

Jurnal

ISSN 3025-5759

# IDENTITAS

Kewarganegaraan, Administrasi Kependudukan & Penghapusan Diskriminasi

Volume 04 Nomor 01, Maret 2024

***Managing Ambiguity: Religious Intolerance and Policy in Indonesia***

Alamsyah M Djafar

**Hidup dalam Kesenjangan: Paradox Migran Baru Asal Tiongkok (*Xinyimin*) dengan Masyarakat di Indonesia**

Paulus Rudolf Yuniarto

***From Conflictual to Peaceful Coexistence? Reconceptualizing The Relationship between Islam and The West***

Muhammad Khoirul Muqtafa

**Agama dan Kewarganegaraan: Minoritas Muslim dalam Masyarakat Hindu Bali**

Eddy Setiawan

**Menggugat Prinsip *Non-Interference* ASEAN: Dari Idealisme ke Pragmatisme Politik?**

Husnul Atiyah

**Resensi Buku: Politik Hukum dan Pembangunan Nasional Indonesia**

Sukman

# Jurnal IDENTITAS

ISSN 3025-5759

Kewarganegaraan, Administrasi Kependudukan & Penghapusan Diskriminasi  
Volume 04 Nomor 01, Maret 2024

## **Tim Penyunting:**

Dr. Rofiqul Umam Ahmad, SH., MH.  
Saifullah Ma'shum, M.Si.  
Sukman, SH., MH.  
Eddy Setiawan, M.Si.  
Adi Kurniawan, M.Si.

## **Mitra Bestari:**

Prof. Dr. Zudan Arif Fakhrullah, SH., MH  
*Direktorat Jenderal  
Kependudukan dan Pencatatan Sipil*

Hamid Awaluddin, Ph.D  
*Universitas Hasanuddin, Makassar*

Muhammad Khoirul Muqtafa, Ph.D  
*Badan Riset dan Inovasi Nasional*

Rikard Bagun, Ph.D  
*Badan Pembinaan Ideologi Pancasila*

Dr. Ahmad Ahsin Tohari, SH., MH  
*Universitas Pembangunan Nasional, Jakarta*

## **Pemimpin Redaksi**

Eddy Setiawan

## **Desain dan Tata Letak**

Riska El Haris

## **Distribusi & Tata Usaha**

Waji Haris Setiawan

## **Penerbit**

Institut Kewarganegaraan Indonesia  
Alamat: Wisma 46 Kota BNI Lt. 14  
Jl. Jenderal Sudirman Kav. 1,  
Dukuh Atas, Jakarta Pusat, Indonesia  
Telp. 021-2510670,  
Fax. 021-5702755  
[www.yayasan-iki.or.id](http://www.yayasan-iki.or.id)

## **Jurnal IDENTITAS**

Jurnal IDENTITAS adalah jurnal yang fokus pada isu-isu kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan, dan penghapusan diskriminasi serta masalah-masalah kebangsaan, demokrasi dan hukum. Jurnal IDENTITAS ingin memfasilitasi dan mendorong berkembangnya berbagai pemikiran ilmiah mengenai isu-isu tersebut sekaligus mempublikasikan kajian dan penelitian mengenai hal tersebut. Jurnal IDENTITAS mengundang para pakar, akademisi, peneliti, pemerhati, dan aktivis di bidang kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan, dan penghapusan diskriminasi serta masalah-masalah kebangsaan, demokrasi dan hukum untuk menulis di jurnal ini. Jurnal IDENTITAS terbit dua kali dalam setahun.

## **Yayasan Institut Kewarganegaraan Indonesia (IKI)**

IKI adalah sebuah lembaga kemasyarakatan yang bergerak di bidang pengkajian, penelitian, penyebaran informasi, pendidikan dan pemberdayaan masyarakat, serta advokasi di bidang kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan dan penghapusan diskriminasi. Yayasan IKI didirikan pada 11 Agustus 2006, tepat 10 hari setelah disahkannya UU Nomor 12 Tahun 2006 tentang Kewarganegaraan Republik Indonesia. Yayasan IKI didirikan oleh sejumlah tokoh yang memiliki perhatian dan komitmen terhadap isu-isu kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan, dan upaya penghapusan diskriminasi. Yayasan IKI berkomitmen terlibat aktif dalam mendukung penyelesaian masalah-masalah kewarganegaraan, administrasi kependudukan, dan diskriminasi yang masih dialami oleh sebagian warga masyarakat dan kelompok masyarakat tertentu.

ISSN 3025-5759

# Jurnal IDENTITAS

Kewarganegaraan, Administrasi Kependudukan & Penghapusan Diskriminasi  
Volume 04 Nomor 01, Maret 2024

## Daftar Isi

- Pengantar Redaksi ..... i
- *Managing Ambiguity: Religious Intolerance and Policy in Indonesia*  
*Alamsyah M Djafar* ..... 1
- Hidup dalam Kesenjangan: Paradox Migran Baru Asal Tiongkok  
(*Xinyimin*) dengan Masyarakat di Indonesia  
*Paulus Rudolf Yuniarto* ..... 34
- *From Conflictual to Peaceful Coexistence?*  
*Reconceptualizing The Relationship between Islam and The West*  
*Muhammad Khoirul Muqtafa* ..... 60
- Agama dan Kewarganegaraan:  
Minoritas Muslim dalam Masyarakat Hindu Bali  
*Eddy Setiawan* ..... 80
- Menggugat Prinsip *Non-Interference* ASEAN:  
Dari Idealisme ke Pragmatisme Politik?  
*Husnul Atiyah* ..... 106
- Resensi Buku: Politik Hukum dan Pembangunan Nasional Indonesia  
*Sukman* ..... 127
- Panduan Penulisan Naskah ..... 132
- Tentang Penulis ..... 135

Redaksi menerima tulisan ilmiah tentang isu-isu kewarganegaraan,  
administrasi kependudukan dan penghapusan diskriminasi ras dan  
etnis serta tulisan-tulisan lain tentang hukum, demokrasi dan HAM



