

## Freedom and Rights of Minorities: A Critical Discourse Analysis of Jihadist Ideological Misinterpretations in Indonesia

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### ABSTRAK

Sudah sejak lama Dunia Barat memandang Islam sebagai ajaran yang berbahaya, tidak toleran, dan penuh kejahatan, dan lebih konserfatif dibandingkan agama yang lain. Hal ini didorong oleh fakta bahwa Muslim di seluruh dunia berpegang teguh pada Al-Qur'an yang turun beberapa abad yang lalu. Perbedaan keadaan antara waktu pada saat Al-Qur'an turun dengan saat ini memunculkan beberapa golongan yang mencoba mengembalikan keadaan seperti dulu menggunakan interpretasi mereka sendiri atas ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an. Interpretasi yang salah atas ayat Al-Qur'an akan sangat berbahaya, seperti kemunculan kelompok ekstrimis yang menggunakan kekerasan untuk mencapai tujuan mereka, seperti yang dilakukan oleh ISIS/IS. Walaupun organisasi ISIS telah runtuh, namun ideologi yang mereka pegang belum sepenuhnya hilang, seperti tetap adanya tujuan untuk mendirikan "kalifah" oleh beberapa kelompok jihadis di seluruh dunia. Tidak hanya itu, narasi mengenai *Ghazwatul Hind*, perang terakhir umat Islam yang diperkirakan terjadi di India, dan dalam beberapa kasus, penerjemahan area jangkauan perang ini lebih luas dan mencakup beberapa negara, seperti Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, dan Indonesia. Menurut narasi ini, Muslim yang melakukan jihad di beberapa area tersebut, akan diberikan ganjaran yang setara dengan melawan *dajjal*. Umat Muslim di seluruh dunia terutama Indonesia, harus merekonstruksi pemahaman mereka atas dua ideologi tersebut, dan lebih memfokuskan diri pada beberapa hal yang lebih krusial, seperti pertumbuhan ekonomi, pendidikan, dan stabilitas politik.

**Kata Kunci:** Ideologi Jihadist, Interpretasi Al-Qur'an, Kalifah, Kelompok ekstrimis.

### ABSTRACT

*For decades, the Westerns view of Islam in general, sees it as purely extremist, intolerant, and violent doctrine and fanatics than the other religions. It can be understood that Islam believers rely on the interpretations of governing documents (Al Qur'an) that came back many centuries ago. The differences of society from the time that*

*Qur'an first writing to nowadays, arises more conservative groups that tries to interpret Qur'an in their own way. The wrong interpret of Qur'an can be dangerous, namely to promote murder, bombing and terror in the name of Islam by some extremist group. The terror of this extremist group based on their interpretation of the Qur'an and. Even there were some claim that ISIS/IS have been defeated, the narrative to resurrecting the "Islamic caliphate" continuous amongst its believers and similar like-minded violent jihadists. This primarily based totally on the declare that it is a necessary part of the Islamic religion associated with tawhid and the Ghazwatul Hind, the last apocalyptic war. Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) has redefined the scope of Ghazwatul Hind places will include Myanmar, Malaysia, Thailand, Bangladesh, and Indonesia. Based on this narrative, the rewards of doing jihad in those areas are equivalent to foghting against Dajjal. Muslims, specially to te extremist groups in Indonesia, should re-arrange their understanding on more crucial Islamic value such as economy growth, education, and political stability.*

**Keywords:** *jihadist ideological, qur'an interpretation, caliphate, extremist group.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

The number of politically or religiously motivated terrorist movement and attack is increasing, at least during the past two decades (Bondu, Tampe, & Menke, 2019; Koehler, 2016; Gambetta & Hertog, 2016; Gill, J, & Deckert, 2014; Bondu & Schelthauer, 2015). The attack not only took place on one place, but it spread on numerous places, such as Asian and African countries, U.S, and some of European countries (Ellis, et al., 2016). The number of jihadist terrorist attack can be increased in those countries because the Islamic State (IS) regime in Iraq and Syria

have been falling, and bring the militant jihadist fighters and their families back to their home countries (Hassan, 2017; Koehler, 2019). The governments, including Indonesian, concerns about potential deterioration and future thread of religiously motivated jihadist attack. Therefore, empirically based research and reliable measures are needed to prevent future jihadist attack.

