

# How to Reject Radicalism and Terrorism?

M. Zainuddin<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Faculty of Tarbiyah and Teacher Training, Universitas Islam Negeri Maulana Malik Ibrahim Malang Indonesia

Keywords: Terrorism-Radicalism, Religious Education.

Abstract: There are three major State enemies, namely corruption, drugs and terrorism. Terrorism has been a big issue in Indonesia for years. This is due to the trivial and rigid understanding of religion that leads the birth of the violent and radical doctrines. The politicization of religion is done by a certain group that claims to have most complete understanding of religion, but in the end wants to build a new dominance in the name of religion. Such politicization has made the Religion lose its essential soul as an inclusive religion and turned into an exclusive, intolerant, extreme and inhumane. In this case, Indonesia became a fertile ground to the interests of particular groups due to weak law enforcement, while religious education in schools does not fully promote the values and moral behavior. Therefore, religious education in Indonesia needs to be re-reviewed, especially in the development of noble values. Education practitioners willing to build this nation free of radicalism and terrorism should seriously attend religious education materials in schools.

## 1 INTRODUCTION

Gradually, the terrorists in Indonesia have been shot to death, ranging from Azhari, Amrozi, Imam Samudra, Noordin M. Top, up to Dul Matin considered as the most wanted terrorists in Indonesia. This raises a question: whether terrorism has ended in Indonesia?

Indeed, the Indonesian terrorist-leaders had been caught, but not with "terrorism". This means that the terror bombings in the country have not ended, or even probably will continue, along with the increase of the "Islam" hardline members organized within an international network. In other words, terrorists in Indonesia has become latent danger that much resembles with PKI's threat in the New Order era. Therefore, we must be wary of and anticipate its very existence. Because no one with common sense and religion will justify any acts of terror and bombing, except for the bombers and terrorists themselves.

## 2 DISCUSSION

### 2.1 The Doctrines of Fundamentalism-Radicalism

The actions by suicide bombers cannot be separated from the doctrine they believe in; as what they do is an obligation, regardless the death sentence that might face them. Also, it is a belief that (one of) God commands that must be implemented. For hard-line religious groups (fundamentalist-radical), violence and even bombings to others regarded as a struggle (jihad) which is very noble deed and strongly prescribed by God. This is the doctrine that they build and develop to its members. The risk of death sentence is not a barrier since there is an expected reward of entering into heaven in the hereafter. This is the power of "jihad" that never seems to extinguish. The strength of this doctrine is difficult to be challenged by anyone and with any resistance. Therefore, Amrozi and friends in Indonesia or their groups outside the country may be dead, but not with their doctrine and ideology.

Fundamentalism or radicalism is a religious phenomenon that can arise from all religions, anywhere and anytime. Therefore, there are some renowned technical terms, such as Islamic fundamentalism, Hindu fundamentalism, Christian fundamentalism, and so forth. The term

fundamentalist here refers to a group of people who tend to oppose religion and political reform.

The fundamentalists are always against secularism. Ironically, said E. Marty, when they achieve this purpose, they cannot break away from the secularism itself. It can be seen in Iran and Sri Lanka where fundamentalists cannot be separated from the benefits of secularization, even in Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Iran's leaders fundamentalist groups have been familiar with the products of secular and Marxist doctrine. In Israel, the fundamentalist group *Gush Emunies* also implements Marxist ideology although they do not belong to it (Sayyed, 1979).

In the religious discourse, fundamentalism is understood as a struggle to re-establish norms and traditional religious beliefs to deal with secularism. In Christianity, fundamentalism emerges to confront the danger of modernism that is deemed to have stained the sanctity of religion and that it wants to go back to the Holy Scripture (the Bible). Meanwhile in Islam, fundamentalism is defined as maintaining the basic teachings of Islam, away from all forms of *tahayyul*, *bid'ah* (heresy), and *khurafat* (superstition) as demonstrated by Ahmad ibn Hanbal and Ibn Taymiyya. Those basic teachings are usually in contradictions with local cultures. In this believe, rituals of Islam that emerge with local culture is cleansed (Alwi, 2014) or there are no negotiations or the identity that is formed and communicated by its meaning with local cultures (Chua, 2013). It is called the Islamic Purification Movement (Berzonsky, 2014), in which ideology and identity kept away from social tradition.

Further development of fundamentalist groups above have a very pejorative and minor connotation and, even regarded as hardliners who often act irrationally and have always been associated with movements and revolutions, such as the Wahhabi movement in Saudi Arabia, Khomeini in Iran, Hasan al-Banna Sayid Qutub in Egypt and etc.. Most experts also consider that fundamentalism as group of people who oppose the existing political order. Therefore, Islamic opposition groups are often regarded as fundamentalists even considered subversive (Bruinessen, 1992).

