The Heritage Media of Indonesia – Malaysia
as the Identity of Cognate Culture

Muslimin M

The Lecturer of Communication, Faculty of Social and Political Science, University of Muhammadiyah Malang – Indonesia

Faculty of Social and Politics Science, University Of Muhammadiyah Malang Indonesia
Jl. Raya Tlogomas 246, Malang-East Java, Indonesia 65144
Email: machmudmus@gmail.com

Abstract:

Paying close attention to the history of Malay (Malay "Name" and "People"), absolutely that the existence of the both countries (Indonesia and Malaysia) cannot be relinquished or forgotten, based on the history record, it was found that Malay people was not formed from single inherit, because Malay people was formed by the combination of various ethnics which professed Islam, spoke Malay and practiced Malay culture. The ethnical groups combination who formed Malay people partly consisted of a society who came from Malay Homeland including Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Pahang, Johor, Perak, Malaka, and partly was the heredity of Java, Sunda, Bugis, Makassar, Minangkabau, Banjar, Mandailing, Kerinci, Riau, Bawean (Boyan), Aceh, or Jambi. Therefore, it could be concluded that Malay people was formed by the ethnical groups combination who lived together. A cultural product can be explained as all the results of thinking, feeling, and human intention, including the heritage media, in which could be defined as tools or ways that was used by a certain society hereditary in order to communicate messages based on the society's necessity and interest. Some of cultural products in the form of heritage media that could be found in the both countries as the society mixture consequence are *Wayang Kulit, Kuda Kepang, Barongan, Gamelan, Zikir, Barasanji, Qosidah, Hadrah, Rodat, Kecapi, Folk Theater, Folk Games*, even cultural products in the form *Folk Dance, Silat, Artifact, Handcraft, Craft, Batik, Songket, Traditional House*, and so on. The cultural products in the both of these countries was rightly became a "*Strong Binding*" in order to create a better relationship, as countries which have similarity in the religion and cultural background.This paper purposed to give an overview about the forms of heritage media products in the both countries, Indonesia and Malaysia, that was should not be a conflict, but rather be a reinforcing element, as the reason that the heritage media could be the cognate culture identity.

Keywords: Heritage Media, Cognate Culture Identity

1. Introduction

Heritage media (traditional media) arises and evolves in a society depend on the society's culture source and development. It is appropriate with the cultural concept as a communal agreement including the clear elements. Therefore, the heritage media that evolves in a society can be defined as a kind of communication system, (Nurudin, 2004) as a part of socio-cultural system that is able to support and create a synergy among the society's culture. Actually, there is a close connection among the local society wisdom related to the heritage media including the society basic culture in the form of conveying messages among them (Muslimin, 2011).

The heritage media can be defined as ways or tools of communication that traditionally and hereditary is used by a certain society and it is inherited by the previous generations. Therefore, related to the heritage media there is an obligation for the next generations who recognize the heritage in order to tend and conserve their obligation. Besides, Asia Sarji (in Latif Abu Bakar, 1999) explains that heritage media is formed by a society in order to fulfill the necessity of cultural association environment where the society is formed.

Related to the definition of heritage media above, Prof. Datuk Dr. Abdul Latif Abu Bakar (2004) explains that when people discuss about heritage media, it is commonly associated with some issues traditionally. Meanwhile, if the tradition concept is observed more carefully, it includes two asymmetry issues. The tradition is not only about the products in the past or about the hereditary habit from the forefather which is still implemented by the society, but the tradition also constitutes as an obligation normatively. In the other word, tradition can be defined as a precise value of honesty then it is reputed as the most truthful, because it is reputed as goodness in which is also believed by the member of a certain society. Thus, it can be explained that if people hold on to a tradition it means that they also hold on to the right values. Furthermore, if this case is linked to an art performance, so it can be said that pragmatically the performance of heritage media is a kind of an art performance which offers a glorious and truthful meaning in the certain society.

Indonesia and Malaysia are two countries within differences in ideology, government system, although in the country structure, but they also have many similarities. It means that even both of the countries have differences in the government and institutional system, but they also have the most prominent similarities such as language and cultural products that exist in the both of these countries. Moreover, those similarities become the

reason of why both of these countries are called as cognate countries (Malay).