Jihadism is a conceptual distinct doctrine and can be understood as a source of contention that seen as a spiritual struggle, or a defensive religious war (Boussamoui,

2007). The main framed idea of this terrorist movement based on the caliphate ideology related to tawhidic (doctrine of God's unity) discourse, and the Ghazwatul Hind narrative (final apocalyptic war). This doctrine is main idea and sacrosanct part of the Islamic faith, and can be the *lingua franca* among various jihadist group (Mahfuh & Shah, 2020). To achieve this, jihadist take an extreme level of violence to attack their "enemies" (Celso, 2014). With their radical ideology, the "fighters" can sacrifice and commit suicide to recreate an utopian community, although they can slaughter the innocent. The use of high level of violence by Islamic extremist can be seen as virulent action against minorities religion, and in some extent, can trigger civil war that could spread across country (Rappaport, 2012).

Recent research on jihad movement focused on the cycles and waves of this religion movement (Celso, 2014; Gibbs, 2012; Pape, 2012; Hoffman, 2006): The jihadist movement has a specific technique of creation, destruction, and recreation. This cycle can be

everlasting due to the fact the fanaticism diverges from beyond extremist violence—it rests upon the radical communities, hope they can be a catalyst for one caliphate. Over time, jihadist can also convert into a political doctrine, to are seeking violent agitation towards Muslim apostates and overseas infidels. Usually, jihadist waves of violence are prompted via way of means of a few elements of the catalytic event, provocative actions, or profound political transformation. The wave of non-stop jihadist struggle has 4 phases: mobilization, extremism, implosion, and rebirth. The wave can only be end because the arise of numerous of forces, such as political concessions, generational change, and the resistance from the state.

This article attempts to filling the gap of the previous studies that have less attention and focus on the root causal of this terrorism acts. To achieve this, we need to understand the main idea used by the jihadist movement. Therefore, this article have two main questions. First, what kind of misinterpretation that make this jihadist movement often do something that harm others people,

specially the minorities? The scope of this question is limited with two framed idea that usually being used by the terrorist movement. Second, if there are no more misinterpretations, what kind of change that can be achieved by people in Indonesia?

The aim of this article is to analyse the interpretations of jihad from the “fighters” in the militant movement in Indonesia. A critical analysis of discourse can help us to understand why those movement can sacrifice their life, which seems irrational to other people, including other Muslims. This article focuses on the two main framed idea in jihadist movement, namely caliphate and Ghazwatul Hind. A misinterpretation can be dangerous, so it is crucial to take robust understanding in every aspect of Islamic doctrines and practices. The goal of jihadist movement should be done with peaceful means, with a strong relations among peoples, and it is important to observance the human right, including the religious freedom. Bigger and better social, economic, and political change will be achieved if there are no violence or even slaughter in a country.

Therefore, Muslim have to increase their level of literacy to minimise the chance of manipulation and misinterpretation by the extremists.

## **1. Method**

This paper use descriptive and analytic studies, case studies, and literature evaluation methods. To get probably applicable booklet for this paper, a double degree changed into used for this evaluate. Firstly, collecting database from Sage Journal, Science Direct, J-Store, Google Scholar, using the keyword: “jihadist interpretation”, “terrorism”, “extremist movement”, and “jihadist fighters”, leading to 67 list of articles. According to IMRAD procedure, an overview on relevant studies being used to get the analytic data for this research.

Observation was made to see how the interpretations of the holy document were made from major militant movement. The data used are not only objective, but also subjective. For the most part, this article aims to fill the gap of the research based on misinterpretation of Islamic religion. One of the major

document analyzed in this research is “Roots of Sadistic Terrorism Crimes: Is it Islam or Arab Culture?” (Jilani, 2018).

