

# ESSENSIA

Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin

**A Legal Debate on Polygamy:  
Classical and Contemporary Perspectives**

*Sukring Syamsuddin*

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the Qur'an: Approaching the Outward Divine  
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*Indal Abror, M. Nurdin Zuhdi*

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# Religions, Violence, and Interdisciplinary Dialogue

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## Abstract

*Religion, as a moral source, a critic and a perpetrator of change, should be able to tame the behavior of its followers to act in a polite, careful, respectful, and wise manner. In fact, not all attitudes and behaviors of the religious people reflect that, instead, they show an opposite attitude of anarchism and violence. By religion, it is expected that human life is better, wiser, more humane, and more responsible. Besides, by the religion, it is also expected that humans can get closer to God of the universe and live in peace. In the context of interreligious relationships, the reality shows leverage differences, not religious equalities. As a result, there are tensions that trigger conflict and violence between religious communities. One possible solution to overcome the violence in religion is to intensify interreligious dialogue.*

**Keywords:** Religions, violence, interdisciplinary dialogue

## Abstrak

Agama sebagai sumber moral, sebagai kritik dan sekaligus sebagai pelaku perubahan, seharusnya bisa menjinakkan perilaku umatnya untuk bertindak secara santun, hati-hati, menghormati sesama, bijaksana serta berkeadilan. Pada kenyataannya, tidak semua sikap dan perilaku umat beragama mencerminkan hal tersebut, justru memperlihatkan sikap yang sebaliknya yakni anarkis dan melakukan kekerasan. Dengan agama seharusnya kehidupan manusia menjadi lebih baik, lebih adil, lebih bijaksana, lebih menyayangi sesama, lebih manusiawi, lebih bertanggung jawab. Dengan agama pula manusia bisa mendekatkan diri kepada Tuhan semesta alam dan hidup secara damai. Dalam konteks hubungan antar agama, yang terjadi adalah saling mengungkit perbedaan-perbedaan, bukan persamaan-persamaan agama. Akibatnya timbul ketegangan yang memicu konflik dan kekerasan antar umat beragama. Salah satu solusi mengatasi kekerasan dalam agama adalah dengan mengintensifkan dialog interreligius.

**Kata Kunci:** Agama, Kekerasan, dan Dialog Antar-Lembaga

## **Introduction**

Speaking of religion is like dealing with something paradoxical. On one hand, religion teaches its believers to live in peace, salvation and well are both now and then. From a theological, historical, and sociological perspectives, the birth of religion is to spread the sacred message, to help and to save the human, to guide the path of peace and salvation, to ensure the certainty of charity so as to bring peace, to teach the compassion of others, to purify themselves from the filth, despicable as well as other damaging acts. On the other hand, history presents information; religion becomes the source, cause and reason for the destruction and pain of the mankind. Hence, religion is essentially nonviolent and teaches humans to have mutual love in life. However, in the name of religion, too, one does violence to destroy one another.

Religious and violence discourses spark the question of whether an incident of violence can be called as religious violence. Society in general and even the academicians easily mark violence as a religious violence because of the use of religious symbols and it is believed that the perpetrators are motivated by certain religious teachings. Conversely, religious leaders tend to be idealistic that religion is basically sacred and not to blame. Therefore, religious violence is understood as a misuse of religion by a person for a specific purpose other than a noble religious goal. Referring to the three religious orientations according to Allport & Ross (1967) are: (1) Religion as End: religion as the final destination. (2) Religion as Mean: religion as a tool. (3) Religion as Quest: religion as a creative quest. In many cases, then, there is evidence that the perpetrators of religious violence are identified as motivated by the first and the second categories of the religious orientation.

The history of the world records the events of war and violence committed to and in the name of religion with certain indicators. Every

religion has one or more dark pages inscribed in its history. In the Jewish religion, for instance, it was found that there was a former rabbinical leader for the Western European Jewish group in Israel called Shlomo Goren issuing a fatwa (1984) that killing Yasser Arafat is a part of religious duties. Similarly, in Christianity, since the early decade of the 90s, it can be seen how the Serbian ruler who supported the Orthodox Church burned the mosques in Sarajevo. Meanwhile, in Islam, the movement of terrorism in various forms is noted. Among these are Hezbollah - a militant Shi'ite organization in Lebanon - which destroys the headquarters of the US, British and French forces in Beirut, which is vaguely said that the treatment is driven by the religious zeal. The most recent case is the expulsion and violence experienced by the Rohingya Muslim minority in Myanmar and the violence perpetrated by ISIS militant groups against civilians. In addition, there are many other cases that indicate the existence of religion-motivated violence and can possibly occur in all religions. Therefore, it becomes the duty and responsibility of all religions to eliminate violence in the name of religion, and even negate it if possible.

