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Sixth Edition

Peace Among Religions
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Is diversity a strength or a weakness in society? There are at least two answers to this question. For people who think that diversity is part of social capital - relationship among people who live and work together - they say it is the strength of society. But for people who think that diversity as cause of conflict and disunity, they say it is a weakness for the society. In Asia, both answers are considered.

On the one hand, Asians often undergo conflicts and violence brought about by the fear of differences. On the other hand, diversity provides rich sources and alternatives to find solutions to create peace amidst conflicts.

In this edition, we present insights and living experience about diversity and differences, as mark of Asia society, are misused to cause and enhance conflict between religious people and seek new understanding to find new alternatives and initiatives to bring peace among religions. In the midst of conflict and divisions in the society, many efforts have been initiated by different groups and organizations, including churches, to bring peace in communities.

Religious people and civil society are called to build harmony and peace in post conflict. The experiences in Maluku is the main thought from Abidin Wakano. He emphasizes the importance to carry a common responsibility in upholding peace and justice by holding dialogues and internalization of local wisdom in the community.

Understanding and respecting other faiths, such as their different religious obligations and freedom of religion are presented in the article by Claudia Währisch-Oblau during the UEM consultation on Mission and Da’wa. She believes that mutual listening and learning can be reached through this Declaration statement on Mission and Da’wa. Therefore Mission and Da’wa leads to dialogue.
We need a room for people to dialogue or start discussion on eradicating radicalism and terrorism. Women, as member of the society, could either be victims or perpetrators of radicalism and terrorism. Oinike Natalia Harefa suggested several practical strategies for woman in eradicating radicalism and terrorism and in strengthening the role of the woman to bring peace.

Besides, there are many minority religious groups that plays significant roles for bringing peace in their communities. They built good sustainable relationships with other faiths and played a very significant role in creating a peaceful society against stereotypes and stigmatization. Fajar Wicaksono gives an example of GKJW Madurese Christian congregation in Sumberpakem, Juwasto shares his experience as a minority Christian in GKJTU Pulosari and Kachchakaduge S.N Fernando writes about the call of MCSL as minority Christian in Sri Lanka to bring peace in their homeland. The same call was written by Bishop Melzar Labuntog from UCCP in the Philippines on how they continue to strive for justice and peace amidst difficult challenges in attaining forgiveness and reconciliation.

In this 6th edition, may the stories, real-life experiences and insights enrich you as peacemakers in society and bring hope for a better future as we live in diversity.

We hope that Indonesian version, enclosed in this edition, will help more Indonesian speaking readers to obtain ideas and insights on peace building in Asian context.

Have a good time in reading!

Rev. Dr. Dyah Ayu Krismawati
Executive Secretary of UEM Asia Department and Chief Editor
A. Introduction

Basically, the *mission sacre* (sacred mission) of religion was made for humanity—so it is very logical for religion to have a very high spirit and concern to all the suffering that plagues human life. Religion in its ethical-prophetic spirit is always pro-life and is present as a response to all the misery and violence experienced by humanity. There is no religion that comes as an expression of momentary pleasure, but religion exists to
defend human values from various forms of injustices, oppression and violence. For that, major religions – those that are the strictest in criticizing against various acts of humiliation are against humanity.

The history of religions shows that the presence of all holy figures or prophets on earth are the pillars in the emancipation of universal human dignity against various forms of life bitterness caused by discrimination, injustices and violence, as well as planting noble values such as justice, honesty, peace, love, and compassion for others.

All religions that exist on this earth teach goodness and peace on human life. Buddhism teaches simplicity, Hinduism teaches Ahimsa (must not hurt and kill), Christianity teaches love, Confucianism teaches wisdom, and Islam teaches grace or affection to all nature (Rahmatan lil ‘Alamin).

The question is, if the noble goals of all religions are peace, pro-life and commitment for nonviolence, then why does violence in the realm of religion often occur with countless victims? Violence in the name of religion for centuries is one of the worst crimes of the human civilization. Something paradoxical, that religion normatively teaches noble values, but on the other hand, religion historically, was also responsible for the occurrence of violence and damages on this earth. Why is religion that teaches the values of love, humanity, peace and other ideal values, often shows a hard, fierce and frightening face in socio-historical facts? Even nowadays
religion is often accused of being one of the causes of conflicts between different religious groups, as well as being the cause of the rise of radicalism, extremism and terrorism.

Historical realism reveals that violence with bloodshed in the name of religion is something that cannot be denied in the history of human civilization. Over the centuries, religious differences have often led to the toughest and the longest war, largest territorial disputes and the biggest number of victims. Such as the Crusade that lasted for approximately two centuries, the conflict between Catholics and Protestants in Ireland, the conflict between Hinduism and Islam in India and Pakistan, the conflict between Christianity and Islam in Nigeria, and the conflicts that happened in Indonesia particularly Poso, Situbondo, Sampit, and Maluku etc. In its negative image, religion is often used as a tool of violence. Religious manipulation in the name of “God”, leads people to willingly commit violence, fight each other, kill each other, oppress each other, and do injustice towards others. It is indeed an act that tarnishes religion’s purity.

Conflict and violence in the name of religion in Maluku, such as between Muslims and Christians which is later called the conflict between “Acang” (Muslim) vs. “Obet” (Christian), is one example of conflict in the name
of religion in Indonesia and the world in this century that took a number of victims, loss of property, depression in various fields of life, trauma and various complex social problems. The problems such as:

1. How does the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Maluku have impacts on the religious life of the Maluku people?
2. What are the efforts to build harmony and peace for religious people in post-conflict Maluku?

B. The Impacts of Islamic and Christian Conflict in Maluku toward the Religious Life of People in Maluku.

As stated above, the riot between Muslims and Christians in Maluku is one of the conflicts that ended with a big number of casualties and within a long time period. If we see from the escalation of the conflict, it openly took place in 1999-2003. Even though in 2003 the escalation had begun to decline. But the impact are quite long and complex. The impact includes:

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2 Islamic groups are called “Acang” originating from the name Hasan and the Christian group it is called “Obet” which comes from the name Robert. Both terms were taken from a peace advertisement on TVRI which recounted the meeting of two friends in an elementary school who could not attend school anymore because it had been burned. The two of them met under the rubble of their school. From afar they both ran and shouted each other’s name. Hasan shout out “Obet” and Robert shout out “Acang”, they hugged each other and cried, while asking why their school had been burned. Also, it narrates about their ups and down in refugee camp. But unfortunately, the adverts that gave a deep message of peace and humanity were manipulated by the media and turned into a symbol of violence, the terms of "Obet" and "Acang" which meant friendship turned into hostility and hatred. Another term for the two groups is "white group" and "red group", the white group refers to the Muslims and the red group refers to the Christians.
First: Socio-economically, Maluku experiences a very severe deterioration. Many people lost their property, jobs, abandoned agricultural lands, and the cost of living was very expensive because of the inflation during the conflict. According to Bank Indonesia data, at that time the rate of economic growth during the conflict fell into its lowest point of minus 27.4%).

Second: There is a sharp social segregation between Muslims and Christians. Not only regional segregation but also thought and mental segregation. Sociologically, social segregation impacts the loss of informal meeting spaces in the community, particularly children and youth — not having a collective memory of shared life experiences. This segregation also has an impact on the world of education, where in the majority Muslim regions, most students and teachers are Muslim, some even 100%. Likewise, in Christian areas.

This type of segregation is very vulnerable to the emergence of in-group vs out-group polarization: “we are not them, or they are not us, and we are against them”, or in the local dialect of Ambon using the term “Katong against Dong”. Moreover, facing the challenges of identity politics or politicization of religion, and the rise of hoaxes and hate speeches that are scattered on social media today. In addition, the segregation of religious life created by the communal conflict in 1999-2003 was usually

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3 [speech text of the Maluku Governor at the Maluku Provincial DPRD Plenary Session, 19 August 2016]
followed by the collective stigmas of the past and the construction of communal “imaginary enemies” and “negative reference groups”. It is reinforced by exclusive and conflictual theology.  

**Third:** There is a collective stigma in the relations of Muslims and Christians in Maluku. The stigma between the two religious communities is constructed from problems in the past particularly the conflicts and riots between the Islamic and Christian communities from 1999 to 2003. That the dynamics of the relationship between Islam and Christianity in Maluku socially and politically has complicated implications. The perception of Maluku Muslims towards Maluku Christians, or vice versa, is strongly influenced by polarization of global and local politics factor. From the beginning, particularly after the conflict, Muslim was identified with Arabs and Christianity was identified with the West. The West, especially the Netherland is Christian, and Arabic is Islam. Another identification such as Palestine is Muslim, and Israel is Christian. This identification process is followed by a “blind fanaticism” attitude. For example, in certain Islamic regions, it is written or labeled as a Palestinian zone and in certain Christian areas it is also written or labeled as the Zionist zone of Israel.

This polarization developed quite strongly, so that global problems that occurred between the West and Arabia or Israel and Palestine were immediately digested or constructed as a local problem of Muslims and Christians

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4 Lewis Coser, the functions of Social Conflict. (New York: The Free Press 1956)
in Maluku. In the local context, Maluku Christians are identified as separatists RMS (Republic of South Maluku), even sometimes the RMS was defined as “Republic of South Maluku”. Then Muslims are identified as terrorists—many Christians assume that if there are people with beard and wears Gamis (Muslim clothes) are terrorists. In addition, there are stereotypes from Christian towards Muslims, which says that Muslims are stupid. The stereotype like that can arise because from the beginning Christians in Maluku, particularly in the colonial era, have had the opportunity to access education more than Muslims.

All the processes of identification or stereotype were strengthened due to hatred and hostility during the 1999-2003 conflict. For all the processes of identification and stereotypes, theological justification is accompanied by the construction of "imaginary enemies" and the attitude of hegemony and mutual threatening.

**Fourth:** One of the effects of the conflict between Muslims and Christians in Maluku is the development of the religious fundamentalism movement. It is undeniable when the conflict occurs, Maluku became the stage for the meeting of various radical Islamic groups, such as Laskar Jihad and Mujahidin, beside local groups formed based on country, village or location. These local warriors are also formed in Christianity and the most popular are the Las-kar Kristus.
The problem is that when the various Islamic radical groups enter Maluku, they were not only coming with the pretext of “participating in jihad to defend Muslims in Maluku”, but also spreading exclusive and radical theology or religious understanding through preaching, recitation and education. This was marked by the increasingly massive preaching to various places in Maluku, both in cities and villages, and the establishment of several pesantren (Islamic Boarding School), one of which was the Al-Mansuroh boarding school, under the Abubakar As-Shiddiq foundation at BTN Kanawa Kebun Cengkeh Ambon.5

The entry of various Islamic radical groups or Islamic transnational groups to Maluku during the conflict became a significant challenge to the efforts of peace building and the development of awareness of pluralism or multiculturalism in Maluku and Indonesia in general. Because these radical Islamic groups are anti or reject the Pancasila and NKRI (Republic of Indonesia), there are those who are very puritanical and reject various cultural practices, including forbidding Maluku local wisdom such as Pela and Gandong, because they put it into the category of “Bid'ah”, And there are those who develop exclusive and conflictual theology which considers groups outside themselves to be infidels, particularly non-Muslims.

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5 At the time of conflict in Maluku, the news in the media was very tendentious and provocative. If the media is affiliated with Muslims, it said Muslims are victims and the sources of problems are Christians. Likewise, if the media is affiliated with Christianity, on the other hand, it said that the victims are Christians and the perpetrators, or the source of the problem are Muslims.
The development of theology or religious understanding as stated above is one of the major problems caused by conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Maluku. In this context, according to a secular scientist named Arthur J. D’Adamo, explaining that the emergence of a crisis complexity of interreligious relations is the existence of exclusive religious attitudes. According to D’Adamo, author of *Science Without Bonds, A Synthesis of Science, Religion and Mystics* (1995), the exclusive “religious perspective” (Religion's Way of Knowing) is the root of all inter-religious conflicts that arise later. The exclusive characteristic of Religion’s Way of Knowing, according to D’Adamo, departs from a paradigm that only their religion and scripture are the source of truth, and are fully believed to be: (1) consistent and containing truths without errors at all; (2) are complete and final – and therefore do not require truth from other religions; (3) the truth of religion itself is considered to be the only way of salvation, enlightenment and liberation; and (4) the whole truth is believed to be original from God and not human construction.6

In a modern perspective, as stated by D’Adamo, that “Religion's Way of Knowing” clearly can cause big problems, particularly if one religion is dealing with another religion. The problem that can arise is the “war” of truth claim and then the war of salvation claim. Meanwhile, from a sociological point of view, this factual claim of truth and claim of salvation have caused various socio-

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political conflicts and inter-religious wars. The conflict in Maluku between Muslims and Christians in 1999-2003 is one example that this exclusive religious style contributes significantly to the development of the conflict.

This has become one of the theological problems in the relationships of religions today, because several enduring debates throughout the history of religions are related to “truth” and “salvation”, namely how a religious person can define himself right amidst other religion that also exist and have validity. As it is known that one of the main problems in relation with religions is that if exclusive theology is set-up, then history expands it into a non-plurality condition: that only our religion is the right one, while other religions are wrong or distorted "Other religions are false paths that mislead their followers, “other religions are false paths that mislead their followers”.

Ajith Fernando said, not to mention the socio-political problems that often create tensions and crises among religious followers, which get the problem worse.

A lot of thinkers have been tried to respond to these problems. Hugh Goddard for example – a Christian, lecturer in Islamic Theology at Nottingham University in England– wrote a critical book: Christians and Muslims, from the Double Standards to Mutual Understanding. This book illustrates that in the whole history of Christian-Islamic relations, what has made the relationship develop into a misunderstanding, even leading to an atmosphere.

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of “mutual threatening” to each other—is nothing but the condition of “double standards”.

In other words, Christians or Muslims always set different standards for themselves that is based on ideal-normative standards, and on the other hand uses a different standards for other religions, which are subjective, minor and casuistic-historical. It is through this double standard that prejudices, and unfair claims arise, so that sociologically and theologically, it can cause the relationships between religious people become worse.

In the theological perspective for example, the double standard was born in the form of strong awareness, that our religion is the most true and originally from God, while other religions are nothing more than human construction – or at least from God but have been reduced by such adherents. The effect will lead to conflict and violence, both internal and inter-religious.

This double standards mentality shows itself to be more extreme in form of truth claims between one religion and other religions.¹ This mentality is often used by followers of certain religions to “judge” other religions in the degree of theological validity under their religion.

¹One of the intellectual works that is very interesting in examining the forms of “truth” from various authentic religions and traditions can be seen, for example: Hendrik M. Vroom, Religions and the Truth: Philosophical Reflection and Perspectives (Amsterdam: William B. Berdmans, Publishing Company, 1989). Besides showing the formulas of ‘truth’ from various religions, this book also offers dialogical inter-religious solutions.
C. Efforts to Build Interreligious Harmony and Peace in Post-Conflict Maluku

Starting from the various problems of conflict and the impact of it, the following will describe some of the efforts that have been made to build and maintain peace, and are considered as part of the success story of peace building in post-conflict Maluku, including:

**First:** The creation of spaces for dialogue and encounters conducted by civil society groups in the context of continuous interaction between religious groups through religious institutions, cultural arts groups, interfaith groups, interfaith youth and student communities, inter-indigenous and ethnicity communities, as well as a network of Kings, well-known by the community as King of Latu Patty Community.

The emergence of various civil society groups that became agents of peace, which in later developments were better known in Maluku as peaceful provocateurs, worked on various levels and issues. For example, the movement with cross-universities in encouraging the development of peace education and multicultural education. Then in school there was a movement with the interfaith teacher community, which developed peace education at schools. Then the King of Latu Patty who fought to revitalize customary institutions as socio-cultural capital in peace building. In addition, various peace activists in NGOs emerged, such as the Maluku Interfaith Institute (El-Ai-EM), the Maluku TIFA Damai Foundation,
the Baeleo Network, the Women and Children Empowerment Institute (LPPAN), Walang Perempuan, Gasira, etc. In addition, among young people there are joint movements across religions, tribes, professions, talents, arts, including: Young Ambassadors for Peace (YUP), Moluccas Peace Generation, Hekaleka, Ambon Bergerak, Kopi Badati, Ambonese, Non-Violence Study Circles (NCSC), Kanjoli, Interfaith Photographers, as well as various art communities for peace, such as Interfaith Hip Hop, Sawat Community and Interfaith Totobuang, etc.