## RESULT

The literature review brought about finally finding that a main of jihadist assault based on the misinterpretation of a number of the sentence in holy Quran, ensuing radicalization approaches and/or arrangements of the attack. According to Jilani (2018), The sadistic terrorist conduct and excuses depend upon their ethical reasoning that derives from their expertise in certain legal texts. Terrorists, in particular, belong to Sunni, consider that their sadistic act is a shape of reciprocity. They often use verse in Quran that states: “*So whoever has assaulted you, then assault him in the same way that he has assaulted you*” (Saheeh International, 2021, p. 2:194); “*And if you punish (an enemy, O believers), punish with an equivalent of that with which you were harmed*” (Saheeh International, 2021, p. 16:126). Indeed, the terrorist act has no relation with the genuine and mild teaching of Islam. This may be refuted in ways:

### 1.1 The Tawhidic Concept: Sayyid Qutb

*Sayyid Qutb* became a fundamental espousal of the tawhid, stated that the principle of governance in Islam entirely based on tawhid—another idea that could be rejected and understood as *shirk* and *kufr* (Khatab, 2019). Anyone who rejects *Shariah* will become an unbeliever (non-Muslim), and authorities applying legal guidelines of guilty. This additionally may be applied to those who support, vote, and related for, or taking advantage of such action. With this condition, *tawhid al hakimiyyah* (only God has the proper to legislate), as Islam is conceived as each a faith and a state (Khatab, 2002). Understood as such, *Qutb* view the political sector of the world as an asides coin, wherein they may be Islamic or jahiliyyah (lack of knowledge and unbelief) wherein divine sovereignty not belongs to Allah, and it will become questionable (Ghazi, 2018).

Depart from this understanding, a lot of jihadist movements, particularly ISIS/IS, claim the term of Caliphate, with the robust idea of *imamah* (leadership),

part of *millah* (path) from Prophet Ibrahim. The main idea of Caliphate is to make the believers to disassociate from the *kuffar* (disbelievers) and *mushrikin* (polytheists) (Al-Maqdisi, 2014). There are two sectors of leadership in *imamah*; political and religious. Almost all jihadist movement argued that religious leadership can only be achieved when the political leadership already taken, so they can have power on the land and people. With this political power, *ummah* will unite with one *imam* (political leader), to fight and guarding the landmark, so the Shariah (law) can be ruled, and ensuring Muslim can live under the *tawhid*.

### 1.2 The Ghazwatul Hind Narrative

Ghazwatul Hind can be understood as final apocalyptic war, and would be happen in India. According to this narrative, Muslim often being persuaded to travel into certain places in South Asian, with a hope to achieve the merits associated with it. To do so, most of jihadist movement use the social media platform, And the narrative was translated into numerous languages, namely Indonesian, Hindi, Tamil, and Urdu.

Some “fighters” use this narrative to strengthen their belief to mobilise them in the terror wars in many places, such as Syria, Iraq, and Afganistan.

Nowadays, Ghizwatul Hind narrative application increasing at least within the past two decades, specially to the South Asian jihadist movement networks in Kashmir. The Indian government strengthen their security within their territory, which fit within this Ghazwatul Hind narrative. The output, Muslim in Kashmir is being oppressed by non-Muslim forces, and can be harmed the peace situation in Kashmir. More radically, Jemaah Islam Indonesia (JII) seeing Ghazwatul Hind as a closer and broader understanding. JI redefining the terms of “Al-Hind” in geographically much closer—it include Southeast Asia—and include Hindus and Buddhists as well. The JI narrative not yet to be accepted by whole jihadist movement in Indonesia, but it still have a possibility to be common jihadi discourse if Muslim in Myanmar and Thailand still being oppressed and became the target of large-scale of religious opperession. If this

narration happens, the war not only harm the conflicting parties, but also can take collateral damage, such as civilians that do not have relation with it.