Various previous cases of religious violence does not basically stand alone but intertwined with the context or other dimensions of human life so as to form a pattern of harsh and polite behaviors. A group or individual with an exclusive theology, for instance, can be tough in a particular context but can also be a peacemaker in a different context. So it is not easy to establish what violence in a religion. If so, what is the relationship between a noble religious teaching and the anarchist violence? Is it true that violence is synonymous with terrorism and radicalism? This paper will map out various concepts of the relation between violence and religion so that it may become an analytic category to investigate the recent violent events.



### Terror, Terrorism, Radicalism, and Violence

The term 'terrorism' surfaced approximately two centuries ago, but the phenomenon of violence as a form of 'terror' itself has existed since the first century. Among them is the Sicarii group, a religious sect active in the Zealot struggle in Palestine (66-73 AD) by means of violence. There is also a fraction of Isma'iliyya Shi'ite group, which is the Assassin or Nizari sect who murdered its political opponents, the Saljuks in the 12th and 13th centuries, although eventually, they were annihilated by the Mongols. Historians categorize them as 'terrorism'. Both terror and terrorism are both violent acts as a way of being used by certain parties to weaken or frighten other parties or their opponents.

To make a classification of the acts of violence, it raises issue of where the violence is justified and where the violence is not justified. The boundaries of both are very relative, depending on whose interests and in what context the violence is perpetrated. For instance, the violent acts perpetrated by the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO), an internationally acclaimed Palestinian Arab political organization established in 1969, by Israel and the West as terrorism, have no political legitimacy so that their actions are illegitimate and not acceptable. On the contrary, others consider that as a representative of the oppressed Palestinian people, the PLO needs to use action to achieve a legitimate goal because it is inevitable. In addition, the subjective nature of terror complicates the definition of 'terrorism' in terms of fear and response of a person or group to violence that differs from one another. It happens because it depends on the cultural background and experience, for instance, children of perpetual victims of conflict are no longer afraid of bullets, weapons or murder because those become habitual. While in other groups of children, the event caused trauma and extraordinary fears.

Other difficulties to consider are related to opinions that are already widely known - even though the dissemination of opinion also seems to be imposed by certain parties, in this case the West - that terrorism is an act of violence perpetrated by groups or networks outside or in conflict with established order and political norms. In the September 11 WTC tragedy that killed about 2800 innocent people, the perpetrators were indicated as terrorists of the 'damned', 'deviant', 'perverted' groups and so on. Although there is actually 'official terrorism' done by certain rulers and states, but there is almost no protest or a curse, though the violence is much greater, for instance, the invasion of American and British troops against Afghanistan which killed 6000 innocent people. Even, according to Johan Galtung and Dietrich Fischer, since 1945 the United States has intervened other countries as much as 67 times with the number of victim not less than 12 million people. Ironically, Western media have never condemned it, even the violence is not categorized as terror. However, Galtung and Fischer insist on establishing it as 'state terrorism'.<sup>1</sup>

In order to overcome the difficulty of the formulation, it seems that Thornton's view should be argued that 'terrorism' is the use of terror as a symbolic act designed to influence policy and political behavior in an abnormal way by using violence. According to him, there are two ways of the category of the use of terror, firstly, enforcement of terror by the authorities to suppress the challenges that undermine their power. Secondly, agitational terror which is the terror activity carried out by a group that wants to disrupt the established order in order to master the next political order.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Ahmad Syafii Maarif, "Islam Versus Terorisme," *Makalah pada Seminar Islam dan Terorisme Universitas Cokroaminoto Yogyakarta*, 28 Desember 2002.

<sup>2</sup> Thomas Perry Thornton, "'Terror as a Weapon of Political Agitation' in Internal war: problems and approaches," dalam *Internal war: problems and approaches*,

