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Peaceful Da'wah and Religious Conflicts in Contemporary Indonesia

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ABSTRACT

At least there are two trends in contemporary da'wah challenges; First, the tendency of some Preachers to be extreme and strict in understanding religious notions (da'wa ethics) and trying to force these ways in delivering da'wah. Second, other tendencies are permissive acts to religious practices and accommodating negative attitudes and thoughts that came from pop culture and modern life. Both of these trends can be observed from the Al-Qur'an statement about *al-guluww fi al-din* (excessive attitudes in religion) in Q.S. al-Ma'idah / 5: 77. In a more specific aspect, it can be observed that the university curriculum at the Da'wah Faculties of Indonesian Islamic Universities is still lacking in emphasizing the aspect of peaceful da'wah, especially in the Indonesian perspective. The ideal Da'i (Islamic Preachers) insight is at least not only on normative theological aspects but requires other insights such as world view, human rights, cultural insights and local traditions.

Keywords: *peaceful da'wah, religious conflict, Indonesian muslim*

INTRODUCTION

Various reports published by several institutions indicated a high rate of religious violence in Indonesia post-reform. In 2010, The Moderate Muslim Society report recorded 81 cases of religious violence. This report was certainly not a perfect picture at all, because not all regions of Indonesia were within the scope of monitoring (Bagir, 2010).

There are several main things highlighted on the report. In terms of issues, two main and most problematic issues are still religious

defamation/deviation and aggression of the worship houses (Osman, 1996; Woodward, 2013). Both of these are the main issues because in the past few years, conflicts around the issues have often turned into violence that has not been handled properly.

A similar point of view can also be seen from one of the assessments submitted by several civil society organizations. The Wahid Institute (WI), for example, every year since 2008 published a Report on Freedom of Religion and Tolerance in Indonesia (previously, since 2005 it has published a monthly report). As the name implies, this report mainly discusses two things: (1) violations of religious freedom, the perpetrators were the state institutions (including offices of ministries, state bodies, police, court officers, soldiers, and also local, village, sub-district, district/government city and province); and (2) intolerance on the basis of religion and belief, the perpetrators can be the state, but also community groups (mass organizations, especially religious, individual and unidentified mass organizations). Based on these two criteria, WI calculated quantitatively the number of violations and acts of intolerance. Comparing with previous years, WI assessed the situation of religious freedom in Indonesia in 2010 had reached the red light stage (Penyusun, 2011).

At least there are two trends in contemporary da'wah challenges; First, the tendency of some Preachers to be extreme and strict in understanding religious notions (da'wa ethics) and trying to force these ways in delivering da'wah. Second, other tendencies are permissive acts to religious practices and accommodating negative attitudes and thoughts that came from pop culture and modern life (Haramain, 2019). Both of these trends can be observed from the Al-Qur'an statement about *al-guluww fi al-din* (excessive attitudes in religion) in Q.S. al-Ma'idah / 5: 77.

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lacking in emphasizing the aspect of peaceful da'wah, especially in the Indonesian perspective. The ideal Da'i (Islamic Preachers) insight is at least not only on normative theological aspects but requires other insights such as world view, human rights, cultural insights, local traditions, and so on.

The religious leaders as the manifestation of the continuity of da'wah should concern about humanity and society (Winarni, 2014; Zaman, 2010). The problem so far is that the Islamic teachings orientation were only directed at the eschatological aspects (heaven-hell subjects) and is not grounded widely to the public reality issues. The author thinks these problems are quite alarming because there are inequality and imbalances that deviate from the principles of da'wah.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The following are the previous research study that has relevance as a foundation and a comparative study of this research.

First, Julian Millie in his book "Hearing Allah's call: Preaching and performance in Indonesian Islam" (Millie, 2017) discusses about the preaching as an immersed performance. Julian rises some fundamental questions, how do preachers preach? What oratory techniques and tactic do they apply? How do the audiences respon? How and to what extend does local ambience affect or determine the communications between preachers and their audiences? It's a contradictory concept between the local and the governmental about preaching as a tool of religious communication. The chapters discuss about the forms and options are considered relevant and why? Relating to the language used, the preacher sense of humour, and bodily comportment. It rises a question about the ideas promulgate about the value of Islamic rhetoric compared to other forms of communication, particularly written text? This book does not discuss deeply about the role of preachers in triggering religious

conflicts, as my research plan. However, this book is important as a fundamental knowledge to further observe from the preacher's side and their influence.

