

IIS and PUSAD Launch Hate Spin Book


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Institute for International Studies (IIS) Universitas Gadjah Mada and Center for Religion and Democratic Study (Indonesian acronym: PUSAD) Paramadina Foundation collaborate in translating a book entitled *Hate Spin* by Cherian George. The book which is written by a journalism professor from Hong Kong Baptist University is translated into Indonesian, becoming *Pelintiran Kebencian: Ketersinggungan Agama dan Ancamannya bagi Demokrasi*. The book was officially launched on Thursday (21/12) at Auditorium of Faculty of Social and Political Sciences UGM.

A discussion was also held during the book launching which presented several speakers, including Zainal Abidin Bagir (the Head of Religion and Cross-Culture Study Programme UGM), Widiarsi Agustina (Managing Editor of Tempo), and Irsyad Rafsadie (Book Editor and Researcher from Center for Religion and Democratic Study).

According to Irsyad, this book is based on the anxiety of Cherian George during the political threat in the form of religious conflict that is called as hate spin towards democracy. The democracy is threatened when the vulnerable group continues to be intimidated or discriminated while the voices which are considered to hurt the dominant group keep being shut up. Irsyad further said in this book George invites people to encourage equality and not be reckless in criminalizing speech.



“This book gives an essential warning to prevent hate and reveal the interest of political actors behind it,” said Irsyad.

On the other hand, Zainal presented the pattern of the current hate spin. According to Zainal, there are many actions of hate spin.

Those actions are forms to affirm their existence, claim themselves as the victims, until demand a respect. “In several countries, the hate spin is directed to political war, more specifically the general election,” said Bagir.

Bagir further said George provides a solution with assertive pluralism. This term refers to the multicultural constitutional order and protecting the equality is better than privileging one religion and cultural identity. Assertive pluralism does not neglect someone’s religious identity but demands the people to not neglect the existence of other religions. In addition, assertive pluralism does not disown the role of religions in the public life of democratic nation. However, it opposes the perspective that says legitimation and respect can only be obtained by one religion while setting other religions aside.

“Hate spin is a political action by political entrepreneurs to achieve their political objectives instead of their religion’s interest. It contains religious political modus,” he added.

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