Second. The development of theological contextualization and the development of peaceful mission and da’wah pioneered by religious campuses and institutions, such as IAIN, Maluku Indonesian Christian University (UKIM), State Christian Religion Institute (IAKN), Catholic College of Education (STPAK) Santo Yohanies Ambon, Synod of Maluku Protestant Church (GPM), MUI Maluku, Amboina Diocese Maluku, Walubi Maluku, and Parisada Hindu Dharma Maluku. This contextualization effort emphasizes three aspects: (1). How do religions in Maluku reinforce a commitment as a nation of Indonesia, that the Pancasila, the 1945 Constitution, Bhinneka Tunggal Ika, and NKRI are common platforms. Because there really is no conflict between religious values and national values. (2). Formulate the theology of orang basudara (brotherhood). The terminology of hidop orang basudara is a local expression of Moluccan people about their commitment to live together as brothers and sisters to understand each other, respect each other, love each other, proud of each other, and support one another.
Moluccan’s idiom quote: *Potong di kuku rasa di daging, ale rasa beta rasa, dan sagu salempeng dibage dua*. The basic theology *hidop orang basudara* here is intended to create accommodations of religions with the local wisdom of Moluccan people, such as *Pela, Gandong, Larvul Ngabal, ‘Aini ain, Kalwedo, Kidabela, Duan Lolat, Kai Wai, Wari Wa* and so on.

The value of brotherhood in religious and cultural relations in Maluku is so strong, the Muslims are greeted by the word “Salam”, and Christianity are greeted by the word “Sarane”. In the same spirit, it is realized that although different hamlets, villages or countries, ethnicities, languages, religions, political choices, etc., but “*Katong Samua Orang Basudara (We are all family)*”. No matter what religion people have such as Muslims, Christians, Hindus, Buddhists, Khong Hu Chus, or others, but they have the awareness that we are Indonesians and Moluccas. The activities carried out to conduct contextualization include seminars, education (joint class between Ambon IAIN and UKIM university students, lecturer exchanges between IAIN Ambon, UKIM Ambon, and IAKN Ambon, IAIN student internships at the GPM Maluku Synod, and GPM goes to IAIN Ambon, etc.), peace sermon, religious leaders’ live in (clerics, reverends and pastors), interfaith social action (cleaning houses of worship, planting trees of life, etc.), as well as workshops, training, and discussions.

In addition to strengthening social integration at some national level religious events in Ambon-Maluku,
such as national level *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur'an* (MTQ), national level ecclesiastical choir (Pesparawi), and Catholic Church Choir Party (Pesparani), all religious people from different religions are actively involved as committee, master of ceremony, and the khafilah or contingents from outside Maluku can live in other religious communities.

**Third:** Build and develop knowledge and awareness that the reality of diversity or multiculturalism is Sunnatul-lah or something given. This can be seen in the reality of diversity or multiculturalism in Indonesia, particularly Maluku. Socio-historically, it is a fact that multiculturalism in Maluku is part of the cultural identity of Moluccan’s people. From a historical perspective, as the spices island, especially Chengkeh, Pala and Pully, Maluku had long been a place for encounters with various civilizations in the world and it is where the Nusantara’s link had been built. In addition, it had been an area of contestation for various world trade and political interests, particularly Portuguese, Spain, Britain, the Netherlands, and Japan, in addition to Arabia, China and India. This condition makes Maluku to be a very multicultural society. We have approximately 100 sub-tribes and sub-ethnic groups, 117 languages and dialects, in addition to 6 official religions and many tribal religions, and hundreds of kings with titles such as Latu, Patty and Orang Kaya spread over approximately 1,340 islands.

This can be seen from the variety of family names or clans in this area. Besides there are hundreds of local clans or families such as Patty, Toisuta, Shanaya, Sa-
hetapy, Manuhutu, Pattikawa, Latuconsina, Wakano, etc. There are also tens to hundreds of clans which are acculturated foreign cultures, for example, from South Sulawesi using Bugis or Makassar family name, from Southeast Sulawesi using the initials La or Wa, from Sumatra using Padang family names or Palembang family names. There are Arabs who use family names such as Assagaf, Allidrus, Basalamah, Attamimi, Bahsoan, etc. From the Netherlands there are those who use family names or clan such as Van Afflen, Van Room, De Kock, Ramschie, Payer, etc. From Portugal there are those who use family names such as Da Costa, De Fretes, De Lima, Fareire, etc. From China there are those who use family names such as Lie, Khouw, etc.

Another interesting thing, from the results of acculturation, show various treasures of cultural arts in this area. For example, acculturation of local culture with Islam or Arabic, such as Abda'u in Tulehu, Pukul Sapu in Mama-la-Morela, and Sawat Dance, and so on. Acculturation of local culture with Arabic and Malay is seen in Dana-Dana dance. Meanwhile, acculturation of local culture with the West is seen in Katreji Dance, Hawaiian music, Oralapei dance, Ola-Ola dance, and Cakaiba dance.

The efforts to build and develop knowledge and awareness about the fact of diversity or multiculturalism is carried out through various activities which are initiated by various civil society groups and the government. For example, the development of Orang Basudara Education Curriculum (POB) initiated by the Ambon government in
collaboration with the Japan International Corporation Agency (JIKA) on 2008\(^9\), then development of multiculturalism education and development of value-based education, such as: Living Values Education (LVE) on campus and schools, as developed by the Ambon Reconciliation and Mediation Center (ARMC) of IAIN Ambon since 2012 - until now. It is in the form of seminars, trainings, workshops, angkat Pela education in schools, such as SMPN 9 (Junior High School) in Ambon whose students are 97% Christian and SMPN 4 (Junior High School) in Liang, Central Maluku regency, whose students are 100% Muslim. Then angkat Pela education in the Ambon State Islamic Institute (IAIN) and the Indonesian Maluku Christian University (UKIM) Ambon in 2016, as well as a live-in program for interfaith teachers in 2012. One of them was made in a documentary film which won the Eagle Award Documentary Competition held by one of the Nasional News Channel - Metro TV under the title “Provokator Damai (Provocateur of Peace)”. For these various efforts, Maluku continues to transform into a peaceful and advanced region. In the past Maluku was known as a conflict laboratory, but now it has been transformed as a laboratory for harmony and peace between religious groups in Indonesia. This is indicated by the success story achieved, such as: according to the results of the R&D research by the Ministry of Religious Affairs Indonesia, Maluku is one of the regions that has

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the highest or best inter-religious harmony index in Indonesia, after Bali and NTT. Besides that, according to SETARA Institute, the city of Ambon and the city of Tual are among the 10 most tolerant cities in Indonesia.

D. Conclusion

1. The impact of conflicts between Muslims and Christians in Maluku includes: (a). the emergence of social religious segregation between Muslims and Christians, not only regional segregation, but also logical and mental segregation. This segregation causing social vulnerability in terms of polarization and the process of identity politics; (b). the emergence of collective stigma and stereotypes in the relationship between Islam and Christianity. For example, identification of Islam as a terrorist, Islam is Arab-Palestinian, Islam is nationalist, while Christianity is Western, Jewish Zionists, and Separatists; and, (c.) the emergence of various fundamentalism movements in Maluku, both fundamentalist groups from outside Maluku such as Laskar Jihad and Mujahidin, as well as local groups, such as Laskar Kristus.

2. Efforts made to build harmony and peace in the life of religious people in Maluku include: (a). Creating dialogue’s space and encounter conducted by civil society groups for a continuous interaction between religious groups. (b). The development of theological contextualization and the development of peaceful mission and da’wah pioneered by the campus of religion and institutions, include: efforts to build commitment as Indonesia
and Mollucas, formulate the theology of *Orang Basudara* (brotherhood), and build awareness of accepting the facts of multiculturalism in Indonesia and Maluku.

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Pembangunan Kerukunan dan Perdamaian Antar Umat Beragama Di Maluku Pascakonflik

Dr. Abidin Wakano, M. Ag

A. Pendahuluan

Pada dasarnya, mission Sacre (misi suci) agama diturunkan untuk kemanusiaan—maka sangat logis agama datang memiliki spirit dan perhatian sangat tinggi terhadap segala penderitaan yang mendera kehidupan umat manusia. Agama dalam spirit etik-profetisnya senantiasa pro-kehidupan dan hadir sebagai respon terhadap segala kesengsaraan dan kekerasan yang dialami umat manusia. Tidak ada agama yang datang sebagai ekspresi terhadap kesenangan dan kenikmatan sesaat, tetapi agama hadir untuk membela nilai-nilai kemanusiaan dari pelbagai bentuk ketidakadilan, penindasan dan kekerasan. Untuk itu, agama terutama

1 Dosen Fakultas Tarbiyah dan Ilmu Keguruan IAIN Ambon, Direktur Ambon Reconciliation and Mediation Center IAIN Ambon dan Aktivis Interfaith Dialog di Indonesia
agama-agama besar hadir--merupakan gerakan kritik paling tegas terhadap pelbagai tindakan penistaan manusia.

Sejarah agama-agama menunjukkan bahwa kehadiran semua tokoh suci atau nabi di muka bumi ini merupakan tonggak emansipasi harkat kemanusiaan universal, yaitu melawan pelbagai bentuk kegetiran hidup yang diakibatkan oleh diskriminasi, ketidakadilan dan kekerasan, serta menanamkan nilai-nilai agung seperti keadilan, kejujuran, kedamaian, cinta, dan kasih sayang untuk sesama.

Semua agama yang ada di muka bumi ini mengajarkan kebaikan dan kedamaian hidup manusia. Budha mengajarkan kesederhanaan, Hindu mengajarkan Ahimsa (tidak boleh menyakiti dan membunuh), Kristen mengajarkan cinta kasih, Konfusianisme mengajarkan kebijaksanaan, dan Islam mengajarkan rahmat atau kasih sayang untuk seluruh alam (Rahmatan lil ‘Alamin).

Pertanyaannya adalah, apabila tujuan luhur semua agama menghendaki kedamaian, pro-kehidupan dan komitmen terhadap anti-kekerasan, lalu mengapa kekerasan pada ranah agama itu kerap terjadi dengan korban yang tidak terhitung jumlahnya? Kekerasan yang mengatasnamakan agama selama berabad-abad merupakan salah satu kejahatan terburuk yang telah mengisi peradaban manusia. Sesuatu yang paradoks, karena agama yang secara normatif mengajarkan nilai-nilai luhur, tetapi agama secara historisitas juga
bertanggung jawab terhadap terjadinya kekerasan dan kerusakan di muka bumi ini. Mengapa agama yang asasinya mengajarkan nilai-nilai kasih sayang, kemanusiaan, kedamaian, dan nilai-nilai ideal lainnya; tetapi justru mengapa dalam fakta sosio-historis sering menampilkan wajah yang keras, garang dan menakutkan? Bahkan dewasa ini, agama kerap dituduh sebagai salah satu penyebab konflik antar kelompok masyarakat yang berbeda agama; selain sebagai penyebab munculnya radikalisme, ekstrimisme, dan terorisme.


Konflik dan kekerasan atas nama agama di Maluku,
yaitu antara umat Islam dan umat Kristen yang kemudian pada saat konflik diplesetkan sebagai konflik antara “Acang” (Muslim) vs “Obet” (Nasrani), merupakan salah satu contoh konflik atas nama agama di Indonesia bahkan di dunia pada abad ini yang memakan korban yang cukup banyak, baik korban jiwa, harta, keterpurukan kehidupan masyarakat dalam pelbagai bidang kehidupan, meninggalkan luka batin paling dalam, maupun pelbagai problem sosial yang sangat kompleks.² Permasalahannya adalah:

Bagaimana dampak konflik umat Islam dan umat Kristen di Maluku terhadap kehidupan keagamaan masyarakat Maluku?

Bagaimana upaya-upaya membangun kerukunan dan perdamaian kehidupan umat beragama di Maluku pascakonflik?

B. Dampak Konflik Umat Islam dan Kristen di Maluku Terhadap Kehidupan Keagamaan Masyarakat Maluku


**Pertama:** Secara sosial ekonomi Maluku mengalami keterpurukan yang sangat parah. Banyak orang kehilangan harta benda, mata pencaharian, lahan pertanian terbengkalai, serta tingkat biaya hidup sangat mahal karena inflasi saat konflik. Menurut data Bank Indonesia, saat itu angka pertumbuhan ekonomi saat konflik turun pada titik terendah yaitu minus 27,4%).

**Kedua:** Terjadinya segregasi sosial yang cukup tajam antara umat Islam dan umat Kristen. Bukan hanya segregasi wilayah tetapi juga segregasi pemikiran dan mental.Secara sosiologis, segregasi sosial berdampak pada hilangnya ruang-ruang perjumpaan secara informal di dalam masyarakat, khususnya anak-anak dan pemuda—tidak memiliki memori kolektif tentang pengalaman hidup

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3 Naskah Pidato Gubernur Maluku pada acara Sidang Paripurna DPRD Provinsi Maluku, 19 Agustus 2016
bersama. Segregasi ini juga berdampak pada dunia pendidikan, dimana pada daerah yang mayoritas Muslim, peserta didik dan pendidiknya mayoritas Muslim, bahkan ada yang 100%. Demikian halnya di daerah Kristen.

Fakta segregasi seperti ini sangat rawan terhadap munculnya polarisasi yang bersifat *in group vs out group*: "kita bukan mereka, atau mereka bukan kita, dan kita melawan mereka", atau dalam dialek lokal Ambon menggunakan istilah "Katong melawan Dong". Apalagi dalam menghadapi tantangan politik identitas atau politisasi agama, serta maraknya *hoaks* dan *hate speech* yang bertebaran di media sosial dewasa ini. Selain itu, segregasi kehidupan keagamaan yang tercipta akibat konflik komunal pada 1999 – 2003 itu, biasanya diikuti oleh stigma-kolektif masa lalu serta adanya konstruksi "musuh imajiner" secara komunal dan "negative reference group". Serta diperkuat oleh teologi yang ekslusif dan konflikual.4

**Ketiga:** Munculnya stigma-kolektif dalam hubungan umat Islam dan umat Kristen di Maluku. Stigma dalam hubungan kedua komunitas beragama ini merupakan hasil konstruksi masa lalu dan terutama konflik atau kerusuhan antara komunitas Islam dan Kristen 1999-2003, bahwa dinamika hubungan Islam dan Kristen di Maluku secara sosial politik menyimpan beberapa persoalan yang cukup pelik dan memiliki implikasi yang kompleks. Persepsi umat Islam Maluku terhadap umat Kristen Maluku, atau sebaliknya, sangat dipengaruhi oleh


Semua proses identifikasi atau stereotype itu semakin menguat karena adanya rasa kebencian dan permusuhan pada saat konflik 1999-2003. Terhadap
semua proses identifikasi dan *stereotype* tersebut muncul pembenaran secara teologis disertai dengan konstruksi “musuh imajiner” serta sikap saling menghigemoni dan mengancam.


