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## FOREWORD



In Indonesia, or perhaps in other parts of the world, it can be easily witnessed on social media or even in conventional mass media, such as newspapers and television about how difficult it is to find truth based on the facts. The public is difficult to distinguish between hoaxes and factual ones. Sometimes, hoaxes are considered true or conversely the truth is considered a hoax. Truth is clearly built on opinion not on facts. Truth is more related to aspects of feeling than thoughts. Because of the involvement of political authorities, who control the mass media, finally they are able to force the truth to the public.

This situation is in accordance with what was initiated by experts regarding an era called the "post truth". In this era, the facts have become less important than emotional persuasion. Therefore, the public has difficulty in finding the true truth, because of the interference of political power and interest groups. Within this situation, historians have not shown an important role in giving enlightenment to obtain essential or factual truths. There is even a tendency for many historians, who are members of the groups in social media, to show an allergic attitude to talk about social-political problems that are occurring.

The issue of increasingly sharpening social conflict, election fraud, corruption, poverty, foreign debt, and so on does not seem to arouse the interest of historians. Even, if there is a historian who shares the news about these things in the social media group, he/she gets a warning from group members so they don't share the political news in the group.

This phenomenon shows that historians have less moral commitment and concern for their people, who are facing many problems. This also shows that historians have lost their socio-cultural functions. They do not show responsibility for the present life. They are likened to standing in an ivory tower, that is alienated from its community and engrossed itself, like someone who is masturbating.

If skepticism and an allergy to the political situation among historians are true, it is clear that historians have now been uprooted from the context of their society. Their works will only be stories about antiques that have no relevance to the actual problems being faced by the community. Likewise, their works will only be a justification for the status quo. In fact, historians should, through their works, be the sentinel for their nation to achieve a glorious future, live in prosperity and justice.

To achieve a bright future, people must learn from their own history to seek wisdom, so that they do not become foolish who repeat the same mistakes. This can be found in the work of R.G. Collingwood (1946), in his book entitled "The Idea of History", who states: "Knowing yourself means knowing what you can do; and since nobody knows what he can do until he tries, the only clue to what can be done is what has done". Likewise, historians have an obligation to educate the younger generation to appreciate present and future life through their historical works. This is in accordance with what John Dewey (1997), in his book entitled "How We Think", said that the young people should be acquainted with the past in such a way that the acquaintance is a potent agent in appreciation of the living present.

To what extent do Indonesia historians through their work contribute to solving the problems being faced by their society? In this case, historians should, through their works, prioritize commitment to Indonesian values with a humanitarian foundation, namely returning to the ideals of the nation-state as embodied in the Preamble of the 1945 Constitution. Functional aspects of the work of historians can be seen from their contribution in realizing the nation's ideals and overcome various problems: injustice, poverty, corruption, moral decadence, and so on.

The work of historians should raise people's awareness to have the ability to deal with dominant structural conditions, unfair, suppress, and even exploit. Therefore, historians through their work must have a high commitment to create equality, justice, democracy, transparency, and emancipation in the social system. This is based on the idea that history should not only provide an understanding of injustices in the distribution of power and resources, but should try also to help create equality and progress in the social life.

In addition, historians through their works should also have a moral attachment to criticize the exploitative status quo and build a more equitable social life. This is also in accordance with what was expressed by Jean-Paul Sartre (1957), in his book entitled "Being and Nothingness: An Essay on Phenomenological Ontology", that: "[...] the duty of the intellectual is to denounce injustices and abuses of power, and to fight for truth, justice, progress, and other universal values". This is also in accordance with what Kuntowijoyo (2000) said, in his article entitled "Indonesian Historiography in Search of Identity" and be published by journal of "Humaniora", that historiography should be social criticism. Only in this way will historians through their works have an important role in the present and future life.

Thus, historians should not be allergic to information about the chaotic social, political, and economic life that is being faced by their people. We have been reminded by Kahlil Gibran (1933), a Lebanese poet, about his concern for his nation through his poem "Pity the Nation", as following here: "[...] the nation that acclaims the bully as hero, and that deems the glittering conqueror bountiful [...] and [...] the nation whose statesman is a fox, whose philosopher is a juggler, and whose artist is the art of patching and mimicking". Do Indonesian historians in the era of "post truth" today no longer have social concerns like Kahlil Gibran at the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century?

The articles presented in the TAWARIKH journal currently, edition of April 2019, of course, not provoking like my opinion and suggestions above. However, most of articles try objectively with scientific and historical approaches to elaborate about the "Dar al-Ulum of Deoband as an Islamic propagation and education institution in India"; "story of Prophet Joseph in Al-Qur'anic non-verbal language"; "the existence and roles of Plinggatan temple in Central Java"; "history of Zending as the Protestant Christianity organization in Southeast Sulawesi"; and "Ngalaksa ceremony and local tradition in Rancakalong, Sumedang, West Java". What is important here that all articles are concerning on the dynamic of events, whether as an individual, agents of change, organization, or social and cultural structures in historical entities.

Happy reading articles in the TAWARIKH journal, hopefully there are benefits.

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