Meanwhile, paying close attention to the history of Malay (Malay "Name" and "People), it cannot be separated or forgotten about the existence of the both countries (Indonesia and Malaysia), because according to the history record the Malay "Name" has been existed since the 7th century, Malay name is also mentioned in the sources of ancient journals such as the work of *Nagaratargama* (1365), *Sejarah Melayu* (1612), and *Pustaka Raja-Raja Di Bumi Nusantara* (1667). All of the sources declare that Malay or "*Melayu*" is the name of a place in Palembang (Anwar Din, 2007:17).

Based on the Malay historical record it is found that Malay people are not formed from single inheritance, because they are formed by group combination ethnically within the similar background of professing Islam, speaking Malay language and performing the Malay culture. It is in accordance with the definition of Malay people based on the institution of Malay federation (Law), case 160 [2] that Malay or "*Melayu*" means an individual who profess Islam, commonly speak in Malay, according to Malay culture (Anwar Din, 2007:13. Read on Ismail Hamid, 1991:4). Therefore, it can be concluded that the existence of Malay people are not depended on the blood heredity because the most important and principal bonding of Malay is Islam, the unity language of Malay and culture.

The combination of various groups ethnically that form Malay people partly consist of society from Malay homeland or *Tanah Melayu* such as Kelantan, Terengganu, Kedah, Pahang, Johor, Perak, even Malaka, and partly come from the inheritance of Java, Sunda, Bugis, Makassar, Minangkabau, Banjar, Mandailing, Kerinci, Riau, Bawean (Boyan), Aceh, also Jambi. Besides, there are other ethnical groups which is avowed as separating countries that become the part of Malay people, for example Arab, China, India, Siam and other countries who profess Islam, speak Malay language, and is influenced by Malay culture.

The most basic question, as the issue that commonly appears is how to explain the Malay identity, where there are still some ambiguities because the definition of Malay is always different, change, and evolve depend on the situation, condition, and the interest. Based on the socio-culture aspect, the definition of Malay has a broader meaning that is about the cluster of Malay archipelago consist of Malaysia, Indonesia, Brunei, Singapore, Philippines, Thailand, Cambodia, and so on. Meanwhile, based on the Malaysian law, the definition of Malay is only including Malaysian citizen such as defined in the Malaysian Nation Institution that has explained above. This difference is certainly able to create a different perception and understanding about Malay people.

2.   The Similarities of Indonesian – Malaysian Cultural Products

Although there is a difference of conception in explaining who Malay people between Indonesian and Malaysian, while according to the history that the both countries cannot be separated. For example, in Malaysia, people who come from Java, Bugis, Makassar, Sunda, Boyan, Madura, and others are reputed as Malay people, while in Indonesia there are differences among people who ethnically as Java, Bugis, Makassar, Sunda, Boyan, Madura, even other ethnics. Because in Indonesia, Malay people are defined as one of Indonesian indigenous society lives in the province of Riau. The similar case with Mandailing people who stays in Malaysia are reputed as Malay people, while in Indonesia they are reputed as a certain society that come from Batak and profess Islam who live in the province of North Sumatera.

The along-with factor (origination) that forming several ethnical groups become Malay which exist in Malaysia nowadays is constitute as the British government policy while organizing the inhabitant census in 1913. At that time, British enforce a law about the storage homeland of Malay in order to prevent that Malay homeland fall into foreigners. Within that census people who come from Kelantan, Terengganu, Pahang, Kedah, Johor, Perak, Malaka, Java, Bugis, Sunda, Makassar, Minangkabau, Banjar, Mandailing, Kerinci, Riau, Boyan, Aceh, even Jambi are organized as one category or group that is called Malay or "*Melayu*" (Anwar Din, 2007:18).

When people who come from Java, Bugis, Makassar, Sunda, Minang, Banjar, Mandailing, Aceh, and Jambi come to Malaysia, it appears that they are not only come physically, but also by their mind, culture, belief, language, and habit which are adhere in their soul (become an inseparable part in their life), moreover if the cultural products are reputed as the complement in doing their ritual or religious ceremony. By this thought, they think about evolving their belief and original culture, indeed all the equipments which belong to their movement, so that when people arrive in a new place, they will strive for defending even evolving it. Therefore, it is found many cultural products similarities including the heritage media in the both countries. Those cultural products are brought and evolved by them who come from the various places in Indonesia, furthermore it is hoped to be accepted by the local society.