Masalahnya, masuknya pelbagai kelompok radikal Islam ini bukan hanya datang dengan dalih “ikut berjihad membela umat Islam di Maluku”, tetapi juga ikut menyebar teologi atau pemahaman keagamaan yang ekslusif dan radikal melalui dakwah, pengajian dan pendidikan. Hal tersebut ditandai dengan makin masifnya dakwah ke pelbagai tempat di Maluku, baik di kota maupun di desa dan didirikannya beberapa pesantren, salah satunya adalah pesantren Al-Mansuroh, di bawah yayasan Abubakar As-Shiddiq di BTN Kanawa Kebun Cengkeh Ambon.⁵

⁵Pada saat konflik Maluku pemberitaan di media sangat tendensius dan provokatif. Jika media berafiliasi ke Muslim pasti mengatakan Muslim adalah korban dan yang pelaku atau sumber masalah adalah umat Kristen. Demikian juga sebaliknya jika media yang berafiliasi ke Kristen, pasti juga mengatakan yang korban adalah umat Kristen dan yang pelaku atau sumber masalah adalah umat Islam.
Masuknya pelbagai kelompok radikal Islam atau kelompok transnasional Islam ke Maluku saat konflik menjadi tantangan yang cukup signifikan terhadap upaya pembangunan perdamaian dan pengembangan kesadaran terhadap pluralisme atau multikulturalisme di Maluku maupun Indonesia secara umum. Karena kelompok-kelompok Islam radikal ini ada yang anti atau menolak Pancasila dan NKRI (Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia), ada yang sangat puritan dan menolak pelbagai praktik budaya, termasuk mengharamkan kearifan lokal Maluku seperti Pela dan Gandong, karena masuk dalam kategori “Bid’ah”, dan ada yang mengembangkan teologi eksklusif dan konflikual yang menganggap kelompok di luar dirinya adalah kafir, apalagi non-muslim.

kebenaran-kebenaran yang tanpa kesalahan sama sekali; (2) bersifat lengkap dan final – dan karena itu memang tidak memerlukan kebenaran dari agama lain; (3) kebenaran agama sendiri dianggap merupakan satu-satunya jalan keselamatan, pencerahan dan pembebasan; dan (4) seluruh kebenaran itu diyakini original dari Tuhan dan bukan konstruksi manusia.6


Hal ini menjadi salah satu problem teologi dalam hubungan agama-agama dewasa ini, sebab sejumlah perdebatan abadi sepanjang sejarah agama-agama, ialah menyangkut “kebenaran’ dan “keselamatan”, yaitu bagaimana seorang yang beragama bisa mendefinisikan dirinya secara tepat di tengah-tengah agama lain yang ju-

ga eksis dan punya keabsahan. Seperti diketahui bahwa salah satu problem utama dalam relasi agama-agama yaitu apabila teologi yang ekslusif di-set-up, kemudian sejarah mengekstrimkannya ke dalam suatu kondisi nonpluralitas: bahwa hanya agama kitalah yang paling benar, sedangkan agama lain adalah salah atau menyimpang, "other religions are false paths that mislead their followers". Kata Ajith Fernando. Belum lagi masalah-masalah sosial politik yang sering memunculkan ketegangan dan krisis di kalangan pemeluk agama, semakin menambah kerunyaman tersebut.

Tidak sedikit pemikir kemudian mencoba memberi respons terhadap permasalahan tersebut. Hugh Goddard misalnya – seorang Kristiani, dosen Teologi Islam di Nottingham University Inggris – menulis sebuah buku yang cukup kritis: Christians and Muslims, from Double Standards to Mutual Understanding. Buku ini melukiskan bahwa dalam seluruh sejarah hubungan Kristen-Islam, apa yang telah membuat hubungan itu berkembang menjadi kesalahpahaman, bahkan menimbulkan suasana "saling mengancam" satu sama lain – adalah tak lain dari kondisi "standar ganda" (double standards) tersebut.

Dengan kata lain, orang Kristen atau pun orang Islam selalu menetapkan standar-standar yang berbeda untuk dirinya, yaitu berdasarkan standar yang bersifat ideal-normatif, sedangkan penilaian terhadap agama lain memakai standar lain, yang secara subyektif, minor dan ber-

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sifat kasuistis-historis. Melalui standar ganda inilah muncul prasangka-prasangka dan klaim-klaim yang tidak adil, sehingga secara sosiologis dan teologis, dapat memperkeruh hubungan antara umat beragama.

Dalam perspektif teologi misalnya, standar ganda itu lahir dalam bentuk kesadaran kuat, bahwa agama kita adalah agama yang paling sejati dan asli berasal dari Tuhan, sementara agama lain tak lebih dari konstruksi manusia – atau setidaknya berasal dari Tuhan tetapi telah direduksi sedemikian rupa oleh pemeluknya. Efeknya akan menimbulkan konflik dan kekerasan, baik itu internal agama, maupun antaragama.

Mentalitas double standards ini memperlihatkan dirinya lebih ekstrem dalam bentuk klaim kebenaran (truth claim) antara satu agama dengan agama lainnya. Mentalitas ini pula yang sering dijadikan pemeluk agama tertentu untuk “menghakimi” agama lain dalam derajat keabsahan teologis di bawah agama yang menilai.

C. Upaya-upaya Membangun Kerukunan dan Perdamaian Kehidupan Umat Beragama Di Maluku Pascakonflik
Bertolak dari pelbagai permasalahan konflik dan dampak konflik di atas, maka berikut ini penulis akan

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menguraikan beberapa upaya yang pernah dilakukan dalam rangka membangun dan merawat perdamaian, serta dianggap sebagai bagian dari success story pembangunan perdamaian di Maluku pascakonflik, antara lain:

**Pertama:** Penciptaan ruang-ruang dialog dan perjumpaan yang dilakukan oleh kelompok civil society dalam rangka terjadinya interaksi antarumat beragama secara berkesinambungan melalui lembaga-lembaga keagamaan, kelompok-kelompok seni budaya, kelompok-kelompok antariman, komunitas pemuda dan mahasiswa lintas agama, komunitas lintas adat dan etnis; serta jaringan raja-raja atau yang lebih dikenal dengan komunitas Raja Latu Patty.

Munculnya pelbagai kelompok civil society yang menjadi agen-agen perdamaian, yang dalam perkembangan selanjutnya lebih dikenal di Maluku sebagai aktor provokator damai ini bekerja pada pelbagai level dan issu. Misalnya gerakan bersama lintas perguruan tinggi dalam mendorong pengembangan pendidikan damai dan pendidikan multikultural. Kemudian di sekolah ada gerakan bersama komunitas guru lintas agama, yang mengembangkan pendidikan damai di sekolah. Kemudian para Raja Latu Patty yang berjuang melakukan revitalisasi pranata adat sebagai modal sosial-kultural dalam membangun perdamaian. Selain itu, muncul pelbagai NGO pegiat perdamaian seperti Lembaga Antariman Maluku (El-Ai-EM) Maluku, Yayasan TIFA Damai Maluku, Jaringan Baeleo, Lembaga Pemberdayaan Perempuan dan Anak
LPPAN), Walang Perempuan, Gasira, dan lain-lain. Selain itu di kalangan anak muda ada gerakan bersama lintas agama, suku, profesi, bakat, seni, antara lain: Young Ambassador for Peace (YUP), Molucass Peace Generation, Hekaleka, Ambon Bergerak, Kopi Badati, Amboness, Non Violence Study Circles (NCSC), Kanjoli, Photographer Lintas Iman, serta pelbagai komunitas seni untuk perdamaian (art for peace), seperti Hip Hop Lintas Iman, Komunitas Sawat dan Totobuang Lintas Iman, dan lain-lain.

Kedua: Pengembangan kontekstualisasi teologi serta pengembangan misi dan dakwah damai yang dipelopori oleh kampus agama dan lembaga, seperti IAIN, Universitas Kristen Indonesia Maluku (UKIM), Institut Agama Kristen Negeri (IAKN), Sekolah Tinggi Pendidikan Agama Katolik (STPAK) Santo Yohanes Ambon, Sinode Gereja Protestan Maluku (GPM), Majelis Ulama Indonesia (MUI) Maluku, Keuskupan Amboina Maluku, Perwalian Umat Budha Indonesia (Walubi) Maluku, dan Parisada Hindu Dhrama Maluku. Upaya kontekstualisasi ini menekankan pada tiga aspek:


(2). Merumuskan teologi orang basudara. Terminologi hidop orang basudara merupakan ungkapan

Begitu kuatnya nilai persaudaraan dalam relasi agama dan budaya di Maluku, maka panggilan untuk Islam di sapa dengan ungkapan “Salam”, dan panggilan untuk Kristen disapa dengan ungkapan “Sarane”. Dalam spirit yang sama, disadari bahwa walaupun berbeda kampung, desa atau negeri, suku, bahasa, agama, pilihan politik, dan sebagainya, tetapi “*Katong Samua Orang Basudara*”. Walaupun beragama Islam, Kristen, Hindu, Budha, Khong Hu Chu, atau yang lainnya, tetapi tetap punya kesadaran bahwa saya atau kita adalah orang Indonesia dan orang Maluku. Kegiatan-kegiatan yang dilakukan untuk melakukan kontekstualisasi tersebut antara lain melalui kegiatan seminar, perkuliahan (kuliah bersama mahasiswa IAIN Ambon dengan UKIM, pertukaran dosen IAIN Ambon dengan UKIM Ambon dan IAKN Ambon, magang mahasiswa IAIN di Sinode GPM Maluku, serta *GPM go to Campus IAIN Ambon*, dll.), *peace sermon, live in* para tokoh agama (ustadz, pendeta dan pastor), aksi sosial bersama lintas iman (pembersihan...
rumah ibadah, penanaman pohon kehidupan, dan lain-lain), serta kegiatan workshop, pelatihan, dan diskusi.

Selain itu, untuk memperkuat integrasi sosial pada saat pelbagai perhelatan keagamaan tingkat nasional di kota Ambon-Maluku, yaitu kegiatan *Musabaqah Tilawatil Qur’an (MTQ)* tingkat nasional, pelaksanaan Pesta Paduan Suara Gerejawi (Pesparawi) tingkat nasional, dan Pesta Paduan Suara Gerejani (Pesparani) Katolik tingkat nasional, semua umat beragama terlibat aktif sebagai panitia, pembawa acara, hingga para khafilah atau kontingen dari luar Maluku ada yang tinggal di komunitas agama lain.

(3). Membangun dan mengembangkan pengetahuan dan kesadaran bahwa realitas kepelbagaian atau multikulturalisme merupakan *Sunnatullah* atau sesuatu yang *given*. Hal tersebut dapat dilihat pada realitas kepelbagaian atau multikulturalisme Indonesia, dan khususnya Maluku. Secara sosio-historis fakta multikulturalisme Maluku, sudah merupakan bagian dari identitas kebudayaan masyarakat Maluku. Dari perspektif historis, sebagai *the spices island* (pulau rempah-rempah), khususnya Chengkeh, Pala dan Pully, sejak dahulu Maluku sudah menjadi tempat perjumpaan pelbagai peradaban di dunia serta terbangun jalinan Nusantara; selain menjadi wilayah kontestasi pelbagai kepentingan dagang dan politik dunia terutama Portugis, Spanyol, Inggris, Belanda, Jepang, Arab, China dan India. Kondisi ini menjadikan Maluku sebagai masyarakat yang sangat multikultural. Kami memiliki kurang lebih 100 subsuku dan subetnik,
117 buah bahasa dan dialek, selain 6 agama resmi dan agama-agama suku, dan ratusan raja yang bergelar Latu, Patty dan Orang Kaya yang tersebar di kurang lebih 1.340 buah pulau.


Atas pelbagai upaya tersebut, Maluku terus bertransformasi menjadi daerah yang damai dan maju. Kalau dulu Maluku dikenal sebagai laboratorium konflik,

\(^9\)B. Pattiselano, dkk (Editor), Psikososial Kurikulum Pendidikan Orang Basudara Maluku, (Ambon: Dinas Pendidikan Kuta Ambon, 2009)

D. Kesimpulan


2. Upaya-upaya yang dilakukan untuk membangun kerukunan dan perdamaian dalam kehidupan umat beragama di Maluku, antara lain: (a). Pencipataan ruang-
ruang dialog dan perjumpaan yang dilakukan oleh kelompok civil society dalam rangka terjadinya interaksi antarumat beragama secara kontinyu. (b). Pengembangan kontekstualisasi teologi serta pengembangan misi dan dakwah damai yang dipelopori oleh kampus agama dan lembaga, meliputi: upaya membangun komitmen keindonesiaan dan kemalukuan, merumuskan teologi orang basudara, dan membangun kesadaran menerima fakta multikulturalisme Indonesia dan Maluku.

Daftar Pustaka:
B. Pattiselano, dkk (Editor), *Psikososial Kurikulum Pendidikan Orang Basudara Maluku*, Ambon: Dinas Pendidikan Kota Ambon, 2009
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Mission and Da’wa

Rev. Dr. Claudia Währisch-Oblau

Introduction

In interfaith dialogue and in the living together of people of different faiths, the question of spreading one’s own religion is always the most difficult one. It is not surprising that it is often not even mentioned, out of fear that bringing it up might endanger trust and a positive relationship.

Behind this fear is an understanding of mission and da‘wa as a zero-sum game: If I win someone, you lose; if you win someone, I lose. And if mission and da‘wa are understood in this way, a dialogue about them is pretty much impossible, because we would be talking about undermining each other. In consequence, some Christians engaged in interfaith dialogue have decided to completely give up the concept of mission and stick with dialogue only. This, of course, quickly leads to the question to how then understand the call to mission which is found in the Gospels (e.g. in Matthew 28:16-20; Mark 16:15-18). One possible answer is to assume that Christians and Muslims are praying, in effect, to the same God – after all, together with the Jews they belong to the family of Abrahamic religions –, and are just using different ways to approach and understand him. Then both religions can make missionary efforts approaching those who are neither Muslim nor Christian, leaving each other in peace.
But Christians and Muslims who take their faith seriously will not be content with such a solution. I write this paper as a Christian who feels compelled to share the good news of a God who became human out of love to the people he created, who gave up his power and even died to overcome evil, and who then could not be held captive by death but rose again, filling this world with hope of a new creation in which peace, justice and love will prevail. I feel compelled to share this with others because this truth has gripped me, changed my life, fills my being – and I want to talk with people about what is so important to me, regardless of whether they are religious or not.

The important point for me, in this respect, is that by sharing what I believe and experience, I do not belittle or criticize other faiths. In a somewhat limited comparison: If I tell my friends about the man I love and am married to, I am never implying that their husbands are any worse than mine!

As a Christian who thinks and believes in this way, I was surprised to find that within Christian-Muslim dialogue, the topic of mission and da'wa has very rarely been taken up. As we were preparing the UEM interfaith consultation on mission and da'wa which was held in October 2017, we only found documents of one other dialogue on this topic: It was organized by the World Council of Churches and had been held in 1976! Its closing document uphold the principle of religious freedom which

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1 See the report and documents of this consultation in International Review of Mission, Volume LXV, No. 260, October 1976, 365-460
2 Ibid., 458-460
includes the right to spread one’s faith freely, then focuses on the suffering of Muslims under colonialism and the abuse of *diakonia* for proselytism and calls on all churches to “suspend their misused *diakonia* activities in the world of Islam [...] to cleanse the atmosphere of Muslim-Christian relations and orientate them towards mutual recognition and co-operation.” The document then calls for further Christian-Muslim meetings to have deeper discussions on mission and da‘wa and even develop rules on how they should be practiced. But as far as we could ascertain, no further meeting was ever organized by either the WCC or the Muslim representatives involved in the 1976 conference.

The only other Muslim-Christian document we could find on this issue is a short communiqué in German language from the Evangelical Church in Kurhesse-Waldeck and Muslim representatives of this German region on mission and religious freedom, published in 2008. This document did not really look at theological issues, but just outlined that both religions are missionary religions and need to have the freedom to engage in mission and da‘wa.

In UEM, we therefore felt that it was high time to revisit this issue. Because of its sensitivity, we decided to hold a small consultation, inviting leading representatives from the Christian and Muslim side in Germany (where the

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3 Ibid., 459
Muslim participants were all of Turkish descent), Tanzania (Zanzibar), Cameroon, Rwanda, Indonesia and the Philippines.

The group of 22 participants met in Germany from 4-13 October 2017. After a day of getting acquainted, a three-day exposure was arranged in three smaller groups to see Christian, Muslim and even some Jewish activities on the ground. The group then came back together for five days of intensive consultation. One day was spent to evaluate the exposure, then one day each was spent to consider the concept and reality of da‘wa, the concept and reality of mission, and religions challenged by secularism. Each day was opened with a keynote speech and plenary discussion, followed by intra- and interfaith group discussions. Each day, two case studies were also introduced to the plenary. The last day was spent to discuss and finalize the declaration which follows in full.