# From Conflictual to Peaceful Coexistence?

## Reconceptualizing the Relationship between Islam and the West

————— **Muhammad Khoirul Muqtafa** —————

*Researcher at Research Center for Society and Culture,  
National Research and Innovation Agency (BRIN)  
Email: muqtafa@gmail.com; muha094@brin.go.id*

### ABSTRACT

The relationship between Islam and the West has been a subject of study for many scholars, yet the discussion seems never to end. Part of the reason is that their relationship is anything but simple as the historical records depict it: there was a period of tension, conflict and cooperation. The September 11 attack was critical since then the discussion between the two has been publicly discussed with the question of Islam, whether it would bring peace or instead, it would be a threat to the Western world. Employing desk research, this paper expands the discussion between Islam and the West by examining different ideas among Muslim scholars, from liberal to conservative or fundamentalist ones to see the prospect of promoting peaceful coexistence between the two. More than that, the progressive idea needs to be creatively spread and infused into the people's consciousness so that the concept of peaceful coexistence would not only be the concern of elites but also that of the general public. Bringing this into view may shed some light to what extent the relationship between the two might be reconceptualized and proposed into a more peaceful one.

*Keywords: Islam, the West, liberalism, fundamentalism*

---

### ABSTRAK

*Hubungan Islam dan Barat sudah menjadi kaian banyak sarjana, namun diskusi tentang keduanya nampaknya tak pernah selesai. Salah satu alasannya adalah karena hubungan di antara keduanya tidak sederhana sebagaimana catatan sejarah menggambarannya: ada periode di mana hubungan keduanya diwarnai ketegangan, konflik dan kerja sama. Peristiwa 11 September menjadi salah satu titik kritis karena sejak itu hubungan keduanya mulai didiskusikan secara public dengan pertanyaan*

*besar apakah Islam akan membawa perdamaian ataukah akan menjadi ancaman bagi dunia Barat. Dengan studi pustaka, artikel ini mendiskusikan kembali persoalan di atas dengan menelaah berbagai gagasan pemikir muslim, dari yang liberal sampai yang konservatif atau fundamentalis untuk melihat prospek perdamaian di antara keduanya. Lebih dari itu, gagasan progresif tentang perdamaian perlu disebarkan dan ditanamkan ke dalam kesadaran masyarakat sehingga gagasan tersebut bukan hanya menjadi concern para elit tapi juga masyarakat umum. Mendiskusikan kembali hal ini diharapkan bisa memberikan titik terang untuk mengkonseptualisasikan dan mendorong kembali hnbungan keduanya menjadi lebih damai.*

Kata Kunci: Islam, Barat, liberalisme, fundamentalisme

## Introduction

The relationship between Islam and the West has been a subject of study for many scholars. While many research has been conducted, the discussion seems never to end. Part of the reason is that the two entities are not something static, that are finished by-products, but, sociologically speaking, both are being lived, interpreted and contextualized in the moving global world. Due to this, there will always be tensions, negotiations and cooperation between the two that occurred throughout history. One of the historical events that sparked a heated debate between Islam and the West is the September 11 attack: whether Islam would bring peace or instead, it would be a threat to the Western world.

While this tragedy happened more than 20 years ago, it has been one of the key historical events that affected the relationship between the two. That is because since then the issue of the

relationship between Islam and the West has been publicly discussed. Cox and Marks (2003: 1) notice that after the September attack, "The War against Terrorism" or Islamic militant activities became the headlines of many Western newspapers. That event that took around 3,000 lives has shocked people around the world. Omid Safi, a professor of Islamic Studies at an American University, argued that it was difficult to explain how that attack could happen and how anyone could have committed those actions (2008: 201). The attack which was initiated by Osama bin Laden and his network, al-Qaeda, by and large contributed to the image of Islam in the western people. Saikal (2003: 1) argues that the September attack led to a distrustful relationship between Muslims and the Western people.

This essay elaborates on the question of whether the relationship between Islam and the West is

inherently conflictual or provides some foundation to propose for a peaceful coexistence. Some studies have been conducted on this issue before and after the 9/11 attack such as Lewis (1994), Ahmad (1997), Cox & Marks (2003), Saikal (2003), Gabriel (2004) and Nazir-Ali (2006). Some of these works by Lewis (1994), Ahmad (1997) and Saikal (2003), for example, focus on the historical records of tensions and cooperation between the two with the cases of the Middle East and African Countries, the others revolve around the compatibility between Islam and some western culture or ideas such as democracy and freedom. This paper expands these previous studies by examining different ideas among Muslim scholars, from liberal to conservative or fundamentalist ones to see the prospect of promoting peaceful coexistence between the two. Furthermore, this paper also suggests what needs to be done to promote this idea.

Employing desk research, this article is divided into four parts. The first part reveals some historical records that portrayed the relationship between Islam and the West to find the nature of the relationship of both entities and then followed by addressing the question of whether the relationship is inherently conflictual or whether there is a possibility to arrange cooperation among them. The third part will

examine the prospect of peaceful coexistence between Islam and the West. Finally, this paper will confront some issues related to liberalism and religious fundamentalism as this ideology's opponents. Some topics such as democracy, *shari'a* law, secular state, Islamic state and human rights will be discussed in this part.

### **The Relationship between Islam and the West**

Describing the nature of the relationship between Islam and the West is something complex. This is not only because the contact between both civilizations has lasted for centuries, but it also took different forms of relationship which rounded between tension, conflict and cooperation (Saikal 2003: 1). These various forms of relationships seem reasonable since both civilizations have some commonalities such as universal claims and outlook, while at the same time highlight differences in ideas and concepts such as world order (Tibi 2002: 15). However, before taking an in-depth discussion on this issue, it is important to outline terms such as 'Islam' and 'the West' to clarify the meaning.

