

Socializing Religious Moderation and Peace in the Indonesian Landscape

Paelani Setia

Ibnu Sina Research Institute
paelani@isrindo.com

Mohammad Taufiq Rahman

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung
fikrakoe@uinsgd.ac.id

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Abstract:

This paper discusses the idea of religious moderation addressed for peace in Indonesia. This paper is a library research through reference sources on the concepts of religious moderation and peace circulating in Indonesia's new tradition of literacy. This paper concludes that the Indonesian people who have religious diversity need visions and solutions that can build harmony and peace in religious life, especially by using religious moderation to accept different views, and without falling into intolerance, radicalism, and extremism. The goal of religious moderation is to find a middle ground between the two extremes of religion, and to do so peacefully. On the one hand, there are religious fundamentalists who insist that only one religious scripture reading is correct and view all those who disagree as heretics or even infidels. This ultra-conservative group is still reasonably influential, especially in urban areas.

Keywords: *religious moderation; religion and peace; multiculturalism; moderate Islam; cultural dialogue*

Abstrak:

Tulisan ini membahas tentang gagasan moderasi beragama yang dialamatkan untuk perdamaian di Indonesia. Tulisan ini merupakan kajian kepustakaan (library research) melalui sumber-sumber referensi tentang konsep moderasi beragama dan perdamaian yang beredar dalam tradisi baru literasi di Indonesia. Tulisan ini menyimpulkan bahwa masyarakat Indonesia yang memiliki keragaman agama membutuhkan visi dan solusi yang dapat membangun kerukunan dan kedamaian dalam kehidupan beragama, terutama menggunakan moderasi beragama untuk menerima perbedaan pandangan, dan tanpa terjerumus ke dalam intoleransi, radikalisme, dan ekstremisme. Tujuan dari moderasi agama adalah untuk menemukan jalan tengah antara dua ekstrem agama, dan untuk melakukannya secara damai. Di satu sisi, ada fundamentalis agama yang bersikeras bahwa hanya satu pembacaan kitab suci agama yang benar, dan yang memandang semua orang yang tidak setuju sebagai bid'ah atau bahkan kafir. Kelompok ultra-konservatif ini masih menjadi kelompok yang cukup berpengaruh, terutama di wilayah perkotaan.

Kata Kunci: *moderasi agama; agama dan perdamaian; multikulturalisme; Islam moderat; dialog kultural*

INTRODUCTION

Various races, languages, religions, cultures, and socioeconomic positions make up Indonesian society under the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia. It is possible to view diversity as an "integrating force" that holds society together. Still, it can also be a source of conflict between people of different races, nationalities, beliefs, and

values. In multicultural studies, the interaction of people and groups with different cultural behaviors is a natural occurrence that produces cultural diversity (multiculturalism). Indonesia's population consists of various ethnic, cultural, and religious differences (Rahman, 2021). Mulyana (Mulyana, 2005) said that in horizontal communication between groups, there are still disputes between tribes, ranging from prejudice and bias between tribes, and discrimination, to open fights and conflicts between tribes that claim lives. Tribes compete with each other in society, as well as with politicians and intellectuals, for jobs in different government departments.

Every member of a multicultural society must have the necessary social skills to relate effectively to other human beings because the level of human contact in a multicultural society is so high. According to Curtis (Curtis, 1988), these abilities cover three areas: affiliation, cooperation and conflict resolution, kindness, care, and affection/emphatic skills (friendliness, attention, and affection). In Indonesia, differences in ethnicity, race, religion, language, and life values can lead to various conflicts. Inter-group violence occasionally erupts in different parts of Indonesia, showing how fragile the sense of national unity is, how deep the biases between communities are, and how few ways there are to understand each other. Confrontations in Indonesia often lead to humanitarian disasters, both in scope and the number of parties involved. Thus, conflict resolution takes a long time and incurs enormous social, economic, and political losses. Given these problems, Indonesia may face a severe emergency scenario. Various areas of society have been affected by conflict and violence. Many cases of violence are triggered by issues that are mishandled. Violence is the result of unresolved disputes. Having been mismanaged or ignored, disagreements have escalated to an identifiable level of violence (Sutanto, 2007).