As a participant, I felt very privileged to be part of the discussions, particularly in my small interfaith group. There was a true “aha moment” when the Lutheran superintendent from Zanzibar shared the difficulties of his church to establish new buildings for worship. He described conflicts with neighbors, zoning problems, and bureaucratic hassles. When he was finished, the Muslim participant from Germany sighed and then laughed out loud: “How I know and understand these problems!” As a Muslim in Germany, she experiences the exactly same problems when it comes to establishing a new mosque. This insight led the whole group to consider the fact that
both Christianity and Islam can become oppressive quite easily when they are the majority religion, even though without actually intending to act in such ways.

In the following, I will quote the text of the final declaration in full before highlighting and interpreting some of its passages.

Declaration
I. In October 2017 we, a group of Muslims and Protestant Christians, women and men, met at Wuppertal and Witten, Germany, to discuss mission and da‘wa. Our meeting was organized by the United Evangelical Mission. We come from different regions of the world: from Cameroon, Rwanda and Tanzania, from Indonesia and the Philippines, and from Turkey and Germany. In our countries, we all have experienced interfaith tensions and even violent conflicts. But all of us are dedicated to interfaith dialogue and to mission or da‘wa.

The following is a summary of our discussions:

II. Understanding da‘wa
1. Da‘wa literally means “invitation” or “call”.
2. The understanding of da‘wa has been changing throughout history. Today, the word has a different meaning in different contexts.
3. We see two main concepts of da‘wa:
   a. Towards Muslims: coaching, giving advice inside the Muslim community.
b. Towards non-Muslims: Expressing one’s own faith by words, by being a good example and showing Islam as attractive.

4. Da‘wa needs to be done in the best/most beautiful way and with (universal) wisdom. (Sura An-Nahl, 16:125)

5. As Mohammed was sent by God as messenger to submit (*tabligh*) the words and message of God, da‘wa implies the collective duty of submitting the Islamic faith to others. The responsibility is only to submit, while the recipients are free to accept the message or not.

III. Understanding mission

1. Mission literally means “sending”.

2. The understanding of mission has been changing throughout history. Today, the word has a different meaning in different contexts.

3. The subject of mission is God himself: God’s love incarnated in Jesus Christ. Jesus was sent to proclaim the kingdom of God which is justice, freedom, peace and love. (cf. Romans 14:17)

4. All Christians are participants in God’s mission. In this, they follow the example of Jesus Christ who lived and taught humility and respect for others, who suffered rather than using force, and who did not judge others.

5. Christian mission is witness to God’s love in words and deeds.

6. Participating in Christian mission, we hope for conversion and transformation of the world, but
know that only God can bring those about. A metaphor might express that: Christian mission keeps sowing the seeds, but leaves the harvest to God.

7. Mission is open to the guidance of the Holy Spirit which may run counter to any of our plans.

IV. Da‘wa and mission

1. Unanimously, we reject any form of da‘wa or mission which use force or manipulative means to convert someone.

2. In contrast to our understanding, we see that there are forms of da‘wa and mission which use unacceptable means. Therefore, we need to develop ways to promote our understanding and to prevent unacceptable practices of da‘wa and mission.

3. In this, we need to consider the role of majority and minority religions. Each religion – when in the majority – is tempted to misuse their position and dominate the others. There might be also blindness about the situation and therefore we need the view from the outside.

4. The concept of da‘wa includes the idea that religions compete in good deeds (Sura Al-Ma‘ida, 5:48). This idea can also be included in the concept of Christian mission.

5. When talking about da‘wa and mission we have to talk about freedom: Freedom to share one’s faith, to witness, to choose one’s religion, to
change one’s faith, and to not adhere to any religion at all. It is painful when someone leaves our religion, but we need to accept this decision.


7. Our understanding of both da‘wa and mission includes the protection of minorities. Da‘wa protects the right of mission, and mission protects the right of da‘wa.

V. Interfaith dialogue

1. Both as Christians and Muslims who faithfully trust in God, we are convinced of the truth of our respective faith. But because it is God who leads us to this conviction, we mutually respect the sincerity of the other’s faith.

2. Interfaith dialogue is not an alternative to da‘wa and mission as we understand it. Rather: Da‘wa and mission lead us into interfaith dialogue.

3. Interfaith dialogue is about building bridges, mutual understanding, trust, solidarity, and cooperation, not only for one’s own benefit, but for the benefit of humankind and the whole world.

4. Interfaith dialogue should not be limited to religious elites, but be open to all religious believers and should include policy makers.

‘We, the participants of the Think Tank “Mission and Da‘wa” commit ourselves to the following:

1. To overcome our mistrust of and prejudices against the believers of the other faith.
2. To self-critically reflect on our mistakes committed in mission and da‘wa and to abandon those wrong practices.
3. To reject and fight aggressive and manipulative ways of mission and da‘wa.
4. To defend the right to da‘wa and mission in our specific areas of living and working.
5. To accept the freedom of any human being to choose one’s religious adherence.
6. To regularly meet people of the other faith in order to build bridges of mutual understanding, trust, solidarity, and cooperation.
7. To work together with people of the other faith in transparency and mutual respect.
8. When planning any action, to seek the cooperation with people from the other faith, or at least to consider what this action might mean to them.
9. To take action to spread our understanding of da‘wa and mission to the grassroots level and to include it in our interfaith dialogue.

Witten, 13 October 2017

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Important insights from this document

I want to highlight five important insights of this document. I have quoted it in full because I believe that it is a valuable text which merits intensive study and discussion.

1. Parallels in the understanding of mission and da‘wa.

The passages on mission and da‘wa were formulated by the Christian and Muslim participants respectively. The text was then discussed in the interfaith drafting committee to ensure that each side could clearly understand and appreciate what the other side was suggesting. It turned out that both the Muslims and the Christians present had quite similar understandings of what their respective commission is: Both sides understand themselves as called to spread the message of their respective faith. Both sides see that this needs to be done well, without manipulation or even force. And both sides say that their task is to witness, to spread the word, to live out the message, but not to force anyone to believe or follow it. Da‘wa submits the message, but cannot force acceptance. Mission sows the seeds, but leaves the harvest to God. By so distinguishing witness from proselytism, both sides are able to continue or even strengthen mission and da‘wa when
encountering believers of other faiths without becoming oppressive or manipulative.

2. Religious freedom and mutual protection.
Both sides agreed that mission and da‘wa are integral parts of religious freedom. The document names the difficulty of such a position: It is indeed painful if someone from my faith turns towards another faith. But this pain needs to be borne, there is no way around it. The majority religion has to grant the minority the same freedom it claims for itself. And not just grant these freedoms, but protect them! “Da‘wa protects the right of mission, and mission protects the right of da‘wa.” In my opinion, this sentence is the culmination of the whole document. Christians who want to be true missionaries need to protect the right of Muslims to do da‘wa, rather than seeing efforts to spread the Muslim faith as a threat to their own faith and church. Only then can they expect the same attitude from their Muslim counterparts.

3. Dialogue and the understanding of truth
One of the difficulties of interfaith dialogue is how to deal with the question of truth. One solution could be to claim that nobody can really know the truth and therefore nobody can claim it for his or her own faith. But such an attitude is only possible for someone whose faith is neither deep nor personal. But how can you be convinced of the truth of your own faith without understanding another faith
as false, wrong or at least incomplete? This document solves the problem by insisting that both Muslims and Christians are convinced of the truth of their respective faith, but then qualifying this statement as follows: “Because it is God who leads us to this conviction, we mutually respect the sincerity of the other’s faith.” To say it in my Christian language: I believe that Jesus Christ is the Truth. This truth is not a dogmatic proposition, but a living person in whom I believe. And this faith is not something that I achieve on my own; rather, this insight and faith has been given to me by the Holy Spirit. Not I have the truth, the truth has me. This is nothing I can be proud about; on the contrary, it humbles me that God chose to reveal himself to me. Or, to phrase it differently: When I say that Jesus Christ is the truth, I do not speak about him, I testify to him from my personal experience. And from such a standpoint, I can accept that a Muslim testifies to his or her faith in just the same way. It is a deep, an absolute experience, and neither I nor they nor anybody else has a standpoint outside of all faiths to judge whether one claim is more justified than another. Therefore, I can stick to my claim while accepting that others have the same claim, and this can be a good basis for further dialogue and interaction.

4. Mission / da‘wa and dialogue belong together. Some discussions particularly in European churches seem to insinuate that dialogue and mission are
Mutually exclusive. Mission is understood as trying to convince the other of my standpoint, while dialogue is understood as mutual listening and learning. It has already become clear that the document quoted above sees neither mission nor da'wa in this light. Consequently, the document states that mission and da‘wa lead to dialogue. A testimony to the faith that shapes my being leads me to an attitude of openness and wanting to understand the faith of others. Such an understanding, by the way, has informed UEM policy for many years already, as can be seen by the fact that interfaith dialogue is an important part of the work of the UEM Evangelism Department.

5. Personal commitment
The document, while giving some recommendation, closes with a personal commitment of the participants. Rather than calling on others, they pledge a self-critical reflection of mission and da‘wa, a commitment to building bridges between people of different faiths, and to seek interfaith cooperation in their respective programs and projects. As mission and da‘wa flow from personal commitment, so does interfaith dialogue.

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An example for such an attitude is a document of the Evangelical Church in the Rhineland, Weggemeinschaft und Zeugnis im Dialog mit Muslimen, 2015 (no English translation available). The German text is available as a pdf document on http://www.ekir.de/www/service/weggemeinschaft-zeugnis-19148.php/.
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*Rev. Kachchakaduge Sumithra Nandani Fernando*

“Ice – Breaker”, on the move:

Creative building Peace with human security and dealing with violence confrontation through nonviolent action is a great challenge to Churches in Asia today. Many Asian communities are experiencing violence in various forms. Social and cultural vacuums created by war, violence, devastation of communities, economic changes and political oppression provide a foothold for religious fundamentalists; Christian, Muslim, Buddhist, Hindus and other major religions around Asia. Religious intolerance and religious conflicts are increasing in most countries; each country with ethno-religious communities has its own experiences losing thousands of people in ethno-religious clashes. Sri Lanka is consistently experiencing
violence and killings these days between majority Buddhists and minority Christians & Muslims.

In recent years, within Asian Communities Socio political structures have influenced the pattern of religion. It has become a tool for political parties to overrule the communities by taking law and order in their hands. During the last few decades’ minority religious communities in Sri Lanka- Hindus, Muslims and Christians – live in a state of fear and terror. Conflicts and violence in the name of religion and ethnicity are becoming a threat to civilians. Discrimination of people on the basis of caste and denial of their human dignity continues: “we are a society critically in need of healing and reconciliation, in every aspect of our relationships; it’s ourselves, with one and other, with God, and most urgently, with the earth”.

In this article I offer some personal insights on building Christian mission in the context of living in multi-faith communities and religiously plural ethnic boundaries. From my experiences I focus on assisting in order to be a credible voice in the Methodist Church in Sri Lanka. In such a challenging task, my insights that follow are a reflection on an encounter of my personal journey and life. I have drawn my strength from Ethno-Religious origin based “Home’ which has been my personal encounters. Especially my interaction with inter faith communities and carrying out diverse community empowerment in pluralistic contexts. To Empower the mission of peace building and transform our vision components into our daily lives,

1Rosemary Radford Ruether; Women Healing Earth – SEM Press, 1996, p121
I wanted to reflect on what Prophet Micah says, “Everyone will sit under their own vine and under their own fig tree, and no one will make them afraid” (Micah 4:4); which has shaped my vision on a journey of ethno-religious spirituality in my life and Ministry in the Methodist church Sri Lanka.

Brief overview on Church & Community

Sri Lanka is a multi-racial society there are 72% of Sinhala people who speak Sinhala language and live in the predominant “Sinhala” culture. Among them about 69% profess Buddhism as their religion while others belong to the Christian faith. In the recent past, due to many reasons, there were incidents that took place in Sri Lanka leading to a state of tension between Sinhala Christians and Buddhists. In this context, a conception of ‘ethno-religious’ identity has emerged in Sri Lanka as distinct from purely ‘ethnic’ or ‘religious’ identity. These identity groups include ‘Sinhala-Buddhists’, ‘Muslims’ (mostly composed of Moors who adhere to Islam) and ‘Hindus’ (mostly composed of ethnic Tamils) and Christians – comprising Roman Catholics, Protestants and other denominations. Ethnically speaking, Christians usually belong to the Sinhalese, Tamil and Burgher communities. Thus understanding how ethnicity and religion come together to create a complex, entrenched identity on ethno-religious lines is important to deconstructing the causes of contemporary communal violence in Sri Lanka.
Methodist Church in Sri Lanka is a multi-racial church – particularly in the North East & Central Districts. Especially, the inner-city areas and inner suburbs with their differences and own way of living, form an increasingly multi-racial congregations, with challenges and opportunities for all clergy, ministers, church related community workers and lay leaders who are involved in church related mission & community development work. In the present context churches have to analyze conflicts situations in their own perspective and according to the country situations. Methodological terms of peace building stand for involvement in ethnic, cultural and religious diversity.

While I am writing this article, the series of coordinated bombings on Ester Sunday that killed Easter worshipers in three churches and three hotels. It was carried out by a small group of extremist Muslims. It is felt that they do not represent the entire Muslim community. Until this incident most of the Muslims were peace loving moderates that have lived harmoniously with other communities in Sri Lanka.

A history of restlessness

Ethnic/Religious tensions in Sri Lanka were high prior to independence in 1948, and stoked by the 1956 election of the Sri Lanka Freedom Party under Prime Minister Solomon Bandaranaike. During this period, in 1956, State of Sri Lankan Government passed the Sinhala Only Act, which specified that Sinhala was the only language in the country, and on and on to the different kinds of constitu-
tions, which not only made the Sinhalese language the only language but also argued that Buddhism was the only official religion in the country.

The act privileged the country’s majority Sinhalese population and their religion of Buddhism over the minority Hindu and Muslim Tamils. The fallout from this legislation forced Bandaranaike to backtrack, but he was assassinated in 1959 by an extremist Buddhist monk for doing so. Inter-ethnic tensions continued with outbursts of mob violence. “Black July”, Sinhalese rampage against ethnic Tamils, marking the start of the inter-ethnic civil war.²

Thus, it is possible to say that not only the post-colonial rule attributed towards the growing restless situation around community but also that Sri Lanka has experienced violence since the end of a brutal civil war, which lasted from 1983 to 2009. In it, the Government, dominated by Sinhalese Buddhists, who make up a large majority in Sri Lanka, defeated the insurgent Tamil Tigers, a militant group that emerged from the Tamil minority, which is overwhelmingly Hindu and makes up about fifteen per cent of the country. Muslim and Christian minorities, both of which make up about eight-to-ten per cent of the population, have also historically faced discrimination.

Sri Lanka’s most active Buddhist extremist group is Bodu Bala Sena (Buddhist power force, or the BBS). The

² The Sri Lankan Civil War was an armed conflict fought on the island of Sri Lanka. Beginning on 23 July 1983, there was an intermittent insurgency against the government by the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam, which fought to create an independent Tamil state called Tamil Eelam in the north and the east of the island. Wikipedia
BBS entered politics in 2012 with a Buddhist-nationalist ideology and agenda, its leaders claiming that Sri Lankans had become immoral and turned away from Buddhism. The Sinhala Muslim riots in Sri Lanka in March 2018 erupted following a traffic accident in which four Muslim youth attacked a Sinhala driver in Kandy on 22nd February 2018. Emergency was imposed and the military was deployed to aid the police.

Why do ethnic and religious relations in Sri Lanka remain so harmless, even after the decade of war? Personally I feel that part of it has to do with the nature of Sinhalese nationalism, which continues to be debated as a topic both within conservative Sinhalese communities and more hardline Sinhala Buddhist nationalist groups that are operative within the country. In all aspects, at the time of independence we were a well incorporated Nation. Today, we are divided on racial and religious lines and suffering from Jamamith Muslim terrorism.