Islam could be defined as a religion, faith and belief system (Cox and Marks 2003: 5; Gabriel 2005: 13; Ahmad 1997: 80). By this, it refers to "a code of conduct based on values, norms, and laws that represent a way of life" (Ahmad 1997:

80). It also refers to the practitioners of the Muslims faith who practice Islam in their everyday life (Gabriel 2005: 14; Cox and Marks 2003: 3). By this, it refers to different range of community, culture and people (Cox and Marks: 2003: 3). The word Islam also could be defined as civilization since it “represents a historical tradition spread over the last fourteen hundred years” (Ahmad 1997: 80). Although Islam was born in Arabic peninsula, it does not necessarily mean that it is tied to any geographic entity. Ahmad (1997: 80) states that Islam is “universal not only in its message but also in its very physical existence”.

The West, although primarily represents a geographic entity (Ahmad 1997: 80), refers to a symbol for a way of life “rooted historically in Ancient Greece and developed by peoples influenced by Judaeo-Christian tradition” (Cox and Marks 2003: 2). The term West also covers both cultural and civilizational dimensions since it continues to “represent the ethos as well as the interests of what can be described as the western hemisphere of the world” (Ahmad 1997: 81). The West also represents some concepts and systems such as secularism, freedom, human rights and democracy (Ahmad 1997: 81). Furthermore the West refers to Christianity since it is often identified as “the seat of Christian faith” (Gabriel 2005: 13).

Since the notion of Islam and the West contain religious domains, particularly that of Islam, Judaism and Christianity; it is important to identify the contact between the two from a historical perspective. Islam, as well as Judaism and Christianity, are usually called children of Abraham because the religions all share the same faith, “Abrahamic faith” (Esposito 1999: 24). Esposito argues that “while Jews and Christians trace their lineage through Isaac to Abraham and Sarah, Muslims do so through Ishmael, the firstborn son of Abraham and Hagar” (1999: 24). They share common beliefs such as “belief in God, prophets, revelation, a divined mandated community and moral responsibility” (Esposito 1999: 24).

In the early times, the relationship between the three faiths was full of tolerance and utter cooperation (Saikal 2003: 30). When the Prophet Muhammad began the preaching of Islam in Mecca, he called upon Meccan society to monotheism and abandon polytheism; the idea that was also proposed by Jews and Christianity against “tribal gods and goddess” of Arabian society (Esposito 1999: 26). Due to limited success in Mecca, the Prophet than migrated to the empire of Abyssina, part of Yemen region (Nazir-Ali 2006: 60). It is interesting to note that at the time Yemen was a Christian country which considered

by the Prophet as “one of justice and righteousness” (Nazir-Ali 2006: 61). In this country, the Prophet and his followers were “greeted hospitably and passed their time in peace and comfort” (Nazir-Ali 2006: 60).

The peaceful relationships between the three faiths were also reflected in Medina. At the time, Medina was a pluralistic town which not just consisted of Muslims, but also Jews and the ‘unbelievers’ (Bulac 1998: 169). Facing this situation, the Prophet made an effort to reconcile and unify those social groups to find the co-existence formula (Bulac 1998: 169). At that time, the Prophet promulgated the “Medina Document” or “Covenant of Medina” which regulated the social life of those social groups which then called “umma” (Nazir-Ali 2006: 61). Based on this covenant Muslims, Jews and even unbelievers were treated equally (Nazir-Ali 2006: 61).

Regarding this peaceful situation, Amin Saikal argues that under the Prophet the relationship between Muslims, Jews, Christians and even unbelievers was full of tolerance (2003: 30). This does not necessarily mean that there was no conflict between them, but in general they live in a peaceful situation despite the resistance of Jews and Christians to the prophecy of Mohammed and the tension between those three religious followers (Saikal 2003: 30). Furthermore, Saikal argues

that the way the Prophet managed the relationship between the three faiths “was instrumental in fostering bridges of understanding and trust between the followers of the three faiths” (2003: 30).

After the death of the Prophet, Islam’s march was expanded beyond the Arabian Peninsula (Saikal 2003: 30). The expansion covered Byzantine (Eastern Europe) and Persian empires (Sassanid) and then created an Islamic Caliphate stretching from North Africa to India (Esposito 1999: 29). However, during this expansion, Islam still maintained “its pristine respects for other revealed religions and interacted with them positively and dialectically” (Saikal 2003: 30). Under the Islamic rule, although Jewish and Christian communities paid poll-tax (*jizya*), they were provided full protection and allowed to practice their religious activities without any worries of religious persecution (Saikal 2003: 30).

Furthermore, Saikal argues that those positive attitudes were continued to articulate in the Abbasyd (750-1250) in which under the ‘Omar Agreement’, the Muslim leader “accorded full recognition to the right to freedom of religion for Jews and Christians in Jerusalem (2003: 30). Bloom and Sheila, cited by Saikal, wrote that in this land Muslims, Jews and Christians enjoyed the good life which is described as “They dressed in fine clothing, had fine houses in splen-

did cities serviced by paved streets, running water, and sewer and dined on spices delicacies served on Chinese porcelains” (2003: 30).

This situation then drastically changed since the Crusades (Saikal 2003: 31). The Crusades were a series of wars which occurred from the eleventh to the thirteenth centuries, involving Christendom (the Christian armies of the Franks) against Islam (the Muslim armies of the Saracens) (Esposito 1999: 38). The Christians captured Jerusalem in 1099 and 1299 then in the mid-thirteenth century Jerusalem was recaptured by Muslims (Saikal 2003: 31). During this war, especially under the Christians’ rule, Arab-Muslims and Jews were “humiliated and brutalized” which made them more to fear from Christians rather than Muslim rulers (Saikal 2003: 31). The Crusades then marked the red line of the relationship between Islam and Christianity. For Muslims, the Crusades lived the memory of Christian militants and on the other hand, these wars led to the Western perception of Christian triumph and liberation of Jerusalem (Esposito 1999: 37).