In the concept of violence, conflict is equated with destruction or destruction. For most people, war is defined as a struggle between good and evil instead of a contest in which one side wins or loses. If conflict is viewed negatively and handled competitively, it can be a vital source of violence. To promote peace in society, dissent must be taken more seriously. Controlling conflict behavior in the social environment can be done in a firm or educational way. When it comes to solving student problems, there are three basic educational techniques, namely: (1) peace education integrated into the school curriculum, (2) constructive conflict resolution exercises, and (3) peer mediation and negotiation (Gerstein & Moeschberger, 2003). As a result of using conflict resolution models, children are better able to resolve disputes constructively, become more prosocial, and avoid becoming victims of violence (Laursen et al., 2001).

Academics, such as lecturers and students, must have a deep understanding of intercultural knowledge and awareness in order to be able to handle disparities in community groups, no matter how small. A better understanding of cultural diversity, as well as an understanding of the types of prejudice, stereotypes and racism that occur in people's daily lives, is needed for academics. Academics at the university are expected to become agents of change and specialists in solving problems and consulting with other groups to promote a more harmonious environment. Understanding multiculturalism is essential for extension workers to be more successful while providing public services to various communities. Thus, in a multicultural society such as Indonesia, and to deal with opportunities for conflict, concepts and ideas are needed that are able to anticipate them. For that purpose, the idea of religious moderation becomes urgent in overcoming and anticipating conflicts in Indonesia

DISCUSSION

Religious Moderation

Categorizing Islam in Indonesia is complicated and political (Farida, 2015). Bruce B. Lawrence (1998), revealed that:

"Islam has many things. Just as there is no single American, European or Western, so there is no single correct explanation that describes different groups and people with the same values and meanings. Nor is there a single location or uniform culture that is synonymous with Islam."

There is a common debate over the definition of religious moderation among scientists. Graham E. Fuller (Fuller, 2005) assesses the meaning of religious moderation depending on who is used and the agenda of the people (groups and even governments) who use it. Ariel Cohen (Cohen, 2005) mentions that religious moderation occurs when a moderate Muslim engages in dialogue or compromises with people who have different interpretations of the Koran and other non-Muslims. Cohen exemplifies moderate Sunni groups who will not support terrorism against Shia, Sufi, Christian, Jewish, or Hindu groups.

In contrast to Cohen, John L. Esposito (Esposito, 2005) argues that religious moderation is implemented by those who live and work in the broader community, moving to make changes from the ground up by rejecting

extremism and terrorism that lead to violence. On the other hand, for Mohammad Hashim Kamali (2015), religious moderation is carried out when a Muslim has the principles of balance and justice in the concept of moderation (*wasatiyah*). This means that in religion, one should not be extreme in his views but must always seek common ground. Kamali also emphasized that *wasatiyah* is an essential aspect of Islam that is often forgotten by its people, even though *wasatiyah* is the essence of Islamic teachings.

The Ministry of Religion of the Republic of Indonesia (2019), answered the debate and concluded that the purpose of religious moderation is that it is hoped that various Indonesian Islamic groups will accept it. Religious moderation (*wasatiyah*) is defined as a perspective, attitude, and behavior that always takes a position in the middle, always acts pretty, and is not extreme in religion through fair and balanced principles. Fair is the position of someone who is not one-sided but instead sided with the truth and balanced, namely the perspective, attitude, and commitment to always side with justice, humanity, and equality. So, religious moderation requires religious people not to confine themselves, not be exclusive (closed), but inclusive (open), merge, adapt, get along with various communities, and always learn in addition to teaching lessons.

Based on the discussion above, it can be concluded that religious moderation is a perspective and religious attitude that is in the middle, not too right (radical) and not too left (liberal) which is based on justice and balance both textually and contextually and reflects on the principle of nationality (the four pillars) of Indonesia.