Thus a political, racial, ethnic and religious difference has been more or less the root course for community restlessness. All communities have their right to differences, but due to lack of understanding on multi and intercultural identities as minorities, ethnicities and religiousities, Community restlessness has spread in different terms in different situations.
Interdependence and Collective memories:

My collective memories regarding sharing and interdependence are both very important. I was born a Sri Lankan Sinhalese in a majority Buddhist village. I was born into a multi-religious household. My father was a Buddhist and my mother was a Christian. There were no Tamils or Muslims in our village. I went to a Christian missionary school where I have met Tamils, Muslims and Burghers. There were Sinhalese, Tamil and English streams and all religious communities welcomed and respected each other’s faith and religion. Therefore, my life has been molded with peaceful and deep understanding of otherness. In 1973 my parents got transferred to Puttalam District which is a predominantly, a Muslim area. I started my schooling at a Catholic School where again Tamil, Muslim, Christian, Hindus and Buddhist studied together, inherited rich community blessings sharing our social backgrounds.

My experiences are very much deep rooted with communities where I lived and learned from different cultures and religions. Since my childhood, I have reflected upon religion in cultures and societies and the importance, of its effects on teaching morals, values, spirituality, and a guided path of life. At times, however, these different beliefs can conflict each other, thus creating and causing secularism, intolerance, and discrimination towards other religions and cultures. Ever since humans formed different societies and communities, conflicts of power created discrimination and as a result, almost all
the communities suffer various forms of violence. For example, in 1973 in Puttlam at the main bus stand, a Muslim driver killed a Sinhalese driver due to their personal problems but it disturbed the whole community. People developed hatred and anger. This unfortunate cruel calamity created Muslim and Sinhalese to kill each other and destroy their properties, businesses etc. We were hiding in the jungle - no school, no church, nothing. It was after two months so that we started our schooling once again. But I must say that we never had any miss feelings towards each other even after that incident.

In all this, it can be seen that leaders of the dominant Sinhalese Buddhist population have frequently targeted religious minorities, including Christians and especially Muslims. In fact, Christians and Muslims in Sri Lanka have developed a degree of solidarity as persecuted minorities. Two predominant ethnic groups, the Sinhalese and the Tamils, whose members are Hindu, Muslim, and Christian, wrestled over questions of who gets to be in the majority, who has rights, and who gets to be seen as Sri Lankan. This, in broad terms, was the basis for the civil war that began in earnest several decades later. Because the conflict was primarily driven by ethnic divisions, Christians were not necessarily implicated on one side or the other.

However, there are increasing concerns relating to violence targeting places of worship and religious intolerance. Since the end of the war there have been high-profile incidents such as the attack on the Mosque in
Dambulla in April 2012. This has resulted in a limited understanding of the scale and nature of these incidents.

When any kind of social unrest sets in, there are small gangs of undisciplined people who take advantage of the situation. These are mostly teenagers who have had no proper schooling or education in cultural values. They run riot at times, resorting to looting and arson whenever they get the opportunity.

“It is both relevant and urgent to examine the way in which Sri Lankan people are struggling to cultivate justice, Reconciliation and peace in their traditional life as well As in the midst of their contemporary experiences”. 3

My first-hand experience is that I am living in a place where my father who was a Buddhist gifted me a piece of land. I have been born and bred in this area and after I joined the Ministry, I have been Working Island-wide. Recently, after 35 years I came back to my own village thinking of settling down there. However, I find the neighborhood changed and the surrounding community is new. All are Buddhists. I wanted to put up an entrance gate but when we started work the next-door people had called 119 Emergency and complained that I am trying to build a church there. Police came and investigated the situation and said I have my rights to build anything in my premises. But they reacted very badly and spread rumors around the majority Buddhist village that I am trying to build a church. This is a village where still we have our

3 David W Shenk; Justice, Reconciliation & Peace: Uzima, Nairobi, 1997p182
Mother Church and more than 400 families are worshiping. There was no necessity for me to build a church. However, the Police officer in charge stood by them accused me that I am dishonest and just wanted to get my way. The senior inspector insulted me saying “You Christians are having hidden agendas, creating problems for us. Christians are becoming a threat to us today.” What I want to point out is that the coherence of how diverse communities ought to make moral choices in their interaction with one another, and to judge their own and other people’s action reveal the nature of various desires where violated individuals and communities’ rights and developed disharmony in the communities. As mentioned earlier, Sri Lanka is a multi-ethnic, multi-religious country, although the ethnic mix is predominantly Sinhalese. The country is blessed by the teachings of four main religions: Buddhism, Hinduism, Christianity and Islam. However, ethno-religious differences unfortunately gave rise to mutual mistrust and dragged the country into a devastating armed conflict that lasted for three decades.

It is a very clear fact that though the country is blessed by the teachings of four main religions, as mentioned above, in its own perspective many stories give weight to transforming their own visions centered on creating ‘ethnic and religious disharmony. However, in more recent times, ethnic and religious relations in the country have been consistently strained by the rise of communalist politics which have deepened ethnic and religious di-

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4 Papers of the summer school 1996 May ; Liberating the vision, Center for contemporary Theology ,LSU College, Southampton
vides. Of course, communalization and the rise of identity politics are not very much distinctive to Sri Lanka. Ethnic and religious identification has acquired exceptional proportions in various communities in the country. Those who want to add a religious dimension to the alleged ethnic problem falsely claim to create space for disharmony.

**Present Religious tensions in Sri Lanka**

The fundamental Rights Chapter 111\(^5\) of the constitution affords us a deeper understanding of community rights, which is very much connected with crossing the bridge without an act of injustice and as to how we can prevent Religious violence and tension and desire to dominate over others. In our broken communities such religious violence and restlessness, in the face of the current situation, it clearly shows that our broken communities are tragically divided by various forms of injustice, personal and structural, built into the economics, social, religious or political frame works dominating the life of individuals and the Nation as a whole.

Many incidents have been reported of attacks on places of worship in Sri Lanka since the end of the war in May 2009. The report lists 65 cases of attacks on religious places of worship between May 2009 and January 2013. Direct attacks have been reported from all provinc-
es of Sri Lanka, making clear that the threat is not restricted to particular areas. Most of the reported incidents were from the Western province (16), followed by the Eastern province (12), the Southern province (11) and the North-Western province (9). These incidents gives a picture of a starting point to attacks against places of worship of the four main religions practiced in the country. The majority of these cases are against Christian places of worship, mostly against non-traditional churches and there are also a number of attacks on Muslim places of worship. The 65 attacks can be categorized into three main types: inter-communal attacks, intra-religious violence, and robbery.

In terms of inter-religious communal attacks the bulk of incidents where perpetrators have been identified, are instances of Sinhala Buddhist attacks on other religious communities’ places of worship. A significant proportion of the attacks of incidents relating to Buddhist and Hindu religious places are cases of theft and vandalism. There have also been several incidents of intra-religious violence between denominations of all the religious communities apart from the Hindu community.

On Palm Sunday (2019 April) the small Methodist Prayer Centre in Kundichchaankulama, was attacked. The center has been there for the last 15 years. It was the beginning of ‘Holy Week’ for followers of the Christian faith, and that was when mobs hurled stones and firecrackers at the building, following the arrival of Bishop Asiri Perera, President of Sri Lanka’s Methodist Church. Anuradhapura held Good Friday services under police protection. There
was a mysterious silence on Holy Saturday but on Easter Sunday, we were terribly shocked and deeply saddened by the barbarous acts of violence brought on innocent worshippers, children, women and men. These took place at the Easter Sunday services at St. Anthony’s Church, Kochchikade, St. Sebastian’s Church, Negombo and Zion Church, Batticaloa. Several hotels in Colombo targeting visitors to our country enjoying an Easter Sunday breakfast were also attacked. The suicide bombers killed at least 359 people and injured another 500 at churches and top-end hotels across Sri Lanka. Most victims were Sri Lankans, but at least 38 foreigners are among the dead.

Evidence is mounting that local jihadists linked to the Islamic State (IS) group carried out the attack. In Batticaloa, on Sri Lanka’s East coast, 14 children were among the 29 killed in a blast at the Zion Church. Hundreds of Sri Lankan families are in mourning. The choice of targets is more in line with IS ideology than with traditional types of communal violence seen in Sri Lanka.

For the first time in the History of Sri Lanka it was noted that Church services were stopped Island wide - almost all the churches were closed for three Sundays. The threat was aimed at Schools and public places. Terrorists’ main target was attacking Christian Schools. Civilians are not very happy with the State’s security, and they failed to send their children to school. Still the Schools are not in a position to reopen.
The present situation is the most important insight that arises in our societies. In the context of people becoming increasingly diverse in many ways such as culturally, linguistically and religiously, this kind of uniformity has become almost impossible. In fact as Christians we are not expected to be a part of uniformity. God is not ‘Uniformity’, He is ‘Unity’. He is unity in diversity. He is a living God remaining amidst a harmonious coexistence between people and nations. The nature of God is the best example of unity in diversity. Otherwise, the global society would set out on a path toward even greater discriminatory violence.

Mission of the MCSL\textsuperscript{6} : Space for Nonviolence Community

“Thus Church have living in the community, care in the community, concern for faith communities and create space for communities to pay solidarity in order to understand and the possibilities for open to the greater social involvement on what the Creator Redeemer is doing in our world and try to do it with him”.\textsuperscript{7}

Despite the associations with conflict, religion is also a site of reconciliation. The limited literature on this, however, is constrained by its case study approach. This article seeks to establish a conceptual framework for theorizing the relationship between religion and peacemaking in conflict societies where religion is perceived to be part of the problem. All the churches from numerous denomi-

\textsuperscript{6}Methodist Church Sri Lanka
\textsuperscript{7}Paul Ballard and Lesely Husselbee, Community and Ministry: An Introduction to Community development in a Christian Context: London, SPCK, 2007, p29
nations brought humanitarian relief to civilians during Civil war, Ethno – Religious conflict in Sri Lanka. Amid destruction and failed politics, church leaders emerged as the only players left standing with any credibility and national recognition, enabling them to effectively lobby the international community to support the communities while also brokering peace between communities torn apart by war and ethnic strife.

Churches in Sri Lanka have provided cautious and critical support to the peace process, among other things through interreligious cooperative endeavors to mobilize people for peace and national reconciliation. MCSL across the island wide religiously-motivated men and women are living and working in the midst of armed conflicts – different projects have taken initiative action to overcome violent conflicts, to establish and to build communities where peace is a reality.

War-torn Sri Lanka is to receive the first of a series of Good will Missions organized by the MCSL and sponsored by the Dortmund Church. I have been invited to join the Mission tour of Peace to Jaffna (Northern part of Sri Lanka). The purpose of the mission is to show solidarity with the people and community in the North who, for decades have been resisting a war and ethnic conflict. In the Mid 1990s MCSL Peace & Reconciliation Committee made efforts to meet with the Leaders of LTTE, Leaders of Inter Religious forums, Civilians, and church congregations. They visited Christian communities facing situations of violence in different regions of the country and promoted interaction within communities.
The other important Mission was’ Ecumenical living letters" teams (North /East) International Ecumenical Peace Convocation being organized by the World Council of Churches and NCCSL and Ecumenical churches in Sri Lanka has given much thought to this nature of the mission component. The ecumenical team came to Sri Lanka. "Living letters" is a mission by church representatives to express solidarity with and learn from the peacemaking efforts of local churches. The team includes four church representatives - from the USA, Kenya, Indonesia and South Korea. They are to meet major church and civil society players, as well as people from the grassroots in areas affected by the war and religious violence. It was important, that they stand firm and keep their prophetic voice, when the political leaders seem to be overwhelmed.

Almost all the Muslims in Sri Lanka are adherents of Islamic faith and their ethnicity & religion, as in the other parts of the World, are intertwined. Muslim and Christians never had any ill feelings towards each other or their faith or status of community. We have never been enemies. Up to the Easter day blast in 2019, in Sri Lanka Muslims and Christians have been livings with exceptional harmony in the context of serious tensions in many other parts of the World.

In the recent past when Muslims had tensions with Tamils and Buddhists, Christians were always there to express their solidarity with the Muslim communities. With this background ordinary Christians are confused and are
finding it difficult to comprehend the Easter day attack in Sri Lanka. NCCCSL and Ecumenical protestant churches are greatly involved in Peace building initiatives. We have been working in the Muslim villages providing them protection and mediating to overcome violence. Inter religious peace programs, creating community Dialogue initiatives to resist violence have been a deep mission component. Now it is very clear that this was mainly coordinated by extremist so called Islamic groups with many connections with the International World.

In fact during the unrest of communal riots Muslim and Tamil (Hindu) communities were harsh on each other. When I was a member of the CCA\textsuperscript{8} Women’s Executive forum in the year 2000, World Council of Church’s Decade to Overcome Violence program carried out by NCCSL\textsuperscript{9} we were able to carry out community Peace and reconciliation programs among women and children. MCSL Peace & Reconciliation committee promote several interfaith conferences with Muslims, Sinhalese & Tamils. NCCSL greatly supported the Ecumenical member churches to deal with Interreligious leadership to promote more of a non-violence culture among their congregations. In 2002 or 2003, MCSL started a conversation on religion, conflict, and peacemaking at community level.

Interfaith dialogue and Peace Initiative frame work has been a big part of my ministry and it has become a passion of my ministry. As a result of that at MCSL, I am

\textsuperscript{8} Christian Conference of Asia
\textsuperscript{9} National Christian Council of Sri Lanka
carrying out the project on Empowering War Widows and Children for Shalom. There I was able to create a forum for interfaith peace and reconciliation women’s groups as well as open a way for young children’s awareness on Inter-religious peace awareness. I had an opportunity to have an enriching dialogue while conversing with Tamil Hindu women. To them, it seemed interesting that we Christian women speak of the feminine side of theology and on this basis criticize certain practices of their culture.

While my main focus has been on Empowering War widows and community, I have begun to get more involved in the field of peacemaking and conflict resolution through these avenues and participated in UNDP Peace building South East Asia Regional programs. My own experiences Empowering Hindu War Widows and Children had been a deep sense of challenge. In order to counteract the communities culture of harmony and resist nonviolent within the communities MCSL Methodist Women’s groups and Lay volunteer leaders spend great deal of time and communicated more naturally with large number of families, widows, youth and children. These communities never had an opportunity to communicate even with their neighboring villages. Through the community peace building mission communication between Tamil to Sinhalese and even Tamil to Tamil began and they used their capacity to build peace from their hearts. Peace initiative interaction, create a space for restored broken relationships and build up harmonious communities. When other communities saw how these communities took initiative
to work out empowering their communities and changes happening in the neighboring villages, others also wanted to join with them.

**A Sign of Christian Perspective Solidarity**

One of the greatest challenges facing Sri Lanka today is the failure to bring about Ethno-religious communal reconciliation in the island. Hate has grown, gone out of control and has become viral. There are some Buddhists who think that Christians are mediators of past colonial era and consider them as enemies. Some others consider them as betrayers of Sinhala ethnic groups. Perhaps another important trend is the fact that Sinhala Christians share their ethnicity with Sinhala Buddhists while having their common religion with Tamil Christians. Over and above all these, the main reason for tension is related to the so-called unethical conversions from Buddhism to Christianity. In this context, the question of how these two Religious groups, who belong to the same Sinhala ethnic group, could live in peace and harmony with each other has become a deep-rooted problem in the community.

However, as we saw above, The Church is called by God to be a witness among the nations; it is called to be a redemptive and reconciling witness, a people who reveal that the reality of the Church through its leadership has also responded to the need of national unity when these seemed threatened. The attitudes of the churches’ officials have influenced the congregations in their charge,
and although these Christian communities are still distinctly ethnic in their composition, their outlook has been towards national unity. Thus, the Church has played a dual and important role in solidarity with other faith communities.