Despite the debate, terrorism is almost always related to the political issues, namely the use of threats and violence to achieve political objectives. Terrorism always creates horror in the society. Terrorism is a very cruel cowardice.<sup>3</sup> The evils of terrorism can be seen from the intended target, innocent civilians or people, only for their ideological reasons to be hostile. Terrorists will launch attacks without being detected before, even after attacking, they hide themselves so that their identity remains unknown.<sup>4</sup> Such acts can clearly be called irresponsible. Thus, it can be said that terrorism is a planned and politically motivated action committed against unarmed people or civilians. Historical facts show that the terrorism that uses violence with all of its variants in the last two centuries can be mentioned among others: In Germany, it is carried out by the Bader-Meinhof ('Rote Armee Fraktion'), IRA in Northern Ireland, ETA in Northern Spain, and the Red Army in Italy and Japan. Kult terrorism in Japan, Shivsena in India, Sikhs in Punjab, left and right in Latin America, Tamil Elam in Sri Lanka, Muslim group in Pakistan, Al-Qaeda, WTC events September 11, Bali Bombing tragedy.<sup>5</sup> Afterward, there are such events as violence experienced by Rohingyas, hostage to Indonesian crew by militant groups in the Philippines, ISIS movement and so on. From a series of violent incidents, it seems necessary to be criticized more closely what is the real motivation and purpose, who the perpetrators behind the event are, and whether there is a relation to religion or whether there is a religious contribution in the violence.<sup>6</sup>

Furthermore, the meaning of 'radicalism'

ed. oleh Harry Eckstein (New York): Free Press of Glencoe, 1964), 73–74.

<sup>3</sup> Ahmad Syafii Maarif, "Islam Versus Terorisme."

<sup>4</sup> Frans Magnis Suseno, "Agama Islam Digugah? Tantangan Munculnya Kelompok Teroris," *Makalah pada Seminar Islam dan Terorisme di Universitas Cokroaminoto Yogyakarta*, 28 Desember 2002.

<sup>5</sup> Frans Magnis Suseno.

<sup>6</sup> Frans Magnis Suseno.

according to Adeed Dawisha as quoted by Azyumardi Azra is the attitude of the soul that leads to actions aimed at weakening and changing the established political order and replaces it with a new system. Such action is usually done by violent means. In short, the radical term refers to the ideas and actions of the moving group to overthrow the established political order, the state or a particular regime aimed at undermining the political authority and legitimacy of the state and other regimes. Therefore, the term radicalism is intrinsically related to the concept of political and social changes at various levels regionally and globally. In the context of this understanding, the countries categorized as radical in the recent times include Syria, Libya, Iraq and Iran.<sup>7</sup> Other difficulties will soon arise because the West with all its efforts will try to position these countries as terrorists.

From the above description, it can be concluded that both terrorism and radicalism usually use violence to realize its ideals. Both are often understood disproportionately even considered as if the same that eventually resulted in a negative impression. The difference is that if the terrorist is essentially an act or maltreatment perpetrated by violence. They usually come from the 'radical-extremist' group, but that does not mean otherwise. This means that people who are radical and extreme are not terrorists as long as they are not directly or indirectly involved in terrorist acts. While 'radical' or 'extreme' is an attitude of the soul that exists in the mind and personal life.

Furthermore, the term 'violence' is equally difficult to understand precisely because its meaning depends on which side it sees, ie from the perpetrator or the object of the target, the oppressor or the oppressed, what is their motivation and interests, whether it is only

<sup>7</sup> Azyumardi Azra dan Abas Al-Jauhari, *Pergolakan Politik Islam: Dari Fundamentalisme, Modernisme hingga Post-modernisme* (Paramadina, 1996), 147.

temporal or permanent. Hence, the issue of violence is often used as an instrument to bring down others in an effort to defend the truth. Violence is a social phenomenon arising from the conflict of political interests and power. Violence becomes a discourse if it is done by some individuals, but it is not discussed if the perpetrators are all groups, communities and all countries. An action is said to be violence or not is seen from the application as well as the size of the power that does it. For instance, if the actions perpetrated by the Western political regimes and their allies by invading and forcibly occupying the Eastern States are not considered violent.<sup>8</sup> Conversely, if such treatment is done by small countries, then it is considered as an act of violence. Thus, it is the same with the various previous understandings, that the notion of violence is influenced by certain factors of interest and purpose behind the violence itself.

### Discursion between Religion and Violence

As generally understood, religion is a value system consisting of a set of normative teachings and rules in order to realize a happy, peaceful and prosperous life. Doctrinally, all religions provide answers to the fundamental questions in human life, as Hans Kung says:

"All religions offer an answer to the question of the meaning of everything, of life, of history, in the light of an ultimate reality which already has an effect here and now – whether this is described with classical Judaism as 'resurrection', with Christianity as 'eternal life', with Islamic as 'paradise', with Hinduism as 'moksha', with Buddhism as 'Nirvana'..."<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> Hasan Hanafi, *Agama, kekerasan, & Islam kontemporer* (Jendela, 2001), 42–44.