Furthermore, the Ministry of Religious Affairs (2019), added that in understanding the phenomenon of religious moderation, four indicators can be used, namely: 1) national commitment; 2) tolerance; 3) non-violence; and 4) accommodating to local culture. First, national commitment is significant in seeing the extent to which a person's religious attitudes, views, and practices and their implications for loyalty to the national basis, especially adherence to Pancasila and the state ideology. Second, tolerance is an attitude of giving space and not disturbing or eliminating the rights of others in expressing their beliefs or opinions in public. Tolerance refers to an open, generous, and gentle attitude in accepting differences. Third, anti-violence is the antiithesis of the existence of violence that radicalism groups often carry out.

The group in question is those who use violent means to bring about changes in the political system and according to their understanding. The attitude of non-violence also needs to be underlined in the fight against not taking up arms (physically) and verbal and mental violence. Fourth, local cultural accommodation is accepting the nation's local culture and traditions in religious life, such as receiving the practices of cultural accommodation with religious life as long as it does not conflict with certain religious teachings.

Religion and Peace

"Harmony in Diversity" is a religious ideal that must be approached with an optimistic mindset if it is to become a reality. Many obstacles still stand in the way of achieving inter-religious peace in Indonesia in particular. According to the CRCS Annual Report on Religious Life, two problems hinder religious harmony and freedom: the problem of places of worship and heresy. There were 39 issues of inter-religious harmony, including the issue of places of worship, of which 32 incidents had an impact on inter-religious interactions (CRCS UGM, 2017).

Violence can occur because of differences of opinion about religious ideas, and the law can be taken into their own hands to defend the truth or belief from one group to another, which has recently emerged in Indonesia as a cause of ideological strife. People's mindsets, attitudes, and behavior patterns are strongly influenced by religion, which greatly influences society. In people's minds affected by religion, religious doctrines or teachings have a coercive nature for their adherents to follow what religion teaches. A person's attitude is strongly influenced by religious beliefs, which have a profound psychological effect on individual growth (Mu'allim, 2006).

No one in this world is to blame for the lack of interfaith unity; it is a problem that affects everyone. In 2020, Istora Senayan, Jakarta hosted the World Interfaith Peace Week, which aims to create religious harmony in a world without violence (UPF-Indonesia, 2020). Religious leaders and world leaders attended this activity to support the development of peaceful coexistence among religious groups by combining their differences for peace. Religious leaders are essential in a country hit by poverty, unemployment, corruption, and economic, legal, and social injustice. They provide enlightenment and role models for people, develop confidence in themselves and others, and encourage people to seek benefit and avoid evil.

Peace among religious believers is an integral part of the noble ideals of "harmony in diversity" in the life of the nation and state. It took a long time and a lot of effort from the government and the religious community to achieve the abovementioned goals. Effective communication channels, an effective arbitration system, an integrative climate (bridging social capital), a critical mass of peacebuilding leadership, and a fair structure are

some of the theoretical elements that can be used to understand the phenomenon of creating harmony in diversity in inter-religious harmony.

The Urgency of Religion for Peace

Religious phenomena in society, including rituals and symbols, can be understood from a sociological point of view as evidence of the growth and development of religion as part of society's culture. The dynamics of internalizing and externalizing internal and external reality itself are what religion needs, as manifested in culture. As a result, the word "religious mission" appears in contemporary society. As a result, the presence of religion in society has the potential for integration and conflict (Lundby et al., 2017).

For adherents of the same religion, religion functions as a unifying (integrative) force. When a person's religious life includes components of followers of other religions, this integration function tends to be reduced or lost. According to Hendropuspito (1983), internal religious groups function as a means of strengthening brotherhood. Although religion has a dual role, like currency, in social reality, it can be both integrative and disintegrative, depending on the context of religious people's internal and external relations. Religion has a stronger unifying (integrative) influence on religious groups, but it does not rule out the possibility of disintegration, especially regarding differences in religious opinion.

The integrative role of religion in social life cannot be ignored, but other variables also affect social integration. According to peace theory, these elements include channels of communication; structures and institutions that promote peace (arbitrations system/institution); an integrative political-psychological climate (integrative climate (social capital)); peacebuilding leadership (Peace leadership); and a supportive structural context (Just structure).