From the Christian perspective, those communities may be considered as ‘crucified people’ in the community. Encountering historical lessons learnt individual or collective process of none violent solution seeking is the most important task religious community’s face today. We need to reflect on the role of religions in building and binding communities by building bridges and crossing the deep-rooted boundaries. Church can be the agent of peace and change in the values of the community, a sense of caring, of nurturing and protecting the divine nature. ‘Kingdom belongs to God and He has given the earth to humans’.10 As such we should protect humanity, dignity, values others and identify ourselves to fight against all forms of violence. Closely connect with Spirituality to resist violence. Cross and crucifixion reflects, denying ourselves and our own needs. The perspective of redemptive visions that the Religious people must step out of their spiritual cages and go among people who are hurting in a broken society. Community based dialogues, inter-faith dialogues and conversation within the community are very essential. The church community has the potential to be a force of healing and reconciliation in a divided society. Through its practices of the Eucharist, confession, reconciliation, and forgiveness, proclamation, celebration and liturgy, as well

10Psalms 115:16
as through its ecumenical work, its involvement in politics and secular issues, and its influencing of civil culture, it has much to offer. Influencing moral values deeply profound faith and vision for community resistance reflects God’s love for every person. The Love came down from heaven to walk among us. We cannot bring about a mutual peace process unless we bring back our vision in order to share our spiritual gifts simply with a holistic and nurturing attitude to the broken community.

CONCLUSION

Under Article 9 of the Sri Lankan Constitution, Buddhism has been recognized as the foremost religion in the country, and ensures that it is the state’s responsibility to protect and foster the religion. The Article further ensures the freedom to practice or observe other religions.

‘The Muslim fundamentalist terrorists are not fighting for a separate State but to promote an extremely evil ideology. Therefore, the fight against them must be a war with modern weaponry’. "Sri Lanka is more than just a brief news story of tragedy and heartbreak - it is a beautiful country with a rich history and culture that many don’t even realize they are missing out on. The bombings that occurred and the terrorism that prevailed will never take away the country’s beauty or its people’s passion that makes up the tiny but mighty island of Sri Lanka”.

Sri Lankan Buddhists destroyed Christian churches but now they have realized that Christian community is a
peaceful community in the country. Buddhist leaders and in fact, the whole Nation appreciates the fact that within the Christian community there has been interreligious harmony. But it should not be taken for granted. Even Buddhist monks were appreciating the Christian attitudes during this situation. Sri Lankan Christian communities have proved that they won’t respond with violence. That’s the true witness and beauty of Christianity.

There is a need to hold a strong multi-faith and multi-racial dialogue in the country, in order to ensure that, Sri Lanka is a country, safe for all and all. Churches can be the agents of peace processes for changing the values of communities, to care, to nurture and to protect the divine nature. “Kingdom belongs to God and He has given earth to humans. Therefore we must protect humanity, dignity, values of others and their identities and fight against all forms of violence. Closely connect with Spirituality to resist violence. The cross and the crucifixion reflect, denying ourselves of our own needs. The perspective of redemptive vision is that Religious leaders, Communicators, Ministers and Educators must step out of their spiritual cages and go among people who are hurting in a broken society. Christian community has potential to be a force of reconciliation in a divided society.

As the Church of Sri Lanka “we have to Keep Calm & Carry on and “continue grace of God” Acts 13:439 (NKJV).
The Rev. Kachchakaduge Sumithra Nandani Fernando, is an Activist and Ordained Minister in the Methodist Church Sri Lanka, holds degrees in a Bachelor of Theology from the United Theological College of Bangalore and a Master of Theology, Specialist in Women’s Studies from the University of Southampton, United Kingdom. She was the first Ordained Woman who received a UEM Scholarship to preside with Postgraduate studies in UK. Her passion in Ministry is integration with Women Issues and Peace, in order to strengthen peacemaking, at the height of the ethnic crisis, she undertook many risky assignments. Previously, she worked with the National Christian Council of Sri Lanka, served as the Executive Secretary for the Women’s Commission, was a visiting lecturer in Theological College of Lanka Pilimatalawa and Visiting scholar for the Selly Oak Ecumenical Centre for Mission Studies, Queens College, Birmingham. Presently she is engaged in a project for empowering war widows and war affected children in the Northern District as an Executive Project Coordinator of Methodist Church, Sri Lanka.
Introduction: Radicalism and Terrorism

Radicalism arose from the Latin, *radix*, means root. Radicalism came out of the idea that political change must “come from the root” or the very basic source of society. Remy Cross defines three types of radicalism: the practice of high-risk or extreme movement activity, the process by which activists become radicals, and an identity ascribed to those activists who may or may not already be radicalized.¹ In the context of social movement, Thelma McCormack defines radicals as who advocate institutional change.² Jo Freeman gives an example of radicalism in women movement as a means of referring to elements within the women’s liberation movement, whose goals de-

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viated from the majority of other movement organizations. Despite of many definitions of radicalism, in this paper radicalism mean an act or a process of developing extremist ideologies and beliefs. As an act, radicalization may be violent or non-violent.

Terrorism is an extreme negative way of radicalism. Terrorism is meant to terrify. The word comes from the Latin *terrere*, which means to cause tremble. It came to common usage in political sense since French Revolution in eighteen century. The term *terrorism* frequently associated with violence committed by disenfranchised group desperately attempting to gain shred of power or influence. Sociologically, Mark Jürgensmeyer defined the act of terrorism as public acts of destruction, committed without a clear military objective, that arouse a widespread sense of fear. In Indonesia, Provisions in Law Number 5 year 2018 Chapter I Article 2 stated that terrorism is an act that uses violence or threats of violence that creates an atmosphere of widespread terror or fear that can cause mass victims, and/or cause damage or destruction to strategic vital objects, the environment, public facilities, or international facilities with ideological, political or security instability.

There is tendency that radicalism and terrorism is pointing a specific religion. In fact, terrorism is not a reflection of any religion and an act of terrorism can be hap-

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pened to any religion. For instance: the case of Asahara Shoko from Aum Shinrikyo (the Japanese cult) in 1995, the case of Paul Jennings Hill from Salvation Army (Christian) in 1994, the case of a large crowd of Hindu who demolished Babri Mosque in Ayodha in 1992. Therefore, radicalism or terrorism is not identical with one religion and it must be seen as criminality against humanity.

Charles Kimball wrote five warning signs if religion turning evil, they are: (1) absolute truth claims, (2) blind obedience, (3) establishing the “ideal” time, (4) the end justifies any means, (5) declaring holy war. On the other hand, Sya’afatun Almirzanah quoted Fox who argued that according to the theory of human action; people do not really act on the basis of religious motivation. Also, according to academic observers, a religious war analyzed closer motivated by socioeconomic, political, or territorial complaints. For example, the conflict in Aceh is often viewed as the conflict between militant Islam against secular government. In fact, the war is much about political self-determination and control over the province’s vast natural gas reserves as it is about religious ideology. In many cases, what seem to be religious problems are more often has its roots in ethnic conflict. For example, when migrants who are followers of one religion move to a region that is predominantly a different religion, tensions

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run high, especially when the migrant community acquires a strong position in the local economy or becomes sufficiently numerous to challenge the indigenous community’s grip on local politics. This dynamic has featured prominently in both of Indonesia’s “religious wars”. In Maluku, the conflict between Muslim migrants and indigenous Christians was the relevant trigger, much more than any disagreement involving indigenous Muslims. The common perception in the West that this conflict was the result of a Muslim campaign to eliminate Christians is incorrect. In fact, Christians were no less involved in killing Muslims than Muslims were killing Christians.  

The Increasing Role of Women in Radicalism and Terrorism

It is still fresh in our mind about the suicide bombing happened in Surabaya-Indonesia on 16th of May 2018. At least seven people died at three churches in Surabaya along with the six family members, the youngest of whom were girls aged nine and twelve. The father, Dita, contributed a car bomb; two sons aged sixteen and eighteen used motor cycles for their attack; and the mother with her two daughters wore explosives. From the data, they were identified as the member of Jamaah Ansharut Daulah (JAD) in Surabaya, Indonesia. Just few days before this violence, there were several bombing attacks happened in Indonesia. According to Indonesian Police Chief, Tito Karnavian, in the press conference on TV One 14th May 2018, there were two conditions that trigger these

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8 Almirzanah, “The Peace Brokers,” 24
attacks. The first, there was the world dynamic in which the central ISIS recessive and command their cells around the world to do the attack to switch the attention of the world from Syria. The second, it was a local dynamic in Indonesia. Some JAD leaders such as Aman Abdurahman and Zainal Abu Sori are arrested by police. This situation made the member of JAD mad and did the vengeance.

Radicalism and terrorism can be internalized not only by men but also by women. The case in Surabaya showed that a woman, Dita’s wife has a dream to be a bomber/ \textit{sahid}. In some cases, women become voluntarily active, even that woman was the one who recruited her husband and children. Nina Nurmla sees the relation of fundamentalism with the role of women in radicalism or terrorism. Nurmla quoted Munir who defined fundamentalism as believe in religious doctrines which restrict women. They restrict women in the domestic sphere on the basis of \textit{Shari’a} and ‘\textit{kodrat}’ (nature). Hasan al-Bana, an ideologue from Egypt said that a “women’s place is the home, and their primary roles are mother, wife and housekeeper.” In addition, AbulA’la al Mawdudi argued that to preserve the chastity of women, which he believes to be a basic human right, women should be kept in the house and in \textit{purdah}. In fundamentalism, men are regarded to be superior to women and naturally leaders of women.\footnote{Nina Nurmla, \textit{The Influence Of Global Muslim Feminism On Indonesian Muslim Feminist Discourse} in \textit{Al-Ja\textgreater mi’ah}, Vol. 49, No. 1 (Yogyakarta: Al-Jami’ah Research Centre of State Islamic University Sunan Kalijaga, 2011), p. 59}
In the later development, women are increasingly holding more roles in terrorism. From the document released by United Nation, since 2014 the Islamic State (ISIS) announced the formation of the female wing.\textsuperscript{10} They perform in numerous activities, such as procreating the next generation of militants, managing the logistics, recruiting new members, being political representatives, and acting as operation leaders and militants. Since ISIS existed, the role of women in terrorism is not only supporting role of terrorism but also the direct executor. ISIS lets women contribute in offensive ways as well as defensive combat operations. In wars and conflict zones, women play the roles both at the strategic and tactical levels. Karla Cunningham wrote that there are various reasons why women participate in terrorism, such as: (1) they have a personal relationship with a man/terrorist; (2) they have a low credibility as suspects; (3) they have a personal vengeance (rape cases); and, (4) they are convinced to do so. Nevertheless, the violence and discrimination to women who involved in these practices has become a warning issue that constantly encompasses sexual harassment.\textsuperscript{11}

Nowadays, women are being seduced by ISIS with their false definition of empowerment. Women do not choose their participation consciously. They are drawn in as victims and participants. There are some women and non-Muslim women who have been recruited and have been

\textsuperscript{10} United Nation Women Committee, “The Role of Women in Terrorist Organizations: the Case of ISIS” http://www.olinca.edu.mx/Olinmun/olinmun%202018/Background%20Information/1%20UNWOMEN%202018%20Background%20Information%20A.pdf (accessed on 5\textsuperscript{th} of September 2018)

kidnapped or have been held as prisoners or hostages and the victims served for sexual slavery. Main women responsibilities include: suitability as a wife to ISIS soldiers; birthing the next generation of jihad; advancing ISIS’ global reach through online recruiting; and maintaining order within ISIS’ network of women. ISIS justifies its actions by establishing opinion that Allah instructed that the purpose for Muslim women is to support the *ummah* ("community" in Arabic) by being a good wife and nurturing the following generation of jihad. At present, ISIS uses this statement as propaganda to persuade women into participating in the caliphate. ISIS’ goal is simple, to be able to establish a massive Islamic State by conquering the land throughout Syria and Iraq, while developing terrorist cells around the globe. They empower women in extreme/negative way and make them key players in future attacks.

According Cunningham, there are some reasons why women actively become terrorists:¹²

1. They are being used as tools of terrorism by man.
2. There is a potential in women to be proactive, not only being a supporter but also being pro-active executor.
3. Woman has no choice in life. They are forced to do so by man.
4. In ISIS: there is an offer/promise of welfare, higher salary, and free tuition fee at school which they cannot find in Indonesia.
5. Some of them are voluntarily active because of humanity reason: solidarity with other Muslim victims.

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¹² Cunningham, “Cross-Regional Trends”
Situation in Nias, Indonesia

The religious context of Indonesia can be described to have plurality. There are two realities of religious plurality in Indonesia. The first is the existence of six religions acknowledged by Indonesian government: Islam, Catholic, Protestant, Buddhism, Hinduism, and Confucianism. The second is the existence of internal streams and organizations in each religion. According to the Indonesian demographic data from Badan Pusat Statistik National, based on the last census in 2010, it showed that Muslim populations are 207 million (87%), Protestants are 16.5 million (7%), Catholics are 6.9 million (2.91%), Hindus are 4.0 million (6.9%), Buddhist are 1.7 million (0.72%), and Kong Hu Cu is 0.117 million (0.05%). Phenomenologically and sociologically, Indonesia cannot deny the plurality of religions.

In Nias Islands, located in the Western part of Indonesia, the religious plurality can also be seen. According to the data provided by Badan Pusat Statistik in 2016, there are four religions existing in five regencies in Nias Islands, and these are Islam, Protestant, Catholic and Buddhism. Based on the data, the Protestants are the majority in Nias Islands. Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in Nias Islands, people are living in diverse religious context.

Until today, religious people in Nias have never been experiencing such a conflict based on religion. Generally in Nias, the plural religious community is bound as family. However, the problem of radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia is a national crisis and the church has a calling to be the agent of peace in our plural community. Therefore, *Banua Niha Keriso Protestan* (BNKP) sees that the church also needs to take part in preventing and eradicating radicalism and terrorism. BNKP is being active and involving in *Forum Kerukunan antar Umat Beragama* (FKUB) or Reli-

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Regency</th>
<th>Islam</th>
<th>Protestant</th>
<th>Catholic</th>
<th>Buddhist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gunungsitoli City(^{15})</td>
<td>17,834</td>
<td>94,419</td>
<td>16,384</td>
<td>328</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nias Regency(^{16})</td>
<td>1,552</td>
<td>136,050</td>
<td>31,101</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>North Nias Regency(^{17})</td>
<td>6,882</td>
<td>90,537</td>
<td>33,927</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Nias Regency(^{18})</td>
<td>1,865</td>
<td>89,089</td>
<td>27,166</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>South Nias Regency(^{19})</td>
<td>7,344</td>
<td>373,719</td>
<td>76,694</td>
<td>___</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

gious Harmony Forum in Nias. On 31st of August 2018, FKUB Kota Gunungsitoli conducted a National Seminar related to the topic of eradicating radicalism and terrorism in Indonesia. Women from interreligious groups in Kota Gunungsitoli are also invited as the participants. In the group discussion, some women shared their interreligious experiences and proposed some strategies that need to be followed up by FKUB and the participants in Gunungsitoli.

Living in a plural society, the church needs to be aware about the way how the church defines mission. In the context of religious pluralism, mission as proselytism is challenged by the existence of other religions which need the recognition. More than that, the mission concept as proselytism can triggers conflict or clash among religions. According to David Kerr, the church is called to be aware in narrowing mission as coercive proselytism for against freedom of religion. The ecumenical side regarding missionary encounter with other religions, the WCC has repeatedly affirmed that the Church has a mission, and it cannot be otherwise. At the same time, it accepts self-critically that Christian witness has often been distorted by coercive proselytism-conscious and unconscious, overt and subtle.

20 The concept of proselytism in the Bible and in Christianity today displays many shades of color. In the Old Testament, the proselyte was an honor among Israelite for she/he became a fellow by following requirements such as circumcision, baptism, and the offering of sacrifice. The New Testament references to Jewish proselytes among the first Christians indicate that they were welcomed members of the early church (Acts 2:9-10; 6:5; 13:43). But since eighteenth century, coercive proselytism has had a negative connotation against freedom of religion.


22 Kerr, Christian, 12.
In the plural context, the approach towards other religions is determined our present and future relation. We also need to be aware to the exclusivism. Marianne Moyaert argued this approach is the “least open” to other religions. The pessimistic anthropology and Christomorphism of the exclusive position forms a serious difficulty in recognizing the other. Exclusivism sees a radical discontinuity between faith in Christ and the practices of other religions. The label ‘non-Christians’ for others makes a negative perspective to others. There is a clear boundary between Christians and non-Christians. This position has a real impact on how Christians build trust and agreement with others, and it will be a barrier for the genuine relation and genuine dialogue.