Some of the cultural products in the form of heritage media that can be found in the both countries are *Wayang Kulit, Kuda Kepang, Barongan, Reog, Gamelang, Zikir, Barasanji, Qosidah, Hadrah, Rodat, Kecapi, Folk Theater, Folk Game,* even cultural products in the form of *Folk Dance, Silat, Artifact, Handcraft, Craft, Batik, Songket, Traditional House,* and so on. The cultural products in the both of these countries was rightly became a "*Strong Binding*" in order to create a better relationship, but still releasing that each country has their

characteristic which differentiate one another. As long as each side agrees to be consistent with their characteristic, it can prevent a potential conflict. It is accordance with the statement that is like a human, even born as twin but there must be a differentiate characteristic.

A cultural product can be explained as all the results of thinking, feeling, and human intention, including the heritage media, in which could be defined as tools or ways that was used by a certain society hereditary in order to communicate messages based on the society's necessity and interest. Meanwhile, traditional media is kind of cultural product which is still close within the ritual tradition that is commonly implemented by the agrarian villagers. Because it has a close correlation with the ritual so that result of traditional media and art work are always close and united among individual in a society, therefore the cultural product is always implemented wherever they move, furthermore according to Walter Benjamin, this kind of cultural product has its "aura" and become a unique phenomenon within a certain society which is closely has a magic authority and authenticity.

The performance of *Wayang Kulit* (Java), *Kecapi* and *Sinrilik* (South Sulawesi), and the various of traditional media in the other provinces, will be performed or played all night, because those traditional media are purposed as the medium to stay up all night or *Lek-Lekan* (keep stay up until dawn). *Lek-Lekan* is applied as one of ritual form (*Tirakat*) by a belief that all the wishes will be granted by the God. Moreover, it has been united and become an inseparable part among the society's activities then as the result this kind of activities will be performed wherever the society is. Therefore, it is a common if a cultural product of a certain society is also found in another place.

The reason of why the heritage media is always participate in the society movement, because the heritage media is being a part of folk art performance which is also functioned as a connecting media in order to extend messages especially for the villagers. As an example is message that related to the system of value, tradition, habit, character, advice, criticism, love, affection, philosophy aspect, economy, social, politic, religion, heroism, praise, even message that related to the context between human, the God, and the entire world. The heritage media has a high communication value or may extend messages that are easy to understand by the society, because the media is owned and willing by the society.

The heritage media is also spontaneous, simple, and unpretentious or easy to be absorbed even easy to be appropriated with the local culture value, but the performance that can be called as heritage media is a kind of folk art that consist of some characteristic as communicative, informative, and interactive. All the forms of heritage media that are evolved and conserved by people nowadays can be defined as the part of cultural heritage by the forefather in the past. This heritage media performance is assumed to be eternal, it is not only because the owner or performer support but also the audiences' support including art observer and lover. Moreover, the government has an authority to get involved in the form of establishing normative rules or facilities supplying (Muslimin, 2011).

3. The Decreasing of Heritage Media in Indonesia and Malaysia as Modernization Impact

Indonesia and Malaysia are two countries that consist of a complex society, even from the ideology aspect, religion, culture, or socio politic life. This condition cause the citizens of the both countries become pluralistic within multi-ethnic, multi-culture design of tradition, and syncretism religious behavior. This kind of condition become a certain record of the cultural history journey in the both countries that bring them to have a traditional variety and traditional local wisdom including the various of message conveying media which is more traditionally and simply. The historical and political journey bring the cultures into a change, however each of the culture has its wisdom that is believed as a custom and habit. The local wisdom as the basic culture of Indonesian and Malaysian society can be found in the form of tradition, language, law, custom, art, artifact, house building, heritage media, and so on, partly exist and defended, but partly cannot be defended (lost or left).

The decreasing of local wisdom including the heritage media is also reflected by the attention decrease of the communication researchers in the field of media that happen almost in the all of the world. Schramm and Robert (in Amri Jahi 1988) report that between 1954 and 1970 there are found more results of communication researches that are published from the previous era. However, in those research reports there are not found the result of research that related to the heritage media, even Indonesia, Malaysia, and the South East Asia. The decreasing of society's interest toward the heritage media has a correlation with the evolving pattern that is believed and performed by the third countries in the world. The modernization of ideology which become famous nowadays, drive the countries to follow the communication pattern that is recommended. The supporting phenomenon of that condition such as verbal tradition that is changed by the media based on the technology, as the result is the appearance of one way and linear communication.

In the era of nation and people development both Indonesia and Malaysia, *Tamadun* or civilization mostly move from the traditional society to be modern. The traditional society as known always characterized by the traditional and binding value, while the modern is depend on the knowledge and technology. By development as the reason, many progression programs are held, without considering about the society's

condition that in fact do not have enough preparation and capability to carry out the progression (Oepen Mahfred, 1988).