In more detail, Muhammad Iqbal Ahnaf (2011) describes the operational construction of peace in Table 1:

Table 1: Peace Construction

Pillar	Channels of Communication	Arbitration System/ Institution	Integrative climate (social capital)	Peace leadership	Just structure
Actor, institution	Community meeting forums; association; dialogue media; information Systems	Court formalities, organizational regulations; Informal law enforcement and instruments: Customary institutions, religious institutions/authorities etc.	Social organization/association across (bridging) identities/groups (example: hobby groups; sports; business associations; patrols etc.)	Religious/customary leaders, NGOs, grassroots actors, government, businessmen, politicians.	Political system, law, bureaucracy (good government, etc.).
Role	Discussion, clarification, rumor control, conflict resolution by non-violent means		Building trust, stemming identity politics	Promotion of non-violent paths, demobilization of extremism.	Creating justice as the foundation of peace.

Source: Muhammad Iqbal Ahnaf (2011).

First, communicating effectively is the first step in building a peaceful society. Primarily, peace and harmony among community members are made possible by the availability of open lines of communication. An effective communication channel has a high level of communication between community members, enabling them to share their thoughts and ideas with the rest of the community.

Even if it is just an idea or concept, community members can contribute directly to the community's growth through effective communication channels. Problems in society can be addressed and resolved wisely if there is good communication. As a result, without efficient communication, problems become potentials that can cause division in society, especially in mixed communities. Consequently, the essential prerequisite for building a peaceful society and living a happy life is having efficient means of communication.

Second, the second piece of the peace puzzle is a well-functioning arbitration mechanism. The judiciary is essential in creating communal peace in official and non-formal arenas. Security and stability can be achieved by using the legal system established in society. A well-functioning legal system will protect individual rights as members of society, and they will not have to worry about oppressive or controlling forces. In a society built on legal

certainty, having a competent arbitration system makes it easy to see where the line between truth and untruth is drawn.

Third, the integrative climate is the last thing that must be considered (bridging social capital). Like the previous components of peacebuilding (good communication channels and a functioning legal system), this aspect cannot be considered in isolation. Efficient communication and an effective legal system are most likely to cause this third component. To promote peace, efficient communication channels must be established. A peaceful environment can be created in a society with an integrated climate. Non-formal institutions embodied in communal traditions are often a marker of the integrative atmosphere of a community.

One of the characteristics of the community's integrative atmosphere is the formation of organizations or social groups often associated with social interests (civic associations). The function of civil organizations in fostering harmony is essential. Most civic associations include a diverse mix of people who come from different backgrounds and have varying levels of education, income, and religious affiliation. In rural areas, community organizations often form associations, such as associations for agriculture, animal husbandry, PKK, working together, or other groups adapted to local conditions.

It is the network or interaction between organizations and people in different civilizations defined as social capital. Civilian organizations can take various forms, such as those on commercial or private interests such as farmers' organizations and trade unions.

Fourth, there must be a leader who can contribute to peace. This aspect relates to the presence of people who can avoid conflict, such as those who take the initiative or are in positions of authority. In other words, the presence of a large number of people could exert sufficient influence to keep things peaceful. As leaders in society, they are tasked with mediating any disputes that arise, and this necessitates the presence of various personalities in our lives. Formal and informal leaders are people or leaders who are alluded to in this context. The titles of *lurah*, *camat*, regent, and DPR are examples of formal leaders who hold government or political positions. Religious leaders (*ulama*, *kiai*, priests, elders, monks) and community leaders are the most common non-formal leaders (customary leaders, heads of associations, or community leaders).

According to the sociology of religion, the prophetic role includes the role of religious leaders in particular. This position focuses on the role of religious leaders as religious representatives in providing criticism or ideas on government policies or solutions to problems faced by the government. Several examples can be found in Indonesia, such as the emergence of interfaith academic groups that expressed skepticism about the government's progress. A number of interfaith leaders often expresses peace, non-violence, and anti-oppression goals. The development of a peaceful political system thus depends on the presence of public figures or leaders who actively promote the principles of peace.