**Women and Their Roles towards Peace**

To eradicate radicalism and terrorism, women can learn from the history of social conflict in Indonesia and how women participate towards peace. We can learn from a small group of Moluccan women in Ambon who realized that violence will never solve existing problems. Women need to develop alternate strategies to put an end to conflict. This small group continued to meet and share their stories about their personal experiences of the conflict. The storytelling process helped them to realize their common plight as victims. They are demanding an end to the violence. In the conflict area, they were working with youth who were recruited to throw bombs, and empowering women to become agents of reconciliation and peace.

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Peace-building program referred to as “Closing the Gap”, which addresses prejudice, mistrust, and suspicion between Christians and Muslims in the Moluccas. We can learn from a group, the Peace Provocateurs, in Ambon. This group is a collaboration of young Christian and Muslim men and women called *Ambon Bergerak* (“Ambon on the Move”). Their core group consisted of about 10 individuals, each of whom had many contacts around the city’s major flashpoints. Utilizing a strategic team of established contacts across the town, the group frequently verified, and sometimes defused, “reports of mobs, roadblocks, and injuries in real time in an attempt to provide factual sources amidst the rapidly escalating situation”. Throughout the communal riots, they were on the phone with each other constantly, checking out stories and sending information via Twitter, Facebook, emails, blogs, and text messages. The members of the group would check the rumor and if they found the report was inaccurate, they would quickly send text massages explaining that it was a false rumor.\footnote{Sumanto Al Qurtuby, “Peacebuilding in Indonesia: Christian–Muslim Alliances in Ambon Island” in Islam and Christian–Muslim Relations (London: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group, 2013), 359.}

Other example is Lian Gogali, a Christian woman activist, whose house was burned down during the violence in Poso. She established an interfaith school for women named *Sekolah Perempuan Mosintuwu* (the Mosintuwu Women’s School) that aiming: (1) reuniting the broken relationships between Christians and Muslims, (2) awakening a gender awareness of the vital role of women in domestic and public affairs, and (3) creating mutual under-
standing and respect between the two religious groups. All courses taught in the school emphasize Christian and Islamic teachings and the ethics of peace and tolerance as well as theological and moral obligations for Muslims and Christians for establishing just-peace on earth. Students are also encouraged and invited to visit churches and mosques and other sacred places of both faiths and to take part in the religious services and activities of the other group.²⁵

Beside several examples before, some practical strategies for women in eradicating radicalism and terrorism are:
1. Empowering the nature of women as a loving, caring, and healing agent. Women have energy towards life and peace in amidst of the world that has been contaminated by radicalism and terrorism.
2. Empowering women to have a critical consciousness and to be more educated in receiving the information/teachings. Today there is a war of information: information endorsed for peace Vis à Vis information supported radicalism. There is a simplistic teaching in such religions about war against other religions, for instance, the massive teaching about jihad only or war only. In fact, we are not living in the context of war. Moreover, we need continuous research in every school, especially the religion teaching by the religion teachers.

3. Empowering women to be eager to learn the local, national, regional, and global situation.
4. Supporting the government effort towards peace and strengthening Ideology of Pancasila.
5. Learning textual approach in our religion and other religion. Religion has a key role in eradicating radicalism. In each Scriptures, the text towards peace is needed to be more used and more elaborated than text about the war narration and persecution. Here, the religion leaders also has key role in interpreting the text and being a living consistent role model in peace and to stop.
6. Supporting the role of women/mother/parent to be active in struggle against radicalism especially in family. Religion Teaching is not only the role of the father but also the mother. It is very important that a mother teach their children about the humanity. If there is a constructed narration developed, then there is also a way for deconstruction of single narration. Through this way, a role of parents can be a communicator to their children.
Bibliography


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Oinike Natalia Harefa is an ordained pastor in BNKP. Currently, she serves as the head of program and Oikumene bureau in the BNKP synod office. Also, she is lecturing on Missiology and Contextual Theology at STT BNKP Sundermann. She graduated from Jakarta Theological Seminary in 2010 and had her Master degree in Theology from Silliman University Divinity School in 2018. She is also interesting in gender, religions, and peace studies.
Christian Madura community of Sumberpakem lives in Sumberpakem village, Sumberjambe Sub-District, Jember regency, bordering with the Bondowoso regency, East Java Province. The majority of Sumberpakem villagers are the Madurese who are believed to be immigrants from Madura Island. The abundant natural resources affect the characteristics of Madurese in Sumberpakem. They are different from Madurese people in Madura Island. Sumberpakem village is a migrant cultural environment. The Madurese in Sumberpakem village have some differences related to their Madura tradition and values regarding the dialectical processes. This dialectical process produces a new characteristic of communication in Madurese Sumberpakem which may not be found on Madurese in Madura
Island or other Madurese communities. Madurese are accustomed to traditions that end in violence such as *Carok* (clashes using sharp weapons) done to defend their self-esteem when they feel harassed. However, for the Madurese Sumberpakem community *carok* tradition is not a common thing to do. There are several factors that influence it, such as:

- Communication between the Muslim and Christian Madurese in Sumberpakem with non-Madurese (Javanese and a small number of Dutch living in Sumberpakem) has a positive impact, making them more open minded.
- Having the same needs, such as to live side by side with mutual understanding, and high solidarity as a result of being both as migrants.
- They are cautious in everything that they do as they live as migrants in other’s area.
- There is a very interesting attitude found from the Madurese in Sumberpakem, which we may find rare right now, on tolerance. Tolerance is manifested in a concrete way through the neighborhood even in a pluralistic society. A strong tolerance grew from their awareness. This awareness is not build based on pressure or formal regulation, but from social values that says that diversity is a wisdom, a gift from God Almighty. This is the reason why they must take care of each other. This viewpoint is not formed in a short time but through a long process. They learn from the environment and the communities. The elderly villagers teach the young people about proper behavior and attitude to show
that they are faithful in their religion. Not only in their minds but also in their hearts. They have faith in their hearts and in everything that they do.

The basic values of tolerance in Muslim-Christian Madures in Sumberpakem is universal. These are acceptance, sympathy, empathy, caring about cultural diversity, willingness to live together, trust for each other and support each other (co-existence and pro-existence). These values were built for a long period of time and boundless process with intent to avoid exclusive attitudes, such as: selfishness and arrogance (particular-exclusive). In the end, they formed a humble attitude to control and balance the diversity. Living in harmony among the inter-faith.

The majority in Sumberpakem are Muslims but they still can live together and appreciate the Christians and other non-Muslim religions. They build their friendship by attending each others’ Religious Ceremonies, such as the Christian joining the Muslim celebration of Eid Mubarak or the Muslims joining Christians in celebration of Christmas. There is also an event that reflected tolerance called Slametan, an event that unites various aspects of social life and individual experience between religions that is able minimize the uncertainty, tension and conflicts. In Javanese, this ceremony is an interpretation of gratitude or offering to God Almighty, who owns everything. Being called in various names from different groups. In the ceremony they pray for welfare and blessings in life which is normally led by a religious leader or community leader.
Then after they pray, the food is served for all the attendees. The Madures Muslim-Christian in Sumberpakem attend this ceremony together, including the *slametan* for the dead.

In *slametan* for the dead, the dead body is carried out by the families. The *slametan* for death ceremony is held on the first day until the seventh day in a row, then continued on the 40th day and on the 100th day. During the *slametan* ceremony, led by a religious leader, they read praises or *dzikir*, as well as *tahlil* and *tahmid*, also referred to as *tahlilan*. In this village, the Christians, especially men, are familiar in attending *slametan* ceremonies. Same with the Muslims, they gather and read prayers according to their religion. The same thing happens, when a Christian dies, the Muslims take part to help those who mourn. They are familiar with decorating the dead body, arranging the flowers, putting the body in the coffin and so on. In the Christian tradition the ceremony of death is called consolation worship, in other words they also call it *slametan* for the dead. The reverend as a religious leader will give sermons about consolation that contain praises, or in the native language known as *kejunganpojenkahananrohani*. When the ceremony is held, the Muslims are also present there. They attend the ceremony as a form of tolerance. Not only that, they also come during the funeral.

In Muslim tradition and practice, before the dead body is buried, it is bathed, wrapped in a shroud and prayed for. After that, the dead body is buried in the cem-
tery. This ceremony is attended by many people, including relatives and neighbors that grieve. The Christians followed the ceremony from the beginning until the end. For the women, they go to the kitchen to join with the other women and help prepare the needs for the event, they bring necessities such as rice, sugar, etc. for the grieving family. In Sumberpakem, their form of attendance is called *alabet* (mourning). While the men (Christians) help the process of funeral, which is done in a group. They dig the grave, help in the burial, followed by prayers (Muslim funeral rituals) from the beginning until the end. Then they go back to the grieving family to eat together.

They (Moslems and Christians) do that because they have become part of the cultural society. Those attitudes are not bizarre, it is a common behavior in Sumberpakem village. They call it a tradition. According to the community religious leaders in Sumberpakem Village, relatives of the grieving family could bathe the dead body even though they have a different religion. They know what to do from the beginning till the end. There is no debate between them. The word *haram* (means: forbidden) is not used because the one who bathes the dead body is a Christian. This is not a mere sensation, but it is a natural fact in the community.

People in Sumberpakem with different religion believes that their presence in Islamic cultural traditions will not break their *akidah* (faith), instead it is a form of respect to show their strong solidarity with them. The solidarity builds upon an understanding that they are all
brothers and sisters. The idiom for these in Madurese language is “pagun a tretanansaterossah” (remain brothers forever). The religious tolerance referred to this is called sangkolan (a term in the Madurese language), an inheritance passed down from generation to generation.

Sangkolan is part of the life in Sumberpakem. This situation is an example of passing beyond the religious boundary that sometimes considered as an unreasonable or considered to be an infidel. However, the two religions often ignore those judgements. It has been carried out for a long time by both religions. The villagers believe that their faith will not be moved just by attending a different religious ceremony but instead their faith will be shown from how they obey and love their God. This shows that the villagers have a local knowledge that is beyond from being an educated man or urban person. The local knowledge of knowing and understanding that interfaith should work together, help each other and benefit with each other. So, it will not be burdensome for making this as an example of tolerance in Indonesia.

Another form of tolerance is marriage. Marriage generally starts with a wedding ceremony with the intention to form a family. The 1974 Indonesia Constitution Number 1 on Marriage, states that marriage is an inner and outer bond between a man and a woman, as husband and wife, with the aim of forming a happy and eternal family based on the Belief in the One Supreme God. In the constitution, there is no clause that states about interfaith
marriage. There is only an explanation that says, “That marriage is legal if done according to the laws of each religion and beliefs”. This constitution indirectly prohibits interfaith marriages. However, because of the complexity, the problem of interfaith marriage arises. In fact, the interfaith marriage is really happening. They do it for love. The most popular method to resolve the interfaith marriage is by getting married overseas. Getting married in Indonesia have to be officiated in two different religious traditional ceremonies. Meeting and connecting with different religions are very much possible to happen considering that we live among people that have different cultures and religions. Cases like this often occur with the Muslims and Christian Madures Sumberpakem but it is not a big deal. Interfaith marriages are carried out according to family agreements. The family agreement becomes the basis for the sustainability of their relationship.

Although it is recognized that interfaith marriages are rare, that does not mean there is no interfaith marriages. The common thing is either the bride or the groom will have to convert into her or his partner’s religion and the ceremony will be held in one religion. For example, if the bride converts to Muslim, then the ritual is held in an Islamic way, and vice versa. For the Sumberpakem community, this kind of marriage begins with a dialogue within the family. No one is forcing to hold the ceremony with their own religious tradition. This condition occurs because some of those who are experiencing an interfaith marriages are still bonding with their families. The inter-
faith marriages never caused debates between religions. This was also acknowledged by a community leader, who said that interfaith marriages occurred because of the bond between the families. Questioning interfaith marriages is disturbing the relationship. From this explanation, it is understandable that the Sumberpakem villager, besides being permissive, they also have a reinterpretation of each religion. They are not too rigid in interpreting marriage according to the existing rules, but are more flexible and open minded. This condition could reduce the tensions between religions which happen a lot in other places.

These are several factors that form a strong attitude of tolerance among the Sumberpakem villagers:

- The Madures culture that tends to be hard (tend to be violent) combined with the agrarian culture produce a strong tolerance among Madurese Muslim-Christians in Sumberpakem.
- The Madurese in Sumberpakem tend to maintain their attitude by being tolerant as migrants.
- Having the same job as farmers make them become more understanding with each other.

We could also see their tolerance through the structure of their Madureses’ houses, which shows a strong bond as a community. The Madurese’s housing is lined up with one long yard. This reflects the attitude and habits of Madurese toward others and with their own community.
The majority of livelihood in Sumberpakem is farming. But there are also those who work as *batik* craftsmen, birds' cages makers, small traders, civil servants, military and police. Based on their income, most of them are classified in the middle and low class status. The main reason comes from their low level of education. The average villagers graduated from Junior High School, while few of them graduated from Senior High School. This situation also leads to an increase of an early marriage, especially for girls. The tradition of early marriage is also influenced by existing culture and traditions. In the Madurese tradition, if their daughters do not get married early, it will be a disgrace to the family and become an unpleasant story among the neighbors.

Therefore, the presence of churches, particularly Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan (GKJW) Sumberpakem Church has brought new positive changes for the development of the Sumberpakem community, particularly the Christian Madurese.

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE ESTABLISHMENT OF GKJW SUMBERPAKEM

*How did the Christian community develop in Sumberpakem?*

The spread of Christianity in Sumberpakem Village cannot be separated from the spirit of pietism in the 19th century by the Dutch Christians called Netherland Missionary Society or the NZG (Nederlandsche Zending Genootschap). Several other Missionary institutions were also established
in many kinds of form. The large number of missionaries encouraged the Dutch East Indies government to organize the Missionary service area and concluded that each Missionary Institution has one region only and one of them settled in Sumberpakem Village. The Missionary is Ds. Van Der Spiegel.

The Sumberpakem village is dominated by the Madurese which affects a lot of their cultural practices. They have a high tolerance for new teachings like Christianity. Fanatical Islam was still part of them, but the arrival of Christians requires them to have tolerance and slowly the fanaticism faded away. The missionary in Sumberpakem Village was pioneered by an institution who also provided services in the Eastern end of East Java and Madura, namely the Java Committee.

The Java Committee is a new door for Missionaries for the Madurese. They were encouraged to form a new congregation such as: Sumberpakem Congregation (1882) and Bondowoso Congregation (1896). These churches thrived in Slateng, Kayu Mas, Bremi, and Kangean Island (east of Madura Island). One of their programs was to serve the people who are losing their faith. Their method is through individual witness, involving the congregation to witness their faith. They send out brochures to inform the villagers about their work, build schools, churches, medical center, Manse and held family fellowship. There are not many distinctions in the methods between java Committee and NZG.
The first reverend of the Java Committee in Bondowoso was Dr. J.P Esser (Son of Rev. J. Esser) in 1880-1889, he was a former Timor Resident and medical student in Scotland. In September 1880 Dr. J.P Esser arrived in Bondowoso and chose to live in Sumberpakem Village, Sumberjambe Sub-District, Jember Regency. In the beginning, the villagers were not open minded with the Gospel and Missions. So, he started by building an Elementary Christian school and medical center. Aside from improving the villagers’ education, it is also his tool to approach the villagers. However, as time goes by, the devotion of the villagers towards the school decreased.

Even though the interest to study was decreasing, there was a diligent and obedient student which in the end became a Christian. His name is Edin, but he was better known as Ebing. Through his perseverance, he introduced Christ’s work to the Madurese people. He was the first Christian in Sumberpakem and was baptised by Rev. Dr. JP Esser on July 23, 1882 (which became the birthday of Sumberpakem Church) and later in 1884, Ebing’s brothers and sisters also received baptism; Sonidin, Kaniso, Mbok Bangsa, Masora and others.
Before returning to Netherlands, Rev. Dr. JP Esser ordained Ebing as a reverend. Ebing helped Rev. Dr. JP Esser to translate the Bible to Madurese language (in Madurese, the Bible is called *Alketab*), and also helped to preach the Gospel in some areas. As a result, in 1887 there were 14 Christ believers in Sumberpakem Village. When Reverend Dr. JP Esser took a long leave to go back to Netherlands, Ebing was chosen to be the Christian community leader in Sumberpakem Village, Ebing was also allowed to serve the sacrament and as a substitute teacher of the school.