<sup>9</sup> Hans Kung, *Global Responsibility: In Search of a New World Ethic* (Wipf and Stock Publishers, 2004), 52. Hans Kung reminds us: - Every minute, the nations of the world spend 1.8 million dollars on military armaments; - Every hour, 1500 children die of hunger-related causes; - Every week during the 1980s, more people were detained, tortured, assassinated, made refugee, or in other ways violated by acts of repressive regimes than at any other time in history; -

Ideally, religion should serve as a benchmark and a point of action for all attitudes and behaviors of its people in various aspects of life within the scope of individuals, families, communities and all mankind. With religion, human behavior is always controlled, directed and reassuring for anyone including their environment so as to achieve peace and salvation for all loving beings on earth and far from being anarchic, even more damaging. Through religion as well, human beings are able to navigate and contemplate the innermost side of the values of the holy humanity and divinity. In principle, religion shows the way to humans on how to ideally live in this world in a balanced and proportional way.

Furthermore, when viewed the factual dimension of the behavior of religious people that can be recorded lately, it can be said there are various events of violence using religious symbols. The problem becomes very complex when it comes to concluding that violence is identified as religious violence, while other violence is not. The events below can at least illustrate this point:

Terrorism of the Hindu Tamil Elam minority against Sinhalese Buddhists in Sri Lanka; The

Every month, the world's economic system adds over 7.5 billion dollars to the catastrophically unbearable debt burden of more than 1.5 trillion dollars now resting on the shoulders of Third World peoples; - Every year, an area of tropical forest three-quarters the size of Korea is destroyed and lost; - Every decade, if present global warming trends continue, the temperature of the earth's atmosphere could rise dramatically with a resultant rise in sea levels that would have disastrous consequences, particularly for coastal areas of all the earth's land masses. In *Global Responsibility*, the author offers important new approaches and concludes that: - There can be no peace among the nations without peace among the religions. - There can be no peace among the religions without dialogue between the religions. - There can be no ongoing human society without a global ethic." "ISBN": "978-1-59244-560-8", "note": "Google-Books-ID: KgJLAWAAQBAJ", "shortTitle": "Global Responsibility", "language": "en", "author": [{"family": "Kung", "given": "Hans"}], "issued": [{"date-parts": [{"2004", 2, 19}]}], "locator": "52", "schema": "https://github.com/citation-style-language/schema/raw/master/csl-citation.json"}



Tamil Elam does not want to fight for the Hindu State but seek to fight for special autonomy and independence for the Tamils.

The historical hatred between Catholics and Protestants in Northern Ireland begins with British Catholic Irish domination of Anglican Church and the massive influx of British people to Northern Ireland around 300 years ago. They formed an IRA (Irish Republican Army) group to fight the British Empire in order to gain autonomy and independence.

Violence perpetrated by terrorists in Spain between the Catholic Bask and the Catholic Spanish as well as in America conducted by the non-believers. The violent acts committed are not 'religious violence' but are based on the regional and cultural nationalism, even if the perpetrators are religious people.

Hindu and Sikh Terrorism, the attacks on WTC September 11, 2001 by Al-Qaeda, as well as groups of Imam Samodra and Amrozi in the Bali Bombing case for their own admission carried out based on the religious orders.<sup>10</sup>

In addition, other events can be mentioned, for example: ISIS group violence, Sunni-Shiite conflict in Sampang Madura, dispute on worship places in Bekasi and Kupang, Ambon and Poso conflicts, GAM in Aceh, destruction of worship places in Tolikara Papua, Moro in the Philippines South, Red Army in Italy and Aum Shinrikyo in Japan, violent Buddhist acts in Ceylon, Hindu militancy in India and Bali, Muslim Rohingya Ethnic expulsions in Myanmar and so on.

Scrutinizing on the previous facts, is it possible to say that violence is merely a religious violence? What is the basis and indicator that certain violence is categorized as religious violence? What if the perpetrator himself declares that what he does is because of the religious commandment which is a representation of the teachings of a religion?

<sup>10</sup> Frans Magnis Suseno, "Agama Islam Digugah? Tantangan Munculnya Kelompok Teroris."

Similarly, whether the use of religious symbols both orally and verbally when burning the places of worship for instance, can be called as religious violence? Historically, it is very difficult to separate between the religion and the actions of its adherents and then separating them diametrically. Religion is not in the sky, abstract, untouchable and is in a vacuum but it always intertwined with the historic empirical reality and integrates with human culture. In practice, Geertz stated that religion and culture are influencing each other. Therefore, Islam as a religion is not something that is autonomous.