Second, Wardani's research, "Controversy on the Elimination of Peaceful Verses in the Qur'an: Critical-Analytical Study (Wardani, 2010). The findings of this research were as follows; First, the term sword verse arises from the statement 'Alī bin Abī Tālib (d. 40 H), as narrated by Sufyān bin' Uyaynah (d. 198 AH), that the Prophet Muhammad was sent by sword, referring to Q.9 /113: 5. This statement then triggers debate among the Qur'an interpreters, including about its validity. There are four opinions that develop, namely the opinion that the verse muhkam annuls (nāsikh) another verse, is annulled (mansūkh) internally or annulled (mansūkh) with another verse. The most controversial opinion is that this verse is considered to annul many peaceful verses (which are often referred to as verses of patience, forgiveness, or reconciliation verses) which reached 135 verses which ordered Muslims to be tolerant of non-Muslim communities. Secondly, the controversy occurred due to several factors, namely the classic debate about the existence of the exhortation theory (naskh), non-original interpretation, such as the question of how to bring together the particular-universal message of the verse, the semantic problem, the tension between religious authority and sense, theological bias, juridical bias and Sufistic bias, as well as socio-historical and political contexts, such as the context of the Crusades and the strengthening of the movement towards political Islam. Third, the removal of peaceful verses with the sword verse, which has a major influence in the formulation of jihād fiqh, results in a justification for violence against non-Muslims.

After examining and analyzing the previous studies, the author was not able to identifymany similar research that study the preachers da'wah ethics specifically into religious conflict issues. Preachers as religious authorities tend

to experience a decline in meaning as the actors who exceeds conflict, not as a figure of resolution. This is contrary to the principle of da'wah that spread peace. This image is what the authorwould like to analyze in a frame of peaceful synthesis of the al-Qur'an perspective and its application in the reality of human life.

Religious conflict is a series of processes that will never end. Referring to the illustration of Galtung, one of the founders of peace studies, the conflict "has no beginning and no end; conflict can only be transformed into the highest level (without violence), but cannot be completely eliminated" (Dodds, 1997). In other words, conflicts in certain places and times can increase to the level of violence and war. At other times, the tension of violent conflict may decline and peace transformation is achieved. However, the peaceful situation may change again according to the underlying socio-political context. Language and open religious symbols are used as sources for mobilizing mass supporters in various types of conflicts.

Galtung analyzes the conflict and its resolution using a triangular model: contradiction, attitude and behavior. Galtung named the contradiction for a situation where there is a gap between social values and social structure. The warring parties feel that the expected value does not match the reality they have received. The term "attitude" here is the perceptions of the parties, both towards fellow groups and against the opposing group. This attitude includes emotions, thoughts and wills. Meanwhile, behavior includes the types of cooperation or coercion, efforts towards peace or violence. For Galtung, the relations between the three conflict components are dynamic and interrelated (Dodds, 1997).

The scholars of peace studies use the term drivers to identify the main actors of conflict. They use the term drivers with the intention that the conflict actors will ride the conflict into a conflict that ends in violence or transforms it

towards peace. Conflict drivers are in three areas: internal drivers, relational drivers and external drivers (Dudouet, 2006).

To get more extensive information and know the dynamics, internal drivers need to be seen from several aspects: ideology, resources, and organization. Through these three aspects, it can be identified which drivers are dominant on each side, whether the transformers are towards building peace or those who escalate in the opposite direction.

In other perspective, Ibn Khaldun propose ashabiyah terms (Hernawan, 2017). He separated the term ashabiyah into two definitions. *First*, it has a positive meaning by referring to the concept of brotherhood (brotherhood). In the history of Islamic civilization this concept forms the social solidarity of Islamic societies to cooperate with each other, put aside personal interests (self-interest), and fulfill obligations to others. This spirit then encourages the creation of social harmony and becomes a very powerful force in sustaining the rise and progress of civilization.