Sixth, the structural factor is part of the community's efforts to build a fairer judicial system, a fair structure contains a fair economic justice system, a just social justice system, an education system that educates the public, and other social institutions that assist the development of justice in an orderly manner in life. To develop a just society, a justice system must exist in this society. An exemplary structure is software to build a community organized according to existing rules. Most governments have well-established legal systems that regulate the economy, society and culture to ensure the well-being of their citizens.

Interreligious Dialogue

Interreligious dialogue based on a pluralistic view of citizenship is a common manifestation of social peacebuilding aspects. Dialogue between religious communities in the phenomenon of social life, according to JB. Banawiratma (2010) there are 7 levels, including (1) Dialogue of life, (2) Social analysis and contextual ethical reflection, (3) Study of religious traditions, (4) Dialogue between religious communities: various faiths at the level of experience, (5) Interreligious dialogue: interfaith theology, (6) Action dialogue and (7) Interreligious dialogue.

It is impossible to separate religious dialogue in society from the growing attitude of civil pluralism. Simply put, it refers to the belief that people from different ethnic and racial backgrounds can live peacefully in the same country. A pluralistic attitude of citizenship will lead to unity in society, regardless of differences in religion, culture, or race.

When religion is actualized in religious traditions through religious rituals and ceremonies, peace between religious groups is more likely to occur. Ritual is "...prescribed formal behavior for occasions not given over to technological routine, having reference to beliefs in mystical being or powers" (Whitehouse & Laidlaw, 2007). Alternatively, ritual is defined as a belief in the supernatural which manifests itself through actions such as offerings, prayers and the singing of sacred melodies. Religious celebrations also include inter-religious harmony, in addition

to rituals. "The ceremony" comes from the Latin *caeremonia*, which means "sacrifice", according to the Anthropological Dictionary: "A fixed or sanctioned pattern of behavior which surround various phases of life, often serving religious or aesthetic ends and confirming the group's celebration of a particular situation" (Kitcher, 2014). Or A fixed or agreed pattern of behavior pervades the various phases of life, often serving religious or aesthetic purposes and confirming the group's celebration of certain situations.

From the social dimension, religious rituals and ceremonies have a significant role, especially in integrating religious groups. The internal kinship of religious communities can be strengthened by practices, which result in a more profound sense of mutual trust and protection. Furthermore, religious people are expected to be able to carry out their religious principles and bring benefits to followers of other religions through mutual respect, respect, and tolerance between religious communities.

The author uses various ideas to explain peace in diversity from the point of view of the architectural theory of peace in the context of Muslim-Christian interaction. The concept of peace proposes that to live in peace, a number of components are needed, such as channels of communication, institutions, a climate conducive to integration, peace leadership, and a just structure. If this theory is correct, then society does not need all aspects to exist and work properly because it is difficult to apply, even in very small contexts. This assumption is also based on the concept that harmony is a community need when one or more components of peacebuilding are strong and become the basis for people's views on how to behave and behave.

For example, because rural communities tend to communicate more intensely with each other, this understanding is also based on the fact that rural communities tend to have an advantage in terms of intensity of communication that has been repeated in non-formal and informal social institutions as a place or channel of communication where people can discuss the dynamics of their social life. More informal and informal societal institutions create a more favorable environment for a happy communal living (integrative climate).

To create a peaceful society, there must be a willingness to engage in discourse between religious groups with different beliefs. Interreligious dialogue is a sign of establishing communication channels in society, which can be seen as evidence of their presence. When religious, racial, and cultural identities are united, it is hoped that a sense of citizenship plurality will be formed, where these identities do not create separate identities but are combined into more universal identities, such as the identity of "citizenship". Thus, the character and attitude of the community towards citizenship diversity can be seen as a consequence or fruit of harmony between religious individuals (Rahman & Setia, 2021).

Inter-religious dialogue today is hope in dealing with possible conflicts in inter-religious life. Religious harmony can be observed in various ways: effective communication channels; an efficient arbitration system; integrative atmosphere; leadership that promotes peace; and a fair organizational structure. To build peace, not all elements of peacebuilding must be met, but some existing elements also contribute to inter-religious harmony. Inter-religious communication, the formation of multi-identity community groups based on religion, ethnicity, and race are examples of inter-religious harmony (Banawiratma, 2010). Not all components of peace must be completed, but must be implemented.