No violence is entirely referred to as religious violence, and vice versa, if it is stated that religion is an anti-violent entity. Here lies the paradoxical character of religion. On one hand, religion is seen as a road and guarantor of salvation, love and peace. While on the other hand, religion is responsible for the destruction and sadness of mankind. In other words, with the religion, human beings love each other, but because of the religion as well, humans are killing and destroying each other. However, neither violence nor polite conduct in the name of religion is not entirely an implementation of the spirit of religion but is related to other life contexts as well as other factors of human life. A group or individual of certain militant religious schools may, for instance, be strict in certain contexts, but may also be peacemakers in different contexts.

### **Views on Religion**

Various violent events as stated by the authors of the following books clearly reflect the violence of religion, among them:

1. Mark Jurgensmeyer's book entitled *Terror in The Mind of God* (2003) describes a religious logic used by a number of terrorists or perpetrators of violence from different religious backgrounds: Islam, Christianity,

Sikhism and Judaism.<sup>11</sup>

2. R. Jay Lifton in a book entitled *Destroying the World to Save It* (2000) reveals the process of religious-based thought formation of religious group in Japan: Aum Shinrikyo who conducted violent acts by throwing poison gas in subway at Japan.<sup>12</sup>
3. T. Bartholomeusz presents evidence of religious violence in Buddhism in Sri Lanka and Australia in the book: *In Defense of Dharma* (2002) and Bruce Kapferer: *Legends of People, Myths and State* (1988).<sup>13</sup>
4. Daniel Gold writes about the violence of Hindus perpetrated by the Ajeg Bali militant groups in Bali and India in "Organized Hinduism: From Vedic Truth to Hindu Nation" (1991) and Laurence Tamatea in "Ajeg Bali Discourse".<sup>14</sup>

Furthermore, events that show violence in the name of religion that occurred at the beginning of the new millennium further reinforce the presumption of the relationship between violence and religion is the WTC tragedy of September 11, 2001. Religion that should in the future is expected to solve the problem of human life is increasingly complex; bring disaster, sadness and anxiety as the events of the previous millennium. Human belief in a religion that can bring mankind to salvation, peace and happiness fades away. In other words, the previous events further reinforce the

pessimistic view of the role of religion in the next millennium.

Departing from the pessimistic view that religion failed to provide salvation, love and peace to mankind, Charles Kimball put forward an optimistic view. According to him, facing this new millennium religion is a transformative power that can be relied upon so as to provide a spirit for the realization of peace, safety and prosperity for human life. Can religion become a force that can solve various problems of human life in this complex era? Religion can indeed cause violent problems as stated in the history of mankind, but religion can also provide value and direction for humans so that life becomes meaningful. For him, the factor that makes religion a problem or not does not lies in the religion but depends on the man himself.<sup>15</sup> Religion does have a double potential of integrative and disintegrative, good and evil, and happiness and misery. When religion is positioned as a cause of evil, corruption and so forth, it is not in accordance with the authenticity of religious character but because it has been polluted by human power or interest.

### The Use of Religion for Violence

According to Kimball,<sup>16</sup> religion potentially could be a source of violence because of the internal or doctrinal factors in religion consisting of five things:

1. The doctrine of absolute truth claims; in every religion, truth claims are the underlying foundation of the entire religious structure. However, when the claim is interpreted to be a proposition that demands a single justification and is positioned as a doctrine rigidly, it would be easy to misuse religion. Claims of religious truth distorted by certain groups of religious people never have the

<sup>11</sup> Mark Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, Fourth Edition: The Global Rise of Religious Violence* (Univ of California Press, 2017).

<sup>12</sup> Robert Jay Lifton, *Destroying the World to Save It: Aum Shinrikyo, Apocalyptic Violence, and the New Global Terrorism* (Henry Holt and Company, 2000).

<sup>13</sup> Tessa J. Bartholomeusz, *In Defense of Dharma: Just-War Ideology in Buddhist Sri Lanka* (Routledge, 2005); Bruce Kapferer, *Legends of People, Myths of State: Violence, Intolerance, and Political Culture in Sri Lanka and Australia* (Berghahn Books, 2011).

<sup>14</sup> Daniel Gold, "Organized Hinduism: from Vedic truth to Hindu nation," *Fundamentalisms observed* 1 (1991): 531-93; Laurence Tamatea, "Ajeg Bali Discourse: Globalisation, Fear and Othering-online," *Asian Ethnicity* 12, no. 2 (2011): 155-77.

<sup>15</sup> Charles Kimball dan Nurhadi, *Kala Agama Jadi Bencana* (Mizan Media Utama, 2003), xi.

