

ABSTRACT

This thesis discusses the shift in Japan's foreign policy toward incorporating a more religious dimension, using Public Diplomacy programs toward Indonesian Islam as a case study. Globally, the occurrence of 9/11 has changed the foreign policy of Western countries to seek dialogue with Islam more and more. Japan is no exception, and since 2000, the year before 9/11, Japan has been developing a foreign policy that targets religious actors, especially Muslims, as part of Dialogue Among Civilizations. Initially, Japan's Public Diplomacy focused on Islam in Middle Eastern countries, but since the launch of the Program of Visit to Japan by *Pesantren*, Islamic boarding school, Teachers from Indonesian in 2004, many Public Diplomacy programs have been implementing for Indonesian Islam. The reason why Japan has started to implement diplomatic policy using religious aspects with Indonesia is simply because Public Diplomacy using religious actors is more effective in influencing society. In particular, after the fall of the Suharto regime, the influence of Islam has been increasing in Indonesia. Therefore, Japan's policy engaging with Indonesian Islamic intellectuals and communities is an effective means to exercise Japan's influence in society of Indonesia. Moreover, Japan's current diplomatic policy toward the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), including Indonesia, consists of two main aspects: security and economic interests. On the security side, Japan and ASEAN share the common task of restraining China's maritime expansion and countering terrorism by Islamic radical groups. On the economic side, in order to compensate for Japan's declining population, there is a need to attract labor and overseas tourists from Indonesia and other ASEAN countries, and therefore, Japan has more interaction with Islamic societies than ever before. For these reasons, Japan needs to build a closer diplomatic relationship with Indonesia more and more, and that Public Diplomacy toward Indonesian Islam have become more important as a method of achieving these aims. In the analysis of the Japan's Public Diplomacy programs that is used as a case study, Japan has intentionally incorporated many religious elements in the programs, such as dialogues with Buddhist monks and giving participants opportunities to introduce Islam to Japan, in order to capture the hearts and minds of the target audience, in this case Muslim participants, which is an important element of New Public Diplomacy. This shows that Japan's diplomacy is increasingly utilizing and emphasizing religious elements with using Public Diplomacy and it is shifting to embrace Faith based diplomacy as a one of its diplomatic manner.

Keywords : public diplomacy, new public diplomacy, faith-based diplomacy, Japan, Indonesian Islam.