In 1453, the Muslims consolidated their power and successfully captured Constantinople, the Byzantine capital, and then set up the Ottoman Empire (Esposito 1999: 40). The Ottoman Empire emerged as the central power of Muslims which at the same time threat-

ened the existence of Europe. Nollys, cited by Esposito, described the Empire as ‘the present terror of the world’ (1999: 40). Similar to Nollys, Bosworth, cited by Esposito, said that “The Ottoman Turks struck terror into the hearts of Christian Europe” (1999: 40). The Ottoman Empire succeeded to build “a vast and extremely well-organized and efficient state” and created “a world empire that incorporated major Muslim centers like Cairo, Baghdad, Damascus, Mecca and Medina” (Esposito 1999: 40).

The expansion of The Ottoman Empire to Europe reached Vienna in the 1530s (Armstrong 2000: 132). Under the Sultan, despite proposing uniformity, the Sultans provided a framework “which enabled the different groups—Christians, Jews, Arabs, Turks, Berbers, Merchants, ulema, tariqahs and trade guilds—to live peacefully, each making its contribution, and following its own beliefs and customs” (Armstrong 2000: 132). Similar to Armstrong, Jean Bodin, cited by Esposito, also noted that despite constraining, the Sultan permitted everyone to live freely and let the different groups of religions practice their beliefs (1999: 41).

During the Ottoman Empire’s weakening in the eighteenth century, largely because of conservatism, internal decay, and an inability to keep pace with European innovation, the relationship between Muslims and other com-

munities remained the same; there was no religious persecution or forceful methods of conversion (Saikal 2003: 32).

By the nineteenth century, the power shifted and made the West more powerful. In this situation, while Europe developed in many aspects of its life and expanded its territory, Muslims found themselves on the defensive in the face of European expansion (Esposito 1999: 48). At this time, the Muslim challenge was about Islamic identity. Toward the West's achievement, some responses from Muslims rose "from rejection and confrontation to admiration and imitation" (Esposito 1999: 49). While Muslims were struggling with internal challenges, the West continued to dominate Muslims in some areas. After World War I, the French conquered the North and West and Africa, the British colonized Palestine, Transjordan, Iraq, the Arabian Gulf, Malaya, and Brunei and the Dutch colonized Indonesia (Esposito 1999: 49). This situation then led to conflict and collision between Muslims and the West.

After World War II, the tension between Muslims and the West escalated. Huntington pointed out that during this time "first Arab nationalism and then Islamic fundamentalism manifested themselves" (1993: 31). At the same time wars between Arabs and Israel which were created by the West occurred (Huntington 1993:

31). Not only in the Arab region, a violent collision between Muslims and Christians also occurred in Algeria (the 1950s), Egypt (1956), and Lebanon (1958) (Huntington 1993: 31). The culmination of this war was the Gulf War in which America became involved in the war with Iraq (Huntington 1993: 31). In this war, Iraq got many supports from Arabic leaders because the issue was not Iraq versus America anymore but rather Islam against the West (Huntington 1993: 35). Safar al-Hawali, dean of Islamic studies at the Umm al-Qura University, cited by Huntington, said that "it is not the world against Iraq" but "the West against Islam" (1993: 35). A similar notion was expressed by Ayatullah Khomeini, an Iranian leader. As cited by Huntington, Khomeini called for Jihad against the West, "The struggle against American aggression, greed, plans and policies will be counted as a jihad, and anybody who is killed on that path is a martyr" (1993: 35).

After the Gulf War, the tension between the Muslims and the West seems not to be in decline. Several conflicts between Muslims and Christians occurred in Africa, such as in Nigeria Sudan and Eastern Europe, particularly in Bosnia, Sarajevo and Russia (Huntington 1993: 33).

The recent event that strongly remarked the tension between Islam and the West is the tragedy of

September 11 which destroyed the World Trade Center and the Pentagon in 2001. Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda as the actors behind this event were often identified as representing the Islamic power. Then, this event makes the relationship between Islam and the West “more tense than before” (Saikal 2003: 1). Furthermore, Saikal argues that this event leads to the situation in which both Western and Muslim entities now “more fearful and distrustful of one another than any other time in contemporary history” (2003: 1).

The effect of this event is the increasing negative perceptions between Muslims and The West. Among Western people, the force of political Islam seems to be “a serious threat to Western interest that should be combated by every necessary means” (Saikal 2003: 1). US Attorney General, John Ashcroft, cited by Saikal, even stated that “Islam is a religion in which God requires you to send your son to die; on the other hand Christianity is a faith in which God sends his son to die for you” (2003: 15). Another statement which provokes Muslims was stated by Silvio Berlusconi, an Italian leader. As cited by Saikal, Berlusconi stated that ‘the West will continue to conquer Muslim peoples, like it conquered communism’ (2003: 15). Even Bush, cited by Saikal, responded the September 11 by declaring the “Crusades” (Saikal 2003: 15).

On the other hand, Muslim people also worried about the effect of this event that may be used as justification for Western powers such as the USA to “exaggerate the notion of Islamic threat, to maintain a Western sense of superiority and hegemony over the Muslim world” (Saikal 2003: 1). Although Muslim communities, particularly the moderate group, strongly reject the September attack as unacceptable, they reminded the US that “September 11 as providing a dangerous incentive to the USA and its allies to assume the higher moral ground to expand and deepen US dominance in the Muslim world, and marginalize defiant political Islam more than ever before” (Saikal 2003: 19). Another response from radical groups seem to suspect US under Bush administration which is dominated by Christians to place Islam as the enemy by using the September 11 as a justification to attack the Muslim world (Saikal 2003: 21).

Those pieces of historical records clearly reveal the complexity of the contact between Islam and the West. The relationship between them is rounded among tension, cooperation, conflict and competition which are difficult to be simplified.

### **Inherently Conflictual?**

Although historical records show the complexity of the relationships between Islam and the West; some scholars have

different opinions on whether those connections are inherently conflictual or possible to be compromised and arrange cooperation between them. In this section, I will present some arguments proposed by scholars who support the different views of the relationship between Islam and the West.