## DISCUSSION

### 1.3 Debunking Jihadist

#### *Misinterpretations*

The first jihadist movement that aim to achieve caliphate worldwide was ISIS/IS, around 2014. But the demise of this jihadist movement decreasing the prospect to reviving the caliphate of the Muslim world. In fact, ISIS/IS does not have the support from any level of Muslim worldwide, such as scholar, clerics, and vast majority Muslim worldwide. The lack of support, and the extreme agenda such as perpetual war and conflict including terrorism, seem to diminished the hope. However, the efforts to restoring this ideology still have a possibility, if it presented as a *tawhidic* perception. When this ideology entwined with the essence of trust withinside the oneness of God; Allah, is not only can mitigate the contemporary IS weakness, however, can also make sure its political agenda to be indwell.

One that we have to highlight,

Caliphate ideology is not an essential part of the Islamic faith. This argument is well-supported on different spiritual ground, and clerics, such as:

- a. The Qur'an and Sunnah, most crucial sources of theology and regulation in Islam. There is no single declaration that designates the established order of caliphate as a component of *rukun al-Islam* (five indispensable pillars of Islam), or *rukun al-Iman* (six indispensable pillars of faith) (Ali, 2009). Based on *maqasid ash-shariah* (objective of Islamic law), The system of law or Sharia in Islam will constantly be one, and it is use consensus and ensure equality and justice. The "government" itself is immaterial, and the important thing is to achieve is the fulfilment of these objectives.
- b. Al-Ash'ari, one of the Sunni scholars stressed that the 4 Imams who proceeded Prophet Muhammad, was not meant to resolve the undisputed, however only

guidance for future establishments and political system for Muslims worldwide (Ann, 1981).

- c. Qur'an and Sunnah are texts who have meanings that debatable and subject to interpretations, because the changing situation and circumstances. The concept of caliphate is also debatable, with some differences opinions, interpretations, and argument, related to the possibility to have more than one caliph, who hold the office of caliphate, and its function (Nasr, 1987). But this debatable terms still don't have relation with Islamic faith, and just have function to deriving Islamic ordinances and regulations.
- d. One of principles of the Charter of Medina, guaranteed religious freedom for all Muslim. In 2016, over 120 countries sending their delegates to gather for a convention in Marrakesh, Morocco in 2016. This conference Produce the safety

of the rights of minorities, especially in predominantly Muslim countries, and assist initiatives to strengthen relations amongst Muslims withinside the world. One of crucial principles in this charter is the existence of different political system, and reject the radical oppression on non-Muslim minorities.

- e. The Ghazwatul Hind concept which based on the Hadiths, never stated clearly about its time and places, so this concept is not definitive meaning. Muslim who believe on *rukn al-Islam* and *rukn al-Iman* should refrain from the prophecy, because it can harm their Islamic faith. Ghazwatul Hind only happen after al-Mahdi coming, and Muslim should focus on their priority, such as working, and helping the minorities. Muslims whom untrust with this prophecy should re-directing the efforts of the extremist/ radical movement away from the *Ghazwatul Hind* prophecy.



According to those fact, is clear enough that the emergence of caliphate doesn't have relations with Islamic faith. Islam is a religion of *rahmatan lil alamin*, so every aspect to achieve goal in life have to be done with peaceful means. Caliphate just an "immaterial" terms, and Muslim have to prioritize their prior duty.

## CONCLUSION

Muslim worldwide have to continue dismantling the ideology of terrorism/extremist/jihadist that use high level of violence through strong misinterpretations and discourse of Islamic faith and practices. The undeniable part of the Islamic faith needs to be debunked and promote on the spiritual grounds of this present day. Modern general norms, nation-states, and global laws emphasizing non-violent relations amongst countries, which include religious freedom. Moderate Muslims have to step their stage of literacy to prevent misinterpretations from radical thought and limit their probabilities of falling to

manipulation by the jihadist movement.

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