Islamic fundamentalism is popular among Western scholars after the Iranian revolution in 1979. There are two principles of fundamentalism: resistance and rejection. Resistance (opposition) or fighting against all ideologies considered to endanger the existence of religion, whether in the form of modernism, secularism and Westernism. Another one is the rejection of hermeneutics

(Marty, 1991). The fundamentalists reject a critical attitude towards the text and its interpretation. According to this group, the text must be understood as such because our reasonings deemed unable to give proper interpretation of the text. Therefore, this group also called textual-scripturalist.

Islamic fundamentalists assume that their identity is in danger and eroded by cultural and religious hybridity (Hassan & Watt, 2006). They maintain sacred interpretation, doctrine, beliefs, and practices of the past. For them, modernity and globalization that characterize the today's world is a serious threat for the traditional worldview. The underlying reason of the rise of Islamic fundamentalism is the Muslims' feelings, including the intellectuals, that they are under the threat of losing their Islamic identity eroded by the West. Fundamentalist Muslims also feel that the social awakening induced by the influence of the West will make the Islamic community worse than the others. The modern Islamic fundamentalism is a collective response to the emotional and intellectual crisis, because its promise is return to "the true Islam", which can solve all problems.

Fundamentalist groups assert that, in a Muslim country, the non-Muslims' status should be lower than Muslims. For example, the non-Muslims have to wear special badges in order that they are easily identifiable. Furthermore, the non-Muslims are not allowed to build a church or synagogue higher than the mosque, and they should not be prioritized like Muslims in all daily social activities, including that Muslims are not allowed to initiate the greeting *salam* to non-Muslims. The premise that motivates them is that "Islam must dominate". Consequently, the non-Muslims living in Muslim areas should be made to feel inferior so they do not put up with their status. This might be the entry point for them to see the truth and then convert to Islam. This way, in other words, they can leave their low status through conversion to Islam.

The fundamentalist strongly fight for their theology known as *al-wala 'wa al-Barra'* (the doctrine of loyalty and separation), based some classical jurists' work. This doctrine states that Muslims are only obliged to care, interact, and make friendship with fellow Muslims. Muslims are allowed to ask for the help of non-Muslims only if they are weak and needy, but while Muslims are able to gain strength, they must win this 'superiority' status. Muslims should not be friends with non-Muslims, or allow themselves to care or love the non-Muslims (Hassan, 2006:115).

## 2.2 The Relation between Fundamentalism and Terrorism

What is the relationship between Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism? Some Muslim authors demonstrate critical views towards Islamic fundamentalism. Islam as a religion is not a threat, but the idea that Islamic fundamentalism as a threat is true and becomes a political challenge (Tibi, 1998).

In the context of confrontation with Western civilization, Muslims would make Islam as an identity. One of the biggest theoretical problems in the Islamic world is that people better understand Islam as an identity than as a truth (Soroush, 2002). Furthermore, it shows the truth that Muslims do have their identity and civilization, but they should not use Islam for the sake of identity and civilization (e.g., the politicization of religion or political Islam). Islamic identity must submit to Islam as the truth, because the truth of Islam can co-exist with the other truths, whereas the Islamic identity tends to be hostile. Islam as identity, Soroush added, may breed the seed of war rather than peace.

The abovementioned issues (and Islamic fundamentalism) are inseparable from the classic debate about "whether Islam as a doctrine in the Qur'an or is it also ideological/political affairs (al-Islam din wa Daulah)". On the one hand, some Muslims understand that Islam cannot be separated from political affairs—in which Islam understood as both a religion and politics at the same time. While on the other hand, some groups understand Islam as just a religion, which is isolated from the political realm. Groups of political Islam (al-Islam al-siyasy), for example, is represented by the Ayatollah Khomeini and his colleagues with their revolutionary thought through their popular groundbreaking work, *Kasyf al-Gayb*. While a political Islam (al-assiyasy) represented by Ali Abd. Al-Raziq and colleagues with much renowned work, such as *al-Islam wa Usul al-Hukm* (Esposito, 1996).