One scholar who shares the notion of the inherent conflict between Islam and the West is Maxime Rodinson. Despite cooperation, Rodinson (1974: 9) argues that “the Muslims were a threat to Western Christendom long before they became a problem” (1974: 9). This implies that the existence of Islam from the beginning seems to be the enemy, despite being fundamentally connected through the Abrahamic faith. Rodinson based this argument on the several expansions by Muslims from Spain to Italy which always collided against Christians (1974: 9). Moreover, the attitude of Muslims at that time was considered barbaric (Rodinson 1974: 9).

Esposito also notes a similar argument to Rodinson. He argues that “despite the theological roots and affinities of Christianity and Islam” the historical record shows that competing religious and political interests produce a history of confrontation and warfare” (Esposito 1999: 42). Furthermore, he argues that for centuries Christian Europe seems to be defensive against Muslim armies to defend their existence (Esposito

1999: 42). The similarities of the theological doctrines between Islam and Christianity “put the two on collision course” (Esposito 1999: 35). The belief that their covenant was “the fulfillment of the earlier revelation” which means marking “the end of revelation of prophecy” seems to place them in a conflictual position (Esposito 1999: 35). The claim of universal mission in which both of them represented “a transnational community based upon common belief” also contributed to this situation (Esposito 1999: 35).

Huntington in his article *The Clash of Civilizations?* noted that “conflict along the fault line between Western and Islamic civilizations has been going on for 1,300 years” (1993: 31). This notion implies that conflict between them is something inevitable and inherent. Furthermore, to support his opinion, Huntington argues that “Western ideas of individualism, liberalism, constitutionalism, human rights, equality, liberty, the rule of law, democracy, free market, the separation of Church and state, often have little resonance in Islamic [and other]... cultures” (1993: 40). Huntington even states that “Islam has bloody borders”, (1993: 35) such provocative phrase to describe that Islam is such religion that led its followers to instigate bloody conflict throughout history.

While the previous scholars seem to state that the relationship between

Islam and the West is inherently conflictual, other scholars such as Saikal argue a different opinion. For Saikal, the fact that the relationship between Islam and the West in history took different forms of contact has proven that the relationship among them is “complex and multidimensional, containing elements of conflict and cooperation, perception and misperception and cultural and social differences” (Saikal 2003: 1). In other words, the relationship among them can not be simplified as inherently conflictual only by focusing the conflicts occurred between them.

Halliday (2002: 194) even stated that “Islam versus the West” is an illusion. Furthermore, he argued that “Islam” and “West” are both unitary entities is a myth (2002: 194). This is because both terms refer to broader and more complex meanings that can not be generalized. In the period of the last five hundred years there has not been “a unified confrontation between Islamic world and the West” (Halliday 2002: 203). Halliday gave an example of the Ottoman Empire from the seventeenth century which sometimes collided with Western countries but another time allied with them (2002: 203).

Plessner (1974: 425-460) also outlines that the contact between Muslims and the West, especially during the Crusades, largely contributed to science such as astrology, alchemy, medicine

and pharmacology in the West. The discipline of Mathematics, astronomy and optics, as written by Juan Vernet, were also owned by Muslim scholars such as al-Khawarizmi who wrote algebra, Ibn al-Haytham, al-Biruni, al-Qazwini who wrote about colors (1974: 461-468). In terms of philosophy, Ibn Shina and Ibn Rushd were valued by Europeans for their contribution to that discipline (Tibi 1999: 107). On the other hand, Muslims also gave much respect to Western intellectuals such as Aristotle who was considered as *al-Mu'allim al-awwal* (the first master) overwhelming al-Farabi as *al-Mu'allim al-Thani* (the second master) (Tibi 1999: 107).

Those cooperative examples between Muslims and the West prove that the contact between them also lead to the development of science which is very helpful for the existence of human beings. The fact that there is no unified Islam and the West as proposed by Halliday and the complex relationship between them as argued by Saikal is important to note that in spite of the inherently conflictual relationship, the cooperation among them is possible.

### **Prospects for Peaceful Co-existence**

The historical records of cooperation between Islam and the West also mean that there is a chance and positive prospects to realize peaceful co-existence among them. So, despite propos-

ing a “clash between civilizations” it is important to arrange dialogue between different cultures and civilizations to build a new world order “where different civilizations can co-exist and even compete in a healthy manner without resorting to war and exercises in mutual destruction” (Ahmad 1997: 85).

To get there, Muslims and Western people need to remove the projection of antagonism among them which is rounded on Crusades, Jihad, and the Western colonial model (Ahmad 1997: 89). This is because, as outlined by Fred Halliday cited by Apostolov, “the myth” of the clash between them, often sustained by two conflicting parties: those are “who in the West and in the zone of contact who seek to turn the Muslim world into another enemy after the end of Cold War, and those in Islamic countries who advocate confrontation with the non-Muslims, notably Western, people” (Apostolov 2004: 3).

More balance, appreciation and treatment between them is also needed to show respect to each other because among Muslims there is a general feeling that Western countries often apply double standards to justify their action such as their response in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict (Ahmad 1997: 89, 91). At the same time, among Western people, Muslims often identified as extremist, fundamentalist or terrorist (Ahmad 1997: 90, 91).

The Peaceful co-existence between Islam and the West is also determined by the way they deal with cultural differences (Tibi 2002: 200). Islam is different from the West since they emerged in different times and places. These cultural differences may come from religion or local tradition. Due to this reconciling Islam and the West also means to compromise those cultural differences. This issue is discussed further in the following part of this essay.

### **Liberalism versus Religious Fundamentalism**

In order to realize peaceful co-existence between Islam and the West, it is important to discuss some concepts within both entities which are always considered as opposite and even uncompromised. Those concepts such as democracy, secularism, secular state and human rights which represent Western liberalism and Islamic (fundamentalism) concepts such as God’s sovereignty, Islamic state and *shari’a* law will be confronted in this part. After that, I will present some arguments made by some Muslim scholars who propose a compromise between those opposite concepts.

