indonesia is the fourth most populous nation in the world (after China, India and the United States). Of its large population, the majority speak Indonesian, making it one of the most widely spoken languages in the world. Most Indonesians, aside from

speaking the national language, are often fluent in another regional language (examples include Javanese, Sundanese and Madurese), which are commonly used at home and within the local community. Most formal education, and nearly all national media and other forms of communication, are conducted in Indonesian. In East Timor, which was an Indonesian province from 1975 to 1999, Indonesian is recognised by the constitution as one of the two working languages (the other being English), alongside the official languages of Tetum and Portuguese. The Indonesian name for the language is *Bahasa Indonesia* (literally "the language of Indonesia"). This term is occasionally found in English, and additionally "Malay-Indonesian" is sometimes used to refer collectively to the standardized language of Indonesia (*Bahasa Indonesia*) and the Malay language of Malaysia, Brunei, and Singapore (*Bahasa Melayu*).

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