In this context, Islamic fundamentalism is one of the global phenomena in the world politics. Fundamentalism is also an ideological symptom of the "clash of civilizations". It is not only a cause of the crisis of our today's world, but it also serves as an expression and the response to it (Tibi, 1998). Additionally, agitative fundamentalism is not a solution, yet it may lead to chaos because it constantly causes the conflict and sharpens the cultural fragmentation. In this respect, it rejects the politicization of religion that is carried out by fundamentalist groups (Tibi, 1998). The reason that

Islamic fundamentalism is a political ideology of the purely religious phenomenon lends evidence from the fact that it does not incorporate any special theological debate.

## 2.3 The Deradicalization of Religion

We may question on what should be done to anticipate and protect us from the danger of radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia? There are at least two things to do: first is creating strong law enforcement; and secondly is to reorient our understanding of religion and review the curriculum in educational institutions.

Further, there should be joint commitment between the government and community on the law enforcement to erode the latent danger of terrorism. The government can no longer be permissible to some foreign groups that enter Indonesia's territory easily, nor even to the neighboring countries in the region. Besides, the government should also uphold justice and democratization for the sake of pressing social jealousy among the people in the country, especially in the making of regulations across religion, because the injustice, among other things, may lead to the inter-religious conflict and the emergence of terrorism. In educational institutions, should be implanted to impart religious education religious doctrine moderate (*alhanifiyyah al-Samhah*), peaceful religion (din mercy) is not a religion of violence and fundamentalism.

Then, how should we formulate our education? I personally see that there needs to be concrete efforts towards the improvement of education, particularly on reorienting the religious education in schools. The orientation of religious education is not only on external matters, such as ceremonies, rites, symbols, and on a series of other formalistic ritual piety. In other words, religious education cannot be equated with those formal aspects, though they are also important parts in the religion.

How should we stipulate the basic direction of Islamic religious education in schools, especially at primary and secondary level? Is religious education simply aimed at making learners religious? How effective is the current religious education for our students? How is the quality of religious education contained in the textbook? If religious education is not merely a transfer of knowledge by teachers in schools—rather planting religious values and forming characters that starts from the childhood within family—then what should we define the religious education in schools?

## 2.4 Reorienting the Religious Education

The materials of religious education should convey the messages that Islam is tolerant, inclusive, humanist, and pluralist. Religious education is an effort to prepare students to believe, understand, appreciate and practice their religion through sustainable guidance and teaching activities.

Therefore, both teachers and textbooks as an element of the learning process must be taken into account at the same time (Gorton, 1876). In fact, as theorized by Gorton, attention has been less paid to the textbook materials used in schools.

Indeed, thus far, the materials contained in the new textbook touch on formal aspects, while the spirit or soul of the religion (e.g., good deeds (charity) has not been included. In other words, religious education has been stuck in an effort to make people embrace religion, but not lead them to do good deeds. In fact, religiosity is the basic attitude that makes people do good deeds, become loving, tender-hearted, forgiving as well as have universal humanity and solidarity. This is the core of religion that should become an ultimate focus of religious education in schools.

Further, the observations made by PPIM (Islam and Society Research Center) UIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta have revealed the same results. The religious behavior of some big cities in Indonesia mainly focuses on the dimensions of individual piety. Along with that, the phenomena of corruption, intolerance, violence, exploitation, hegemony also become rife and common practices. In fact, such a phenomenon would easily be settled through approaches of religious education that concerns on both social and individual insight simultaneously (Zainuddin, 2007).

Therefore, the role of education in creating the social awareness is very urgent. Through this study, we may understand the advantages and disadvantages of religious education model designed by the Ministry of Religious Affairs. This area really needs further research, particularly, on the messages contained in the textbooks. This issue must immediately find a solution in order that religious doctrines play increasingly significant role in the creation of a harmonious life in the country.

In other words, the emphasis is not just a religious symbol, but more than that is the spirit of religion itself, namely faith and good deeds. With this model of education, it is expected that students will become individuals who have the ideal personality, spirit solidarity, honest, fair, and much

far from the violence and terror, that threaten the people of the nation. Such orientation of education will also be very useful when faced with the complexity and plurality of religions.

Here, the plurality of religions should be a constructive-transformative force in developing potential and our educational model. This force will develop if the respective religious communities understand and uphold the values of tolerance and harmony through religious education and exemplary attitude from teachers. It is also necessary to define the cultural and anthropological context of the term "spirituality" in religion of which it should be a process of understanding one's life purposes and of obtaining senses (Abrahamov & Kornev, 2007).

Reorientation of religious education may start by reviewing the curriculum that is less qualified and does not reflect human values and peaceful religion from kindergarten to college level. Peaceful religion is a religion that promotes peace and tranquility. The verses of peace (salam) are the ones that not only emphasize the need of religious tolerance, but also uphold virtue on earth. Those verses demonstrate that, in dealing with groups of enemies, Muslims should try to remind them of their moral obligations to God, but if they reject the truth, Muslims should leave them in peace.