Democracy is constituted from the Greek words “demos” and “cratein” which means “rule by people” (Lane and Ersson 2003: 25). This term “rule by people” is often used to define a system

of government (Lane and Ersson 2003: 25). In this sense, democracy differs from any pattern of governance which based its legitimacy not on the people's choice (Sulaiman 1998: 96). Abraham Lincoln (1809-1865), cited by Sulaiman, define democracy as: "Rule of the people, by the people, for the people" (1998: 96). The principle of democracy is equality, anti-discrimination based on race, gender, religion etc (Sulaiman 1998: 97). In term of decision making, in a democratic system, the judgment of majority is more legitimate rather than of minority (Sulaiman 1998: 97). In democracy, people's sovereignty seems to be the basic values.

This issue of democracy within Islamic societies is complex. It is an important element in the political dynamics of the Muslim world (Esposito 1996: 16). Different responses and experiences take place in many different Muslim societies (Esposito 1996: 17). One of those responses which is very challenging comes from fundamentalist groups. For them, since democracy's legitimacy and sovereignty belong to the people, fundamentalists argue that sovereignty should be on God (Choueiri 1990: 121). For them, Democracy is a *kufur* (heresy) because it is a *hall mustawrad* (imported solution) so that should be rejected (Tibi 2002: 26). Sayyid Qutb, one of the fundamentalist thinkers, cited by Choueiri, urges Muslims to establish

their own righteous system rather than adopting democracy which comes from the *jahili* order.

To legitimize the concept of God's sovereignty, Qutb, cited by Choueiri, states that, "the universe is regulated by one single law which binds all its parts in a harmonious and orderly sequence. This systematic and congruent arrangement is the creation of one will, or the expression of one God" (1990: 121). This implies that man only receives, responds to, adapts and applies the immutable characteristics of divine rules because "God has exclusive authority in determining the moral, political, and economic aspects of all societies" (Choueiri 1990: 121). Similar to Qutb is al-Mawdudi. Al-Mawdudi, cited by Choueiri, stated that, "the principle of the unity of God altogether negates the concept of the legal and political sovereignty of human beings, individually and collectively" (1990: 123). Furthermore, he argued that "God alone is the Sovereign and His Commandments are the Law of Islam" (Choueiri 1990: 123).

Despite democracy, fundamentalist groups tend to implement *shura* (consultation) as an Islamic method of government. For Qutb, cited by Choueiri, *shura* did not simply "denote a political method devised to conduct state affairs, but a fundamental tenet of organizing the life and the community as a whole" (1990: 114). Mentioned twice in the

Qur'an, the concept of *shura* then is used by fundamentalist groups to justify the idea of the Qur'anic concept of governance system (Choueiri 1990: 113).

In terms of state formation, Fundamentalists tend to establish an Islamic state based on *shari'a* law rather than a secular nation-state. For them, a state based on secularism will just exclude God from "intervening in people's social life" (Choueiri 1990: 106). Furthermore, al-Mawdudi, cited by Choueiri, argued that since it claims that religion is a personal relationship between the individual and God, it is a foolish and absurd notion because there is no possibility of avoiding such an admission of God (1990: 126). In this sense, Mawdudi, cited by Choueiri, argued that "there is no separation between faith in God and adherence to His social, political and economic injunctions" (Choueiri 1990: 126). Moreover, secular legislation, being changeable and temporary, lacks moral sanction to make individuals comply voluntarily with its laws (Choueiri 1990: 106).

Fundamentalist thinkers challenge the nation-state by offering an Islamic state based on *shari'a* law (Tibi 2002: 38). The claim that for thousand years Islamic society was governed by the *shari'a* seems to be the justification for fundamentalist groups to implement it (Choueiri 1990: 106). The basic argument for establishing an Islamic state is

their belief in the unity of religion and state (*din wa dawla*) (Tibi 2002: 159). In other words, Mahmud 'Abdulmawla, cited by Tibi, explained that fundamentalist groups believe that "Islam is a political system inasmuch as it is a religious one" (2002: 159). At this point, *shari'a* is defined as "a comprehensive set of norms and values regulating human life down to the smallest detail" (Taji-Farouki 1996: 37). So, the Islamic state must not only achieve the supreme values of the *shari'a* and adhere to relevant general Islamic principles, it must also adhere in its system and institutions to form precisely defined by the *shari'a* itself (Taji-Farouki 1996: 37).

Another issue related to this is human rights. Liberalism views that each individual is important, has equal value and is free to do anything based on their interests (Langlois 2007: 345). For liberalism, individual freedom is the supreme value that is "an essential requirement for leading a truly human existence" (Heywood 2007: 29). In this view, the core of humanity is the self, omitting the fact that this individual is different based on the religion, culture, or political orientation (Langlois 2007: 345) This conception of individuality seems to be the justification for some theorists to argue about the universality of human rights (Langlois 2007: 345).

In Islam, the problem of human rights seems still to be a serious discus-

sion among scholars. Some issues related to religious minorities, women, and apostasy will be discussed here. Religious minorities within Muslim society have certain rights such as freedom of worship but they have to pay a poll tax (*jizya*) (Dalacoura 2007: 46). While women, although they have a right to inheritance, are viewed to be the object of physical violence from their husbands and could be polygamous if their husbands should desire (Dalacoura 2007: 46). In addition, apostasy seems to be a serious problem within Muslim societies since a person who commits it can be punished by death (Dalacoura 2007: 47).

The different concepts between liberalism and Islamic fundamentalism seem to be difficult to resolve. This contrasting concept between God and sovereign people makes it hard for fundamentalist groups to adopt a democratic system since they believe that *shura* could be the alternative to democracy. Together with these ideas is the implementation of an Islamic state based on *shari'a* law rather than a secular state based on secular norms. Another issue related to human rights seems to be crucial to portray the relationship between Islam and the West. The challenge is how to handle this problem and compromise those different ideas.