Second, it has a negative meaning, which is to cause loyalty and blind fanaticism which is not based on aspects of truth. It is this second context of understanding which is undesirable in the government system and values in Muslim societies. Because it will obscure the truth values that are carried in religious principles.

Pluralism and diversity are one of the core values of Islamic religion and cultural traditions (Sayilgan, 2019). The Qur'an recognizes diversity and tolerance for differences based on gender (49:13; 53:45), skin color and language (30:23), creed and caste (64: 2, 6: 165). Harmony between different groups and groups is respected, while competition and restraint against one another are condemned (2: 213, 10:19, 7:38, 13:30, 16:63, 29:18, 35:42, 41 : 42, 64:18).

The Prophet Muhammad said, "The difference of My Ummah is a

grace" (Majid, 2018). Therefore, differences between people are an inevitable and inseparable aspect of humanity. "If God wills, surely He makes man one people; but they are always in conflict" (see Al-Qur'an 11: 118). This difference is closely related to the free will given by God to humans, because humans are expected to be different, not only in nationality and class, but also in expressing their beliefs and the path they choose to follow (see also Al-Qur'an, 19:99). The principle of free will and individual responsibility for all his actions is reflected in the Qur'an: "If Allah wills it, of course He makes you one people. But He allows those whom He wills, and He guides those He wants. But you will certainly be asked to take responsibility for all your deeds" (v.16:93).

Tolerance of "other" believers (People of the Book), or non-Muslims, is repeatedly accepted and affirmed. Equality of followers of different religions is repeatedly stated in the Qur'an and the Hadith. Muslims are asked to keep in mind that there is no difference in the treatment of adherents of different religions except in their beliefs and deeds (3: 113-114, 2:62, 5:68) and pluralism (3:64), (5:68-69).

Among the significance of the strategy of peace-building and the practice of conflict resolution there are seven main principles (proposals) obtained from the Qur'an which support coexistence and tolerance (Abu-Nimer, 2003).

1. Human glory obtains absolute recognition, regardless of one's religion, ethnicity, or belief (see v. 17:70). This glory is an immunity for individuals bestowed by God.

2. All humans are connected and move from one common origin (4: 1, 5:32, 6:98).

3. The difference between humans is God's will and is part of His plan for humans. Differences in ethnicity, race, culture, and so on, are a real and inseparable part of life (10:99, 11: 188, 199, 30:22)

4. Islam recognizes other religions and confirms the origin that unites them (2: 136, 42:13).

5. Muslims have the freedom to choose and decide after the appeal to the piety or message of Islam is delivered (see verses 2: 256, 17: 107, 18:29, 109: 4-6)

6. Judgment belongs only to God and is only conveyed on Judgment Day (16: 124,31:23,42:48,88:25-26

7. Muslims must do good deeds, just and fair in their dealings with all humans (4: 135, 5: 8, 60: 8).

METHODS

The type of this research is a case study and literature study conducted by reading and analyzing the literature and writings by citing various theories and opinions that have a relationship with the observed problems. Therefore, researcher utilizes data based on literature studies that examine sources of information from written materials in the form of books, newspapers, journals and research reports that are directly or indirectly related to the problem being studied.

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This study analyzed two types of sources namely primary and secondary. In this study, the researcher made the Al-Quran, al-Sunnah, and

classical ulama books as the main reference for researching the substance of ontology, epistemology and the axiology of da'wah. This is because the basic material of da'wah science is contained in the references above.

DISCUSSION

For instance, religious issues that lead to religious conflict in Indonesia, can be observed in at least five categories, i.e:

First, moral issues, including gambling, alcohol, drugs, immoral acts, prostitution, and pornography/pornaction. As long as they involve religious groups and/or are framed by actors using religious slogans or expressions, other moral issues, such as anti-corruption, are also considered religious issues.

Secondly, sectarian issues, which include disputes over the interpretation or understanding of religious teachings or the leadership status of a religious group. In Muslim community, the cases of the Ahmadiyya, Lia-Eden, and Al Qiyadah Al Islamiyah groups are among those that frequently spark protests and acts of violence, both among religious groups and the general public. In the Christian community, the leadership dispute within the HKBP (Huria Kristen Batak Protestant) church is an example of this sectarian issue.