In such dynamics, on the one hand, Muslims should ascertain their "enemies" that the differences between them are not personal matters, and should not show any resentment or hatred against their enemies on the other hand. To the extent that when the enemy rejects Islamic teachings, Al-qur'an guides Muslims that the only appropriate response to this rejection is a pray; may peace be granted upon them. Particularly important to bear in mind that Indonesia is not a state of war (*dar alharb*), therefore there is no Islamic juridical reason (*hujjah fiqhiyyah*) to declare the war against other religions. However, the truth is the opposite, which is the fight against terrorist and terrorism— the common enemy of all religions.

## 2.5 Terrorism and Media

Today the role of media in the society is crucial and growing from time to time. Media is significantly affecting public definition and perception of a certain event whether it is political or social. Therefore there are questions about the media itself. One of them is about the standard of the media, the man who designed and shaped a certain news publication, so that we can assure the media is free of political justification and also terrorism. Without

educational control of the society from media, the terrorist, even a small group of terrorist can be a powerful group with the help of media blasting effect in reporting the group. Recognized or not, media is a powerful instrument serving the needs of terrorist group.

Some terrorist organization realized the potential of spreading terror by using the media in order to attract massive attention from the people. Without a good journalist justification, the news will not educate the society. It is demanded that the journalist to be fair and open. Though the term fair and open is also too wide-ranging, the journalist can start by giving balance to the news by showing many points of views which provides clarity and clearness to the news. Therefore the media will not illustrate the publication as a media of fear by the society (Altheide, 2004).

Without an educative way in giving information about terrorism, it become an orientation in our society for commercial purpose. It is a new perspective embedded in our everyday routine in form of news and advertisement. Many commercial advertisement and news contributes to the increase of income for the business world. They sell slogans and advertisement on patriotism, consumption and victimization (Altheide, 2007). The discourse on terrorism may be a moral support to the viewers but also sometimes it has become an artful contract for news and commercial.

In Indonesia, the political change from the *new order* period to reformation era exhibited the rise of nationality and terrorism. There were various bombing happened simultaneously in mosques, night clubs, hotels, churches, and other public areas. In 1997 to 2002 there were ninety bombings that injured and kills hundreds of people (Pusponegoro, 2014). Moreover it continues to other series of bombing until year 2018 responding to the anti-terrorism undertaking by the government. In the recent bombing in Surabaya in 2018, terrorists have shown themselves to public with family suicide bombing (father, mother and children) in open places and government areas.

This pattern, shows us that the bombing now involves the use of media to balance the issues on the media about anti-terrorism in Indonesia. Therefore to make a more dramatic scene and people interest, they make their family, even their own children to join them. In reverse to that, media can be a tools to overpower the terrorism in deradicalizing the effects. Thus, educating people mind through the media to stand for terrorism is essential.

Educating and countering terrorism needs time and efforts. The ideology that is inside someone's heart and mind leads to way of life. Though some of the terrorists and Islamic militancy including Emir Jamaah Islamiah, Abu Bakar Ba'asyir and Nordin M. Top has been arrested and shot to death, their followers are still there making an underground movement. This is because the ideology still lives, and it makes them as dangerous as their leader. Even, some of them are trained in Pakistan (Feillard & Madinier, 2011).

Looking back at Indonesia traditions which are vary created three Muslim classification according to social cultures in Indonesia. They are *abangan*, *priyayi* and *santri* (Geerts, 1981). *Abangan* is the muslim people who lives in urban areas who syncretize old Javanese tradition and Islam; *santri* is muslim who practice Islam in conservative way in *Pondok Pesantren*; while *priyayi* is the aristocratic class who is muslim and make syncretism with Javanese tradition. Today, Islam in Indonesia is not divided by the social culture places but accordingly to their religious orientation and their political affiliation. In this sense Islam in Indonesia is recognized as a different form of Islam compared to Middle-Eastern Islam.

Islamic organizations which are considered big in Indonesia are Muhammadiyah and Nahdatul Ulama (NU). Those two are the biggest muslim organization in Indonesia whose Islam Ideology are accepted widely in Indonesia and are considered as moderate groups. While terrorists in Indonesia are countering Islam that blends with tradition. For instance the Wahabism movement in west Sumatera by Padri movement that tried to expose the literal understanding of Islam, but they failed.