I argue that one of the keys to resolving the problem is re-contextualizing

Islamic tenets in dealing with today's global challenges. Islam is not a religion of the past, instead it embraces the future and its teachings are always open for reinterpretation. In this point, it should be highlighted that such concepts which are proposed by fundamentalist groups are their interpretations of some Islamic doctrines which do not necessarily represent Muslims' understanding as a whole. So, providing different Islamic understandings of Islamic doctrine on those issues above is very important to show that there is a way to compromise liberalism ideas and Islamic doctrines.

Related to the problem around God's sovereignty and people's sovereignty, Tibi strongly argues that the concept of God's sovereignty does not occur in the Qur'an as well as the *hadith* (the prophet tradition) (2002: 188). Due to this, he states that the concept of God's sovereignty is a human not divine doctrine which is invented by "a correspondingly arbitrary reading of the present politicization of Islam into past Islamic history" (Tibi 2002: 188). In other words, because it is a human concept, there is no longer a difference between people's sovereignty and God's sovereignty because both of them are created by humans.

Regarding the concept of *shura* which is proposed by fundamentalist groups, Muhammad Khalaf-Allah has a different

interpretation of it. According to him, *shura* is not a static system but dynamic in which Muslims should reinterpret this system as a response to different situations (Khalaf-Allah 1998: 41). The Prophet Muhammad, peace be upon him, during his life used the system in a particular situation (Khalaf-Allah 1998: 41). Moreover, the *shura* system which was established by the Prophet during that time was temporary, according to the needs of the time (Khalaf-Allah 1998: 41). Furthermore, he argues that the Prophet tended to leave this legislation system to the umma based on their scientific and cultural achievement (Khalaf-Allah 1998: 41).

Although the *shura* system is not well established, Sadek J. Sulaiman found that in terms of principle, *shura* does not differ from democracy (Sulaiman 1998: 98). He argues that “both *shura* and democracy arise from the central consideration that collective deliberation is more likely to lead to a fair and sound result for the social good than individual preference” (1998: 98). It implies that majority judgment tends to be more considerable than minority judgment. Furthermore, he argues that *shura*, as stated in the Qur’an, refers to “a principle of governing the public life of the society rather than specifically ordained system of governance” (1998: 98). This interpretation of *shura* will be useful for Muslims to justify the imple-

mentation of democracy because it is not something new within Islamic tradition and is not only owned by the Western people.

Related to the Islamic state and *shari’a* law, some Muslim scholars reject the interpretation of Fundamentalism. Ibnu Khaldun society, cited by Kurzman, argues that “since the Qur’an emphasizes a just society rather than an ideological state, the form of the state takes is not mandated” (1998: 19). This means that the form of the state within Islamic society is devoted to Muslims people because there is no obligation in the Qur’an to establish a certain state model. Related to the *shari’a* issue, al-‘Ashmawi strongly argues that *shari’a* is not a ready-made system of law (which is) waiting to be put into practice (1998: 50). The Qur’an states *shari’a* merely refers to a path. In other words, the term *shari’a* which appears in the Qur’an signifies “not judicial form but the route or the way” (al-‘Ashmawi 1998: 50). Again, this interpretation makes it possible for Muslims to create or implement the rule of law made by a human being to control their life.

Regarding some issues that are considered against the principle of human rights, some scholars argue that some doctrines in Islam should be reinterpreted. In terms of *jizya* (poll tax), through the Islamic tradition, it was imposed on *dhimmi* (the protected people)

because “they took no share in guarding the state” (Kabir 1998: 148). They were not obligated to defend the state but were allowed to “enjoy the security guaranteed by State” (Kabir 1998: 148). However, this situation changed as occurred in different places. Kabir pointed out that this tax system was no longer used in India when Muslims ruled India. Both Hindus and Muslims were subject to pay tax (1998: 149).

In terms of women, Zein-ed-Din argues that the Qur’anic verses that refer to women should be viewed at the time those verses are revealed which seems to discriminate against women. Some practices of violence against women as well as polygamous are actually inherited from pre-Islamic Arabia traditions which are not the Islamic vision of women because she believes that “God revealed His holy message all filled with the spirit of freedom, justice, and equality among people” (Zein-ed-Din 1998: 104). Similar to Zein-ed-Din, Wadud (1998: 128) argues that those Qur’anic verses related to women should be reinterpreted by addressing women’s experience through history to reach an interpretation which more sensitive to gender issues since she found that most people who read those verses excluded women’s experience.

In terms of apostasy, Talbi found that the punishment of death for a person who has committed that act should be

reinterpreted. He argues the *hadith* used by the theologians to justify the death penalty for the apostate just suits the situation of Muslims’ self-defense, when “Muslims are attacked and their faith seriously jeopardized” (1998: 165, 167). Furthermore, he argues that the *hadith* is not *mutawatir* (strong and qualified) to the legitimate death penalty. While in the Qur’an, he states that there is no mention of certain penalties, including death, for apostasy (1998: 167). This allows Muslim scholars to exercise *ijtihad* to reformulate some Islamic interpretation that suits any situation, time and place (*shalih li kulli zaman wa makan*).

This kind of new interpretation would serve as the foundation for promoting peaceful coexistence. Due to this, the efforts shall not stay there but need to be followed up by spreading these ideas to the general public so that this will not only be the concern of the elites but also that of the people. This is because whether Islam is compatible with Western values such as democracy and human rights does not solely lie in the text interpretation, but in how people are involved in realizing this idea into actions. In other words, the question of promoting a peaceful coexistence between Islam and the West is not merely “a philosophical speculation”, but, to borrow Bayat’s word, “a political struggle” in the sense that it needs to be translated into real actions across spheres.