Third, communal issues, specifically those involving feuds between religious communities, such as Muslim-Christian conflicts, as well as disputes between religious groups and other community groups that cannot always be identified as originating from particular religious groups. Issues such as blasphemy, as in the case of Muhammad cartoon characters, fall under this category of communal concerns. It should be highlighted: Disputes or clashes over a religious issue—so long as the parties involved cannot be identified as

belonging to or representing the same religious community—also fall under the scope of this topic. If both parties can identify the perpetrators as belonging to the same religious community, then these conflicts will be classified as sectarian conflicts.

Fourth, the issue of terrorism, including issues related to terror attacks against religious groups or their property rights, as well as terror attacks against foreigners or the property rights of foreign governments. This violent act is commonly referred to as an act of religious terrorism; however, Juergensmeyer views it as a "symbolic act", or performance of violence, as opposed to a tactical or strategic act. In the case of Indonesia, examples include the Imam Samudra group's bombings in Bali and the numerous bombings in Jakarta. As for violence in the form of terror attacks in communal conflict areas, as well as incidents related to conflict resolution efforts in certain communal areas, such as Poso, Central Sulawesi, and Ambon, Maluku, they fall under the third category, communal issues.

Fifth, political-religious issues, specifically those involving anti-Western policies or other foreign governments, as well as anti-ideological/Western or foreign cultural attitudes. In this context, political-religious issues include the application of Islamic Sharia or Islamism, as well as the pros and cons of Indonesian government policies that impact certain religious communities.

The data presented above demonstrates that the patterns and causes of religious conflict are extremely diverse. It can also be observed that religious conflicts manifest as both peaceful and violent acts. The first is nonviolent action in response to disputed religious matters. Included in this category are protests, support actions, and mediation actions. The second, acts or acts of physical violence in response to religiously contentious matters that result in death, injury, loss, displacement of people, or loss, damage, or loss of property.

The previously stated study's findings provide an overview of the Indonesian population's capacity to build community despite its diversity. Clearly, differences, or conflict, is still more frequently expressed through peaceful means than through violent ones. This could be the result of a series of innovative and ongoing efforts by the community, particularly intellectuals, to reduce the likelihood of conflict. However, this does not imply that the conflict has vanished entirely. As long as the community has not experienced justice in nearly all aspects of life, the potential for conflict remains.

As illustrated by the previous mentioned data, the Indonesian population's ability to view conflict more positively, particularly when it involves religion, is quite encouraging. This adaptability may have been fostered in Azyumardi Azra by the *tasamuh* (tolerance) values taught by the Qur'an and Hadith. In other words, although Islam teaches these doctrines of exclusion, it also teaches numerous doctrines of inclusion. The inclusive nature of Islamic teachings is evident not only at the level of doctrine and ideas, but also in the long journey of Islamic civilization, which has included Indonesia (Azra, 1999)).

Additionally, Azra witnessed Indonesia's distinct Islamic tradition. First, the transmission of Islam to the archipelago occurs through a process referred to as penetration pacifique (spreading peace). Second, the archipelago, in which Muslims are least Arabized. As a consequence, the religious model tends to be more accommodating and inclusive, and even syncretic (Azra, 1999; Dudouet, 2006; Suprapto, 2013).

When interacting with the aggressors, Indonesia's tolerant Islamic culture, which respects diversity, currently undergoing shifts. Efforts to affirm identity are intensified, especially with the participation of Christian missions in colonialism, to a degree that increases exclusivity. Similarly, in their interactions with indigenous beliefs. According to Azra, exclusivity grew in

the second half of the 17th century. Through scholars such as Nur-al-Din al-Raniri, Abd Rauf al-Sinkili, Muhammad Arshad al-Banjari, and the radical Padre Movement in Minangkabau, Islam tends to be scripturalistic (Azra, 1999).

The emergence of Muslim intellectual organizations demonstrates the return of harmony's momentum. Jong Islamiten Bond (JIB) was founded in 1925 with the goal of fostering cooperation between people of different religions while also eliciting sympathy for Muslims. Similarly, the formation of the Studenten Islam Studieclub demonstrates the same trend (SIS). Its members can be of any race or religion, regardless of ethnicity, and they remain critical of colonizers, discrimination against Islam, and Christianity. The culmination of tolerance efforts is the acceptance of Pancasila as the State's foundation.