<sup>16</sup> Kimball dan Nurhadi, 77-284.

realization that human beings have limitations in seeking and articulating religious truths. The interpretation of religious truth claims rigidly enables people to feel justified in doing all kinds of behaviors and attitudes, including their beliefs and actions that are contrary to the main teachings of the religion. When a devout and zealous believer lifts his teachings and beliefs to the level of the ultimate truth claim, it actually opens up the possibility of his religion becoming evil. For instance, the assault and murder committed by the group of The Army of God which was part of fundamentalist Christians against abortionists in Florida in 1993 is believed to be in accordance with God's view.

2. The sociological character of religion that builds blind submission to religious leaders. Indeed, authentic religious teachings do not forbid the use of human thought and freedom in finding happiness according to their own religious ends. When a charismatic religious leader demands absolute obedience to his followers, this is in fact contrary to common sense and authentic teaching of the religion itself. However, that's what Jim Jones, the leader of the People of the Temple sect in Guyana of the United States in the 70s, has done to commit mass suicide. Similarly Asahara Shoko was the leader of the Aum Shinrikyo sect in Japan in the 1990s known as the deadly sarin gas attack. They assume that only their group will survive, while the others will not. Therefore, it is permissible to be destroyed.
3. The doctrine of the ideal age that is anticipated as the era of religious triumph. The ideal age is different from the present age of sin, pride, vanity and neglect. In the ideal Age, man is free from all the defects and sins and will experience eternal happiness. The ideal vision of religion is realized by its adherents who believe that God Himself

wants to do so. For instance, it can be seen in the Taliban regime in Afghanistan that wants to establish a religious State (Theocratic) by committing atrocities against its own citizens for its obedience to the Islamic Shari'ah. Similarly, the idea of the Jewish State of Religion initiated by Rabbi Meï Kahane that must by way of expelling Arabs in the area of Judea and Samaria. Similarly, what Pastor Pat Robertson did, who founded an American Christian coalition who wanted to change the structure of the law and the American State entirely on the basis of the gospel doctrine.

4. The belief that for the sake of realizing the ideal era anything can be done; Religious violence occurs when the adherents of the religion abuse religious components for that purpose so that the term "justifying ends" appears. The religious component in question is the holy places, holy space and time, community and religious institutions. For instance, the early Christian community that separated itself from the Jewish groups exclusively eventually led to continuing animosity in history. If observed, the event of the slaughter of 6 million Jews by Nazi Germany who are Christians became the root in Christian hostility toward Jews. Similarly, the Hindu-Muslim strife in Ayodhya in the 1990s that killed over 1100 people caused untreated deep wounds.
5. The doctrine of holy war; the concrete examples of wars that were sparked by religion were the Crusades, the Gulf Wars of 1990-1991, and modern terrorism on the September 11 tragedy of the WTC assault that had to sacrifice so many innocent people.

Those five factors are the original characters found in the religious doctrine. In practice, these five factors have the potential to be misused by religious believers to serve as justification for action by the way of violence committed

for the purpose of religion. Another author who focuses his study on the innate factors of religion as a source of religious violence is Mark Juergensmeyer in his book *Terror in The Mind of God, the Global Rise of Religious Violence*.<sup>17</sup> In the book, Juergensmeyer uses the *Cosmic War* concept to understand the violent ideology of fundamentalist figures. According to him, *Cosmic War* is the belief of a group that inherits a metaphysical battle between evil forces against the power of God that is believed to have continued from creation to the present day. The perpetrators of violence claimed that they represent the power of God to crush the demonic powers. The *Cosmic War* concept makes an important contribution to the role of religion by identifying present-day violence with a sacred and eternal metaphysical battle. In other words, violence in the present is valid or true because it is the image and symbolization of the past holy warfare.<sup>18</sup>

Further revealed by Juergensmeyer that *Cosmic War* ideology is very close to religious views that position violence as a ritual or religious mandate. There are at least two religious teachings: *martyrdom* (death) and *sacrifice* (ritual sacrifice) as violence and death that must be done as a form of servitude to God. Both are believed to be sacred actions and are the shortcut or the main door to heaven. *Cosmic War* work patterns can be used to see how far the role of religion to increase escalation of conflict and violence that exist in 3 things, namely:

1. Religion can give sacred meaning to a struggle. This sacredness is important and indispensable to justify an act of violence. A struggle that must be done by acts of violence becomes legal without considering the value of its crime because it is likened to an eternal enmity between the powers of God against the forces of Satan. Violence in this context must

be done because it threatens the existence of the religion. Consideration of profit and loss in an act of violence that caused the risk of death disappeared with the promise of God because it is categorized as a war in the way of God and becoming a martyr.