Bayat (2007) argues that bringing the idea into a movement is the key to how a certain interpretation of a text will affect the way society lives socially, politically and economically. This can be seen from the phenomenon of Islamist and post-Islamist movements in the Muslim majority countries across Asia and Africa. With this in mind, the future of the relationship between Islam and the West will rest in the leaders, activists, and community of the Muslim and Western world: which interpretation of text and historical records as well as which actions they would take. With progressive interpretation and democratic actions, the relationship would likely be that of a more peaceful one. On the other hand, with such fundamentalist views and extremist actions, the relationship will only lead to conflict and violence.

## **Conclusion**

The relationship between Islam and the West seems to be difficult to simplify and predict whether the relationship in the future will be cooperative or conflictual. The contact between them could be like a barrier and a bridge. A barrier will separate both Muslims and Western people in different places that may lead to violent collisions between them due to lack of information in terms of politics, culture or economics. While a bridge may connect people to share and

learn each other that will make the civilization more flourish. The historical records of contact between them could be a mirror for them to decide what kind of relationship they will build among them.

At the same time, both Muslims and Western People also face internal challenges which are the existence of radical fundamentalist and conservative groups within them. In Muslim societies, there are such people and groups like Osama bin Laden and al-Qaida who committed the September 11 attacks that killed many people, both Muslims and non-Muslims. On the other hand, the actions of hardcore realists in the US administration also lead to disaster for the Muslim world. Afghanistan and Iraq are examples of the result of the US hardcore realists' actions which led to mass killings and destroyed many public buildings in both countries.

Both Osama and his al-Qaida and the US hardcore realists such as the ones under the Bush administration may not represent Islam and the West as a whole. It would be better to say that some particular groups within Islam and the West are involved in a violent collision to point the friction between them. However, the existence of those groups by and large will affect the prospect of co-existence among them. So, both Muslims and Western people need to pay more attention to this group to realize peaceful co-existence between them.

## References

- Ahmad, K 1997, 'Islam and the West: Confrontation and Cooperation', In *Global Perspectives: International Relations, U.S Foreign Policy, and the View from Abroad*, ed. David Lai, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc, Colorado.
- Al-Ashmawi, MS 1998, 'Shari'a: The Codification of Islamic Law', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Apostolov, M 2004, *The Christian-Muslim Frontier: A Zone of Contact, Conflict or Cooperation*, RoutledgeCurzon, New York.
- Armstrong, K 2000, *Islam: A Short History*, Modern Library, New York.
- Bayat, Asef. 2007, 'Islam and Democracy: What is the Real Question?'. *ISIM Paper 8*, Amsterdam University Press, Amstedam.
- Bulac, A 1998, 'The Medina Document', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Choueiri, YM 1990, *Islamic Fundamentalism*, Twayne Publishers, Boston.
- Cox, C & John M 2003, *The West, Islam and Islamism: Is Ideological Islam Compatible with Democracy?*, Civitas, Institute for the Study of Civil Society, London.
- Dalacoura, K 2007, *Islam, Liberalism and Human Rights: Implications for International Relations*, 3rd Ed., I.B. Tauris, London.
- Esposito, JL 1999, *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, 3rd Ed., Oxford University Press, New York.
- Esposito, JL & John OV 1996, *Islam and Democracy*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Gabriel, T 2004, 'Is Islam against the West?', In *Islam and the West Post 9/11*, eds. Ron Geaves et al., Ashgate, Burlington VT.
- Halliday, F 2002, *Two Hours that Shook the World; September 11, 2001: Causes and Consequences*, Saqi Books, London.
- Heywood, A 2007, *Political Ideologies: An Introduction*, 4th Ed., Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Huntington, SP 1993, 'The Clash of Civilizations?'. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 72 No. 3, pp. 22-49.

- Kabir, H 1998, 'Minorities in a Democracy', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Khalaf-Allah, M 1998 'Legislative Authority'. In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Kurzman, C ed. 1998, *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Lane, JE & Svante E 2003, *Democracy: A Comparative Approach*, Routledge, New York.
- Langlois, AJ 2007, 'Human Rights', In *An Introduction to International Relations: Australian Perspectives*, eds. Richard Devetak, Anthony Burke and Jim George, Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Lewis, B 1994, *Islam and the West*, Oxford University Press, Oxford.
- Nazir-Ali, M 2006, *Conviction and Conflict: Islam, Christianity and World Order*, Continuum, New York.
- Plessner, M 1974, 'The Natural Science and Medicine', In *The Legacy of Islam*, eds. Joseph Schacht and C. E Bosworth, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Rodinson, M 1974, 'The Western Image and Western Studies of Islam'. In *The Legacy of Islam*, eds. Joseph Schacht and C. E Bosworth, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Safi, O 2008, 'Teaching Islam through and after September 11: towards a progressive Muslim Agenda', In *Religion, Terror and Violence*, eds. Bryan Rennie and Philip L. Tite, Routledge, New York.
- Saikal, A 2003, *Islam and the West: Conflict or Cooperation?*, Palgrave Macmillan, New York.
- Sulayman, SJ 1998, 'Democracy and Shura', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Taji-Farouki, S 1996, 'Islamic States Theories and Contemporary Realities', In *Islamic Fundamentalism*, eds. Abdel Salam Sidahmed and Anoushiravan Ehteshami, Westview Press, Colorado.

- Talbi, M 1998, 'Religious Liberty', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Tibi, B 1999, 'International Morality and Cross-Cultural Bridging', In *Preventing the Clash of Civilizations: A Peace Strategy for the Twenty-First Century*, Roman Herzog, St. Martin's Press, New York.
- Tibi, B 2002, *The Challenge of Fundamentalism: Political Islam and the New World Disorder*, University of Carolina Press, Barkeley.
- Vernet, J 1974, 'Mathematics, Astronomy, Optics', In *The Legacy of Islam*, eds. Joseph Schacht and C. E Bosworth, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Wadud-Muhsin, A 1998, 'Qur'an and Woman', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.
- Zein-ed-Din, N 1998, 'Unveiling and Veiling', In *Liberal Islam: A Source Book*, ed. Charles Kurzman, Oxford University Press, New York.