Moderation for Religious Harmony

Creating and maintaining an environment of religious freedom and harmony is very important to achieve a prosperous, safe, peaceful, united Indonesian society, because this nation is ethnically, culturally and religiously diverse. Proper planning is required to achieve this peace, security, and togetherness. Religious moderation is key to this plan. To achieve harmony between people of religion or belief, religious harmony must be maintained in moderation (Setia et al., 2021).

The religiously diverse Indonesian people need a vision and solution that can build harmony and peace in religious life, especially by using religious moderation to accept different views and without falling into intolerance, radicalism, and extremism. Religious moderation aims to find a middle ground between the two extremes of religion and to do so peacefully. On the one hand, there are religious fundamentalists who insist that only one religious scripture reading is correct and view all those who disagree as heresy. The ultra-conservative group is the term used to describe the members of this group (Setia & Rahman, 2021).

Then some exalt reason to the point of ignoring the sacredness of religion or abandoning their religious basis to be more tolerant of followers of other religions, which may be dangerous. Extreme liberal is a typical term for them. Both must be tamed. Religion is a necessity in Indonesia that can never be eliminated. As a result, religious

moderation is a glue to hold people together rather than a sharpener. Religious moderation is important for several reasons drawn from the Indonesian context.

First, religious moderation is a must in Indonesia to preserve Indonesian identity. Pancasila in the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia had succeeded in uniting various religions, ethnicities, and languages in Indonesia since its birth in 1945, when this country was still a multi-ethnic and multi-religious nation. Religion is vital in everyday life in Indonesia, even though this nation does not have a strong religious tradition. The state incorporates religious principles and traditional knowledge in the Constitution and Government Regulations. Some religious rules are even codified into legislation.

Second, the purpose of religion is to maintain human dignity as a noble creature and prevent him from sacrificing himself for his faith. Therefore, every religion aims to bring peace and salvation to the world. Since killing one person is the same as killing everyone else, religious teachings emphasize saving the lives of those entrusted to us. Therefore, religious moderation must be a means to restore religious practice to its core so that religion truly becomes a spirit in life and maintains human dignity. After hundreds of years of religion, humanity has become more diverse, with different tribes, skin colors, and nations. Like any other society, science constantly evolves to help people solve their problems.

Religious texts are also increasingly open to multiple interpretations; as a result, the nature of religious teachings is no longer as calm as it used to be, so some people become fanatics in pursuing their preferred version of reality. As a result, there will be disputes. The complexities of issues of human life and religious beliefs can be found all over the world, not just in one country or location. In addressing this issue, religious moderation is an ideal approach and should be used so that there are no more inter-religious disputes and the survival of humanity is maintained.

This is the true face of Indonesia, a profoundly religious nation known for its decency, tolerance, and ability to engage in civic discourse with people from all backgrounds. The unity and integrity of the Indonesian nation can be threatened if radicalism and religious extremism are allowed to thrive in our country. does not occur and religious beliefs become general moral virtues relevant to individual and group behavior, so that religious harmony can be maintained.

CONCLUSION

From Sabang to Merauke, all Indonesians have agreed to work together to ensure the country's unity. Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia, and Bhineka Tunggal Ika are the four fundamental pillars that unite and bind these common principles. If the community adheres to the principles and values of religious moderation, the four main components can be handled appropriately. Every problem can be handled in a balanced and acceptable way without overly one-sided. It is necessary to use religious moderation when it comes to religious harmony to promote peace or interfaith trust. To deal with Indonesia's very diverse religious landscape, we want a strategy and vision to promote religious harmony and peace while acknowledging diversity and avoiding extremism, intolerance, and bloodshed. There is no spiritual fusion or exchange of beliefs here. Still, religious moderation is more about maintaining boundaries between communities so that each party can control themselves, respect each other, and maintain their strengths and uniqueness without interference from the other party.

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