Studying the History of Islam in Indonesia, we can learn that exposing raw understanding of Islam in Media will not be suitable for the goodness of Islam development in Indonesia. Therefore preserving Islam and Culture who has been done by NU and Muhammadiyah for example, should be preserved. Because none of these ideologies produce terrorists. The role of Media in the exposure of Islamic activity should be more emphasized on these kind of organizations rather than exposing terrorism. By doing so, the society will be educated and naturally countering the terrorism in Indonesia.

### 3 CONCLUSION

Terrorism in Indonesia will never stop if the "Islamic" hardliners still thrive in Indonesia. The

hard-line Islamic group-radical fundamentalists feel justified in performing violence in the name of  *Jihad*  to re-establish the norms of the sacred religion, freed from the influence of secularism, modernism and globalization.

Radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia can be anticipated and prevented through three steps, first, upholding the rule of law seriously; secondly, reorienting the understanding of religion in educational institutions; and third by using the social media to promote counter terrorism. Upholding the rule of law can be taken through controlling the mobility of foreign groups into Indonesia, creating social justice and democratization in the country. In education, religious doctrines such as being moderate, inclusive, tolerant, and peace loving should be imposed. And also through media can be a tools to overpower the terrorism.

## REFERENCES

- Abramov, Yu.F. Kornev, E.V. (2007). Problem of Theological and Religious Education in Modern Russia: Unity and Differences. *Izvestiya Irkutskogo Gosudarstvennogo Universiteta. Seriya: Politologiya. Religiovedenie. Vol. 01, pp. 170-184.*
- Altheide, D. 2004. Terrorism and the Politics of Fear. *Symbolic Interaction 27: 289-308.*
- Altheide, D. 2007. The Mass Media and Terrorism. *Discourse and Communication 1: 287.*
- Alwi, A.Z., Bakar, N.A.B., Subki, R.M. (2014). Islamic Faith in Malaysia: Current Issues and Challenges. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences, Vol. 5 No. 20, pp. 62-70.*
- Berzonsky, M.D. and Dennis R.P. (2014). Identity Processing Styles and Value Orientations: The Mediation Role of Self-Regulation and Identity Commitment. *Identity: A International Journal of Theory and Research, Vol. 14, Issue 2, pp. 96-112*
- Bruinessen, Martin Van (1992). "Muslim Fundamentalism: Can it be Understood or Should be Explained a Way", *Unpublished article.*
- Chua, J.M. (2013). A Sketch for a Ricoeurian Hermeneutics of Religious Identity. *Journal for the Study of Religious and Ideologies, Vol. 12, No. 34, pp. 57-80.*
- Dian Interfidei (1995). *Dialog: Kritik dan Identitas Agama*, Yogyakarta, seri Dian Interfidei Th.
- Donohue, John J dan John L Esposito, (1982). *Islam in Transition: Muslim Perspective*, New York: Oxford University.
- Eickelmann, Dale F. dan James Piscatori (1996). *Ekspres Politik Muslim*, Bandung: Mizan.
- Esposito, John L. (2002). *Dialektika Peradaban: Modernisme Politik dan Budaya di Akhir Abad ke-20*, Yogyakarta: Qalam.
- Feilard, A. & Madinier, 2011. *The end of Innocence? Indonesian Islam and the temptation of radicalism. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.*
- Geertz, Clifford. 1981. Abangan, Santri, Priyayi dalam Masyarakat Jawa. Jakarta: Pustaka Jaya.
- Gorton, Richard A. (1976). *School Administration*. New York: Wm C. Brown Company Publishers.
- Hassan, Riaz. (2006) *Keragaman Iman: Studi Komparatif Masyarakat Muslim*, Jakarta: Rajagrafindo Persada.
- Marty E. & Appelby. (1991). *Fundamentalism and the State*. University of Chicago Press.
- Nottingham, Elizabeth K. (1985) *Agama dan Masyarakat*. Jakarta, C.V. Rajawali Press.
- Pusponegoro, A.D., 2003. Terrorism in Indonesia. *Prehospital and Disaster Medicine. 18(2): 100.*
- Sayyed, Bobby S. (1997). *A Fundamental Fear: Eurocentrism and the Emergence of Islamism*, London & New York: Zed Book Ltd.
- Soroush, Abdul Karim (2002). *Menggugat Otoritas dan Tradisi Agama*, Bandung: Mizan.
- Tibi, Bassam. (1991). *Islam and Cultural Accomodation of Social Change*. Boulder, San Fransisco & Oxford: Westview Press.
- Zainuddin M. (2007). *Kesalehan Normatif dan Sosial*, Malang, UIN Press.