The seeds of this harmony must be sown at non-theological levels, such as ethical, social, political, and economic levels, etc. But its growth must be contingent on certain conditions: a lack of suspicion and fear, as well as an abundance of honesty, fairness, and respect for existing differences.

In particular, Sufism is a factor to consider when preventing conflict. Sufism, or spiritualism, appears to be beginning to flourish in both the Western and Eastern worlds. Again, Tarekat is discussed and practiced. The study of Sufi figures' philosophy is expanding. Even best-selling books on Sufism are published. In institutions, Sufi discourse is prevalent. This phenomenon is of interest to religious sociologists. Modern humans are increasingly attracted to Sufism in a world dominated by rational science.

As noted by Azra, Naisbitt and Abrdene recognize that science and technology do not fully provide meaning to life. In other words, "religious revival (including Sufism) is a firm rejection of blind faith in science and technology," which has been viewed as a "pseudo religion" up until now.

However, what is evolving is not organized religion, but spirituality.

On the other hand, science and technology have failed to give life meaning. Religion is still believed to provide the meaning of life. Modernism failed to eradicate religion from human existence. 6 In light of this phenomenon, there is nothing improper about incorporating Sufism into efforts to suppress conflict. Sufism's values of togetherness and love as a creation can serve as the foundation for social interaction.

In the past ten years, Indonesia has experienced a heartbreaking and alarming humanitarian tragedy (Suprapto, 2013, 2015). Social conflict, which, according to Lewis Coser, has a positive aspect, has turned into a negative conflict (Coser, 1957; Drakeley, 2008)

The intensity of the Indonesian people, who were formerly regarded as a religious, polite, and other nation, has been the subject of a great deal of research and effort. Political factors, economic disparities, cultural disparities, ethnic and religious sentiments can all contribute to conflict. However, economic and political factors are frequently deemed to play a more significant role than the other two factors. Religious and ethnic conflicts are secondary factors in the causes of more complex conflicts with a social, economic, and political background.

In this pluralistic Indonesian society, there is nothing wrong with religious communities studying and discovering effective ways to appreciate, practice, and spread religious teachings. There are numerous reasons why such activities are deemed essential. Due to the limited understanding of its adherents, religion has the potential to spark conflict. Consequently, it is not surprising that many nonreligious scientists attribute the riots to religion (Erb, 1992). This appears to be an exaggerated and typically judgmental signal. Religion, in addition to being a socially unifying factor, has the potential to become a source of conflict, as is frequently stated in older theses in the social

sciences.

In the context of conflict resolution, it is necessary to see many things. If existing conflicts are frontal, they must be deescalated in a short period of time. It is possible with a firm legal strategy. Long-term solutions are sought by, for instance, locating the problem's root, advocating for education with a pluralistic dimension, and preaching with content that does not incite conflict. Realizing justice in all aspects of people's lives, whether economic, political, social, cultural, or religious, is of equal importance.

CONCLUSION

Sociologically speaking, humans require both other humans and the natural environment. Therefore, interaction becomes essential. As a result of disparities in tendencies, needs, cultural, religious, political, social, economic, and other values, conflicts will inevitably arise in a variety of interactions. Conflict can be defined as a disagreement or dispute that can occur between individuals, groups, or nations and can take the form of physical or non-physical ideas / concepts. In the meantime, religious conflict is a dispute over religious values, claims, and identities. Moreover, it can take the form of either peaceful or violent actions. Several factors, including differences in individual attitudes and feelings, cultural differences, divergent interests, and rapid changes in value, can contribute to conflict. Religious conflicts are caused by the following: rigid truth claims; fading religious and ethnic/cultural areas; a narrow understanding of the doctrine of jihad; lack of tolerance and misunderstanding of the ideology of pluralism. Issues of religious conflict in Indonesia, such as moral issues, sectarian issues, communal issues, terrorism, political-religious issues, etc., can be minimized with a firm and fair legal approach, education and da'wah with pluralistic dimensions and full of

wisdom, and a desire to establish justice in all spheres of public life, whether

economic, social, political, cultural, or religious.

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