One of supporting aspect in the development success is the available of communication and information line freely, especially for the whole society without considering about the status, standard, and the residence, whether it is ordinary people, intermediate, or elite society, whether the people live in the city or in the village. Therefore, the next issue that will occur is how the communication role related to the development especially in the part of human capital. According to Adi Sasono (in Oepen Mahfred 1988), communication is the important aspect in the development that cannot be denied, however if the main point is on the modern technology of communication as occur nowadays, there are two important points that have to get serious attention from the government. The first point is the socio-economy and socio-culture condition that ensure the balance and comprehensive of information that result two ways communication between the individual and the society. The second, the availability of modern medium of communication technology, vertically capital intensive that full of meaning for the society's interest or accommodating the whole main needs of the society that becomes the target group.

Another important issue is whether both of the points above can be fulfilled by the government as the wisdom determinant that manages the communication issues. In fact there are just a few countries, including Indonesia and Malaysia that really have an information and media freedom, whether nationally and internationally. As an example is the freedom of the press, in fact it is mean that the freedom for people who capable in handling the press. (Oepen Mahfred, 1988). Therefore, it is true that the third world countries, including Indonesia and Malaysia are required to have a modern media, however it is unethical to let that modern media decreases people attention toward the obligation in evolving traditional media, informal communication, and horizontal communication through the heritage media together with the society. Thus, in fact the government has a role in helping and giving space to the people in order to utilize their own communication tools for fulfilling their right on the freedom of information.

Based on the communication study, it can be explained that by utilizing the heritage media, especially that related to the functioning of communication model within the emancipation orientation (horizontal communication) that has been submitted as the opponent of the communication model which is oriented to the persuasive technique (vertical communication) by the third world countries, as mostly explained by the experts of United State of America, it will help the society most in their effort to get information well and extensively. (Oepen Mahfred, 1988).

The theory and concept that are discussed above actually are not a new thing, because the development that related to the communication strategy has been exist since 1970s, particularly when the main support providers as the World Bank notice the potency of "people media, group media, or society communication" are important and appropriate to be the part of people empowerment. The most interesting aspect from this issue is that kind of observation only appropriate for the multinational institutions which tend to carry out that approach in order to defend the status quo. The secondary analysis has been analyzed accurately in Indonesia and Philippines. The result shows that mostly of Non Government Organizations (NGO) are belonging to the multinational institutions that are bonding the precious idealism such as destiny determination, independency, or inclusion of the people empowerment. The most ironical thing that they are only uses the heritage media paternally by the top-down as the approach. Moreover, many of progressive and humanistic NGO that tend to work and speak on the name of people that actually they are only take their own benefit. They do not help or work for people moreover they just work by themselves directly without involving the people. (Oepen Mahfred, 1988).

In order to avoid that kind of deviation above, the planners have to set about giving confidence toward the individual intellectual ability and social ability as the objective people, therefore they can determine their own destiny, for example is the people are able to identify the issues that they faced, make a serious effort to solve it by applying strategy based on the human resources and natural resource.

4. Conclusion

The correlation of Indonesia and Malaysia has been held for long time indeed before both of the countries get their independency then it cannot be regarded only from the side of politic, economy, and social but also regarded by the cultural side. Because the political and economy aspect commonly bring an implication that tend to make the interest of the both countries as the priority, while the cultural aspect is able to close them more, especially when it is regarded from the history of the both cognate countries. Explicitly, it can be said that the both cognate countries which state side by side may be separated by the political and geographical aspects, but it cannot be separated by the cultural aspect. It means that there is a probability of the similar cultural products among the both countries.

As discussed above, that is the reason of why the cultural product that is found in Indonesia also found in Malaysia, therefore it will be thoughtful if the similarity of the cultural products become the basic of cognate

culture that is able to reinforce the relationship of the both countries. Moreover, they have the similar cultural source also the high dynamicization and mobilization of the both countries (notice the existence of the flight company of Air Asia within the principle of the low flight cost), increasingly it makes Indonesian people go to Malaysian often, so on contrarily. Moreover, as the report from an Indonesian television channel, that the second highest tourist in Malaysia is Indonesian. Otherwise, Malaysian people mostly buy their needs in Bandung, Jogjakarta, Jakarta, and Solo rather than Singapore or Kuala Lumpur.

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