2. Religious symbols can be used as a means of increasing the fighting power and escalating the power to violence.
3. Religion generally distinguishes between the status of laypeople and religious leaders who have the highest authority in the religious field. Lay people are generally very loyal to the fatwa, advice and command of their religious leaders. Loyalty like this is very important to motivate someone to commit an act of violence. In other words, authority that comes from religion will produce a very strong loyalty.<sup>19</sup>

Another internal factor to be added here is that not all religious people have an integral and complete knowledge of the religious teachings they embrace. The limitation of religious knowledge will result in an incomplete view of the teachings of a religion, for instance, views that the function and role of religion only textually or scripturally without considering the substance and its contextualization. This textual, dogmatic and symbolic viewpoint has the potential to trigger violence.

In the context of the use of religion for this violent behavior, it should be mentioned also the concept of Wim Beuken and Karl-Joseph Kuschel who saw it from two perspectives, namely:

1. In the context of society, a religion that functions as an ideology is able to legitimize and endorse an act of violence in the name of religion.
2. In a cultural context, religion is a particular cultural identity. Various cases of violence in the name of religion can be seen in Rwanda Africa, in the conflict between Hutus and

<sup>17</sup> Juergensmeyer, *Terror in the Mind of God, Fourth Edition*.

<sup>18</sup> Juergensmeyer, 21–30.

<sup>19</sup> Juergensmeyer, 30–34.

Tutsi. Christian missionaries and Muslim preachers found the people divided, but ultimately Christianity prevailed by destroying the original religion of Rwanda by identifying itself as a holy warrior. A similar case occurring in Sri Lanka Asia, the Singhasale kingdom known for Buddhist nationalism played an active role in the political stage. The rise of nationalist movements rooted in Buddhism is a response to the colonial system of education and Christian missionaries. Similarly, the conflict and violence that occurred in Bosnia Europe is a representation of ethnicity and culture.<sup>20</sup>

In addition to these internal factors, there are external factors that make religion stronger and potentially trigger the occurrence of violence, that is, when religion is used as a tool for certain political interests. It was completely told by Kimball in his next article, *When Religion Become Lethal: The Explosive Mix of Politics and Religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam*.<sup>21</sup> One example of the intensity of violence that is influenced by socio-political factors or external factors to violence perpetrated by religious communities is what the Jemaah Islamiyyah did in Egypt. Based on the studies conducted by Hafez and Wiktorowicz in the time span from 1970 to 1998, the data show there were 170 violent acts between 1970 and 1990. Whereas between 1990 and 1998 there was an extraordinary increase in violent acts, ie 700 act of violence perpetrated by this group.<sup>22</sup>

The same is stated by Abraham's research which states that acts of terrorism are driven largely by a need to meet the internal interests of the organization that is for the sustainability

of the movement and the internal solidarity. Participation in terrorist organizations is heavily motivated by the need to find communities full of an atmosphere of solidarity and fraternity. In a sociological perspective, this motive is called the "*condition of communion*". Especially for isolated and marginalized individuals, participation in the organization can be an alternative to feeling a more meaningful life. Other external factors that can be raised include the inability of religious institutions to accommodate the diversity of people's expressions, the weakness of law enforcement, discriminatory attitudes or the ruling of the rulers against certain groups, injustices, social imbalances and state neglect against various ongoing acts of religious violence.

### Effort for Solutions

Social facts show that in this life, according to the will of the Creator, man is created differently as mentioned in Surat al-Maidah 48:

"For every people among you, We give clear rules and paths. If Allah willed, surely He will make you one people only, but Allah will test you for His gift to you, and then you shall compete to do goodness. Only unto Allah shall ye all return, and He shall tell you what ye disputed."<sup>23</sup>

The verse implies the understanding that God created human beings in different circumstances in order to test them in order to compete with each other to contribute to goodness and humanity, not vice versa. Humans are created in a diversity of groups, cultures, ethnicities, environments, including religions. Such diversity, especially religion, has the potential to generate conflict because in general, in the context of interreligious relationships which develops in society, people are seeking the difference, not finding the equation. These

<sup>20</sup> Wim Beuken dan Karl-Josef Kuschel, "Agama Sebagai Sumber Kekerasan," *Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar*, 2003, xiv–xxv.

<sup>21</sup> Charles Kimball, *When religion becomes lethal: The explosive mix of politics and religion in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam* (John Wiley & Sons, 2011).

<sup>22</sup> Mohammed M. Hafez dan Quintan Wiktorowicz, "Violence as contention in the Egyptian Islamic movement," *Islamic activism: A social movement theory approach* 6188 (2004): 70.

<sup>23</sup> Kementerian Agama, 2019. *al-Quran dan Terjemahnya* (Jakarta: Terbitan Kemenag (tidak diperdagangkan), t.t.), 143.



efforts can lead to tensions that can trigger conflicts that lead to the acts of violence among the religious followers.

One effort to reduce conflict and religious violence is to build a tradition of interfaith dialogue. Dialogue is not a debate but a process of communication among the followers of religion in order to understand the teachings, traditions, rituals and values of each religion. The purpose of the dialogue according to Ahmad Wahib is not only to create mutual understanding and to seek inter-religious point of view, but also to reform, to change, to transform religious consciousness in a more ideal direction for individuals and society. The main modal of the interreligious dialogue is an open mind, inclusive, tolerant and pluralist view. Such a view will foster an awareness of the relativity of religions and allow for the growth of a view that there is basically salvation and truth in every religion.

The format of inter-religious or inter-ideology dialogue as proposed by Leonard Swidler is the 10 steps:

1. The primary purpose of dialogue is to learn, that is, to change and grow in the perception and understanding of reality, and then to act accordingly;
2. Interreligious, interideological dialogue must be a two-side-project within each religious or ideological community and between religious or ideological communities;
3. Each participant must come to the dialogue with complete honesty and sincerity;
4. In interreligious, interideological dialogue we must not compare our ideals with our partner's practice, but rather our ideals with our partner's ideals, our practice with our partner's practice;
5. Each participant must define himself;
6. Each participant must come to the dialogue with no hard-and-fast assumptions as to where the points of disagreement are;
7. Dialogue can take place only between equal, or *par cum pari* as Vatican put it.
8. Dialogue can take place only on the basis of mutual trust.
9. Persons entering into interreligious, interideological dialogue must be at least minimally self-critical of both themselves and their own religious or ideological tradition.
10. Each participant eventually must attempt to experience the partner's religion or ideology "from within"; for religion or ideology is not merely something of the head, but also spirit, heart, and "whole being", individual and communal.<sup>24</sup>

The interreligious dialogue offered by Swidler above, presumably deserves reconsideration as an alternative solution in order to reduce religious violence. The process of interreligious dialogue includes the doctrine, traditions, rituals and religious values that one embraces with another. All dialogue participants are treated equally, seeing by looking, speaking and listening, internalizing and clarifying from different views in turn. Through such a process, one can gain a better critical understanding as well as more appropriate and enriching attitudes and actions in interreligious relationships. That way, there will be a transformation of consciousness and a change in one's view of religion other than the one embraced. In other words, after following the process of interreligious dialogue, one's view will be enlightened and richer when viewing his or her religion as well as other peoples' religions.

Interfaith relationships will awaken well if there are more opportunities for each other to meet and to hear in interreligious dialogue from different religious communities. The encounter

<sup>24</sup> Leonard Swidler, "The Dialogue Decalogue: Ground Rules for Interreligious, Interideological Dialogue," dalam *Dialogue for Interreligious Understanding: Strategies for the Transformation of Culture-Shaping Institutions*, ed. oleh Leonard Swidler, Interreligious Studies in Theory and Practice (New York: Palgrave Macmillan US, 2014), 47–51, [https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137470690\\_6](https://doi.org/10.1057/9781137470690_6).

will produce a theological awareness that in the context of interreligious relations there are many differences that must be understood differently and the need for other religions as partners to speak and broaden the horizons of the views of each religious people. For that, there is need for empathy where one party understands the other as the other understands them. Such new reflections and attitudes are done without negating loyalty to their faith in God. This series of interreligious dialogue processes must certainly be carried out in the earnest way and full of honesty.

Such a reflection of consciousness would be in accordance with Indonesia's pluralistic and multi-religious geo-political and geo-cultural conditions that are highly vulnerable to friction or contestation among groups potentially triggering conflict. The conflict itself is synonymous with violence. To that end, all communities of religious communities in Indonesia are obliged to always realize and maintain the harmony of life as it has been so far.

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The Esensia: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin is an independent academic journal focusing on the sciences of the ushuluddin (principles of religion), published twice a year (April and October) by the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Islamic Thought, State Islamic University of Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta. It is a shared space to disseminate and publish the scholarly papers of those whose concern is the sciences of ushuluddin, such as, Kalam, Tasawuf, Islamic Philosophy, Tafsir, Hadith, Comparative Religion, Studies of Religion and Islamic Thoughts.

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## Example of Footnote Style:

1. Fahrudin Faiz, "Sufisme-Persia Dan Pengaruhnya Terhadap Ekspresi Budaya Islam Nusantara," *ESENSIA: Jurnal Ilmu-Ilmu Ushuluddin* 17, no. 1 (1 April 2016): 1–15, <https://doi.org/10.14421/esensia.v17i1.1274>.
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