Through his efforts in 1900 in Sumberpakem Village, 43 people converted to Christianity. Ebing was also given the responsibility to serve as Christian fellowship leader that was established in Sumberpakem Village. He was in charge for the fellowship together with staff members from the Java Committee who lived in Bondowoso. There were also people who became Christians in Slateng, Northeast of Sumberpakem Village because of him. Ebing was the first local pastor to be officially ordained in East Java, but he only used his position as a reverend if there is no delegate from Java Committee. Besides the missionary from Java Committee, Ebing also helped to serve the Missionary in Bondowoso, Sumberpakem Village, Slateng, and other East end of East Java which are the regions that were served by the Java Committee. Finally, he was given a service area in Slateng. For almost 45 years Ebing preached the gospel faithfully to his Madurese brothers and sisters until he died in 1928.
Finally, in 1931 after a significant missionary development, the Christians in Sumberpakem Village had its own church incorporated under the name of GKJW (Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan) or East Java Christian Church. They considered that the congregations under the Java Committee are covered in GKJW, even though it was not official until 1940 that Java Committee merged the congregations under GKJW.

During the Japan Colonialization in the Dutch East Indies, many Europeans were arrested including the Missionaries. Likewise, Ds.H.W. Van den Berg, who served in Sumberpakem, was arrested and taken as prisoner by the Japanese, causing panic among Christians in Sumberpakem because they lost their leader. After Ds.H.W. Van den Berg left, Alpeyus Kaeden became Reverend in Sumberpakem.

In 1940, Reverend Alpeyus along with Mr. Japit, Mrs. Srahmo and Mrs. Maria were arrested. They were arrested in Kalisat by the Japanese due to a slander from a group of people who did not like them. They accused Christians as anti-Japanese. Because they were not found guilty of these charges, the Japanese finally released them.

After Indonesian Independence, the Sumberpakem church is developing along with other Javanese Christian congregations incorporated in the Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan. Here are the reverends who have worked in the Madurese Christian community since the Japanese era until now.


For almost two decades, Indonesia has been hit by various issues that may destroy the national unity and harmony. These attacks that are based on religious fanaticism and intolerant attitudes are being spread through social media. This has considerable potential to break the harmony and unity among church people. It is
a call for the church to find a way out from various religious, ethnic, and social issues to avoid and resolve the destruction of unity that has been intertwined in diversity.

GKJW Sumberpakem in Sumberpakem village, Sumberjambe Sub-District, expresses their faith and lives their faith in Madura culture, living together with non-Christian Madurese people. Through the harmony within the Sumberpakem villagers who taught us that Madurese ethnicity does not live in violence and religious fanaticism. The presence of the church at least reduces the stereotype that Madurese ethnic is intolerant and has high resistance to differences.

Family ties (came from the same ancestors), migrants, economic equality, firmly holding on to the culture are the main things that will continuously passed down from generation to generation so that they are no longer resistant with diversity.

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Potret Komunitas Kristen Madura di Desa Sumberpakem Kecamatan Sumberjambe Kabupaten Jember Jawa Timur (dalam Bahasa Indonesia)

Pdt. Fajar Wicaksono

Komunitas Madura Kristen di desa Sumberpakem terletak di desa Sumberpakem kecamatan Sumberjambe kabupaten Jember yang berbatasan dengan wilayah kabupaten Bondowoso Provinsi Jawa Timur. Penduduk desa Sumberpakem mayoritas berasal dari komunitas suku Madura yang menurut cerita merupakan pendatang dari pulau Madura. Keadaan alam yang subur yang sedikit banyak memengaruhi sifat dan watak orang Madura di Sumberpakem berbeda dengan orang Madura yang ada di Pulau Madura. Lingkungan sosial budaya komunitas Madura Kristen Sumberpakem merupakan lingkungan budaya perantauan. Kehidupan sosial budaya masyarakat
Madura di desa Sumberpakem tidak jauh berbeda dengan kehidupan masyarakat Madura umumnya, tetapi ada beberapa perbedaan yang berkaitan dengan tradisi dan nilai kemaduraan. Mereka mengalami proses dialektika dengan tradisi dan nilai yang baru maupun dengan kondisi alam. Proses dialektika ini menghasilkan kesepakatan atau kompromi baru yang merupakan ciri khas dari orang Madura di Sumberpakem yang mungkin tidak dijumpai dalam kehidupan masyarakat Madura di pulau Madura atau masyarakat Madura lainnya. Tradisi yang berpotensi menghasilkan kekerasan misalnya Carok (pertengkaran dengan menggunakan senjata tajam clurit) dilakukan untuk membela harga diri karena merasa dilecehkan. Namun tradisi Carok ini tidak banyak dilakukan oleh masyarakat Madura Sumberpakem. Ada beberapa faktor yang memengaruhinya misalnya:

- Komunikasi yang terjalin antara masyarakat Madura Islam, Madura Kristen di Sumberpakem dengan masyarakat non Madura (Jawa dan sebagian kecil orang Belanda yang tinggal di wilayah Sumberpakem) turut memberikan pengaruh positif membuka wawasan berpikir menjadi lebih terbuka luas.
- Adanya kebutuhan yang sama yaitu ingin hidup berdampingan saling pengertian, memiliki solidaritas yang tinggi sebagai wujud perasaan senasib dalam perantauan.
- Kehati-hatian dalam menjaga diri, sebab mereka berada dalam daerah orang lain, bukan daerahnya sendiri.

antara keluarga. Mempersoalkan nikah beda agama dinilai akan membuat hubungan diantara mereka akan menjadi terganggu. Dari penjelasan ini, bisa dimengerti bahwa masyarakat Sumberpakem kalau tidak disebut permisif, memiliki reinterpretasi terhadap agama masing-masing. Mereka tidak terlalu kaku menafsir soal ketentuan menikah sesuai aturan yang ada, melainkan lebih leluasa dan terbuka. Kondisi ini memang secara sosiologis, dapat meredam ketegangan diantara mereka sebagaimana banyak terjadi di tempat lain. Ada beberapa hal yang merupakan faktor terbentuknya sikap toleransi yang kental di kalangan masyarakat Sumberpakem, antara lain:

- Muara pertemuan antarbudaya yang cenderung keras dengan budaya agraris perkebunan kemudian menghasilkan sikap hidup saling toleransi yang kental diantara Islam-Kristen Madura di Sumberpakem.

- Umumnya orang Madura yang hidup di Sumberpakem berupaya bersikap moderat dan toleran karena mereka sebagai pendatang yang harus menjaga sikap, perasaan orang lain di daerah atau kampung orang lain dengan bersikap toleran.

- Struktur ekonomi rata-rata yang sama yaitu sebagai petani dan buruh tani mereka bersikap tidak mau menonjolkan sikap keras dengan harapan tetap memperoleh pekerjaan untuk memenuhi kebutuhan hidup dan tenang dalam menjalani hidup.
Sikap hidup toleran juga dapat kita lihat dari bagaimana masyarakat Madura memilih dan memiliki bentuk bangunan rumah tinggal sebagai bentuk satu persaudaraan atau satu komunitas yang memiliki keterikatan emosional dan kekeluargaan. Masyarakat Madura memiliki pola pemukiman rumah tinggal berderet berjajar dengan satu halaman rumah yang panjang. Hal ini memperlihatkan sebuah sikap hidup dan kebiasaan orang Madura yang berkaitan dengan relasi sosial yang menjadi cerminan tentang sikap hidup mereka terhadap orang lain serta cara mereka melindungi kelompoknya.

Pada umumnya masyarakat Sumberpakem memiliki matapencaharian sebagai petani dan buruh tani. Namun ada juga yang menekuni pekerjaan sebagai pengrajin batik, pembuat sangkar burung, pedagang kecil, PNS, TNI dan Polri. Mereka pada umumnya tergolong dalam strata ekonomi menengah ke bawah. Suatu hal yang memengaruhi adalah rendahnya tingkat pendidikan yang rata-rata berpendidikan SMP dan ada sebagian kecil lulusan SMA. Dengan rendahnya tingkat pendidikan, juga banyak berpengaruh terhadap perkawinan usia yang sangat muda khususnya terjadi pada anak-anak perempuan. Tradisi kawin muda juga dipengaruhi oleh budaya dan tradisi yang ada. Dalam tradisi Madura jika anak perempuan mereka tidak cepat-cepat dikawinkan, maka hal tersebut merupakan aib bagi keluarga dan menjadi bahan pembicaraan tetangga.

Oleh karena itu kehadiran Gereja utamanya Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan (GKJW) Jemaat Sumberpakem
membawa perubahan baru yang berdampak positif terhadap perkembangan masyarakat Sumberpakem khususnya komunitas Kristen Madura.

SEJARAH SINGKAT BERDIRINYA GKJW JEMAAT SUMBERPAKEM

Bagaimana Komunitas Kristen Berkembang di Sumberpakem?


Masyarakat Desa Sumberpakem didominasi oleh suku Madura dan sedikit etnis Jawa, sehingga corak kehidupan banyak diwarnai oleh budaya Madura sehingga menjadikan kehidupan yang ekslusif. Rasa toleransi dalam jiwa mereka begitu tinggi bahkan terhadap ajaran baru seperti ajaran Kristen. Semangat fanatisme Islam tetap ada dalam diri mereka, namun rasa simpati dan toleran terhadap kedatangan ajaran Kristen membuat ego dan
fanatisme keagamaan mampu dikuasai. Usaha pekabaran Injil di Desa Sumberpakem dipelopori oleh sebuah lembaga yang bertugas memberikan pelayanan di daerah ujung timur Jawa Timur dan Madura yaitu *Java Committee*. *Java Committee* adalah pintu gerbang pemasyurkan Injil kepada suku Madura sehingga lahir jemaat-jemaat Madura antara lain Jemaat Sumberpakem (1882), dan Jemaat Bondowoso (1896). Wilayah pelayanan *Java Committee* ada di Slateng, Kayu Mas, Bremi, dan Pulau Kangean (timur Pulau Madura). Program Java Committee adalah melayani orang-orang Belanda yang mulai meninggalkan imannya. Pelayanan *Java Committee* adalah *individual witness* dengan melibatkan warga jemaat untuk ikut bersaksi. Pendekatan tersebut diikuti dengan sarana dan prasarana berupa brosur, pendirian gedung sekolah, pendirian gereja, pendirian balai pengobatan, dan pastori, serta pendekatan spiritual dengan mengadakan persekutuan doa, dan ibadah keluarga. Pola pelayanan *Java Committee* ini ternyata tidak jauh berbeda dengan Pelayanan yang dilakukan oleh NZG.

Pendeta pertama *Java Committee* di Bondowoso adalah Dr. J.P Esser (Putra pendeta J.Esser) pada tahun 1880-1889 mantan Residen Timor dan sekolah kedokteran di Skotlandia. Pada bulan September 1880 Dr. J.P Esser tiba di Bondowoso dan memilih tinggal di Desa Sumberpakem Kecamatan Sumberjambe Kabupaten Jember. Ia mendirikan sekolah Kristen dan balai pengobatan (poliklinik) di Desa Sumberpakem yang
dalam pertumbuhannya banyak mengalami kesulitan sebab orang-orang Madura hanya mau menerima pelayanan kesehatan dan pendidikan saja tetapi tidak mau mendengar kesaksian atau Pekabaran Injil Dr. J.P Esser. Pelayanannya di Desa Surnberpakem dimulai dengan membuka sebuah sekolah dasar yang tujuannya untuk memperbaiki SDM masyarakat dan memudahkan melakukan ajaran injil. Namun sekolah tersebut setelah berjalan lambat laun kurang diminati oleh masyarakat sekitarnya.

Diantara para murid yang mulai menyeusut ada seorang murid yang rajin belajar dan patuh yang akhirnya menjadi Kristen. Murid tersebut tidak lain adalah Sadin, dan lebih populer dengan sebutan Ebing karena anak pertamanya bernama Ebing.


Akibat perkembangan yang cukup baik usaha pekabaran Injil ini akhirnya pada tahun 1931, masyarakat
Kristen di Desa Sumberpakem sudah mempunyai gereja sendiri yang berbadan hukum dengan nama GKJW (Greja Kristen Jawi Wetan) atau Gereja Kristen Jawa Timur mereka menganggap jemaat-jemaat asuhan Java Committee juga terhisap dalam GKJW, walau secara resmi baru tahun 1940 Java Committee menggabungkan jemaat-jemaat asuhannya ke GKJW.


1. Pendeta Alpeyus Kaeden, 1942 – 1972


Hampir dua dasawarsa bangsa Indonesia dilanda berbagai isu yang berpotensi untuk merusak keutuhan kerukunan budaya adat istiadat dan aspek kebangsaan yang cukup berat bergagai macam ujaran kebencian hujatan fanatisme agama dan sikap intoleran semakin meraya dijagat media sosial. Hal ini memiliki potensi
cukup besar memecah belah dan mengoyak keharmonisan hidup. Situasi ini mengundang keprihatinan yang mendalam sudah layaknya gereja ikut berperan aktif menjawab berbagai isu sosial keagamaan, etnis agar terhindar dari kehancuran kebersamaan yang selama ini sudah terjalin dalam kebhinnekaan.

GKJW Sumberpakem yang berada ditengah-tengah masyarakat desa Sumberpakem kecamatan Sumberjambe mengekspresikan iman dan menghayati imannya dalam budaya Madura, hidup bersama masyarakat Madura yang bukan Kristen. Keharmonisan Hidup yang selama ini terjalin memberikan pesan dan gambaran bahwa etnis Madura tidak selamanya hidup dalam kekerasan dan fanatisme agama. Kehadiran gereja setidaknya mengurangi stereotip bahwa etnis Madura tidak toleran dan memiliki resisten yang tinggi terhadap keperbedaan tidak sepenuhnya benar.

Ikatan kekeluargaan (berasal dari nenek moyang yang sama); menjadi warga perantauan, kesetaraan ekonomi, teguh memegang adat dan budaya menjadi hal utama yang secara terus menerus diwariskan dari generasi ke generasi sehingga mereka tidak lagi alergi dengan sesamanya yang berbeda.
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1. Abstract

The Republic of Indonesia is a big country that have diverse cultures and beliefs. There are approximately 300 ethnicities, 721 regional languages besides Indonesian as the official language, six legal religions and various religious traditions. Different places have different majority and minority religions. In some places there are religions that are discriminated from among the minority. A regional regulation imposes that there should be limited activities. Religious institutions and governments were trying to find solutions to resolve frictions and conflicts. One of the ways to resolve this is through dialogues among religious leaders. However, as of the present, the conflict hasn’t been resolved.

In this paper, it will be called GKJTU Pulosari
Is there a right formula to deal with all kinds of religious conflicts that is happening? Only tolerance and mutual respect will overcome it. But how we translate tolerance and mutual respect is something that needs to be addressed. Church is also required to participate in translating the meaning of tolerance. The tolerance will be built if religious institutions are willing. As a communion, the church must start to do its part. If both parties are just waiting for the appropriate timing, it may create tension and awkwardness between religions in the long run.

2. Introduction

Interfaith dialogue is not an easy thing to do especially if there is an unequal number of believers between religions. For example, in one Area, Religious A has 95% believers, and the rest, 5%, is Religious B. Mostly what happens is the 95% will dominate without considering the 5%. The closest example we could see is at the decision making styles among ethnic churches, the voices of the larger ethnic group tend to be heard more than the minority. Does this mean that there will be no harmony in this condition? No, not all will end up unharmoniously. For example, in Pulosari Sub-District, Pemalang Regency, Central Java, the harmony is established even when there is an unbalanced number between majority and minority religions. 99% of the population are Muslim and only 1% are Christians.\(^2\) However, there is no discrimination, instead it is an extraordinary harmony. In this article, I will explain GKJTU

\(^2\)Based on the data at Pulosari District, it has 58,032 Muslims and 571 Christians
Pulosari’s agenda as one of the churches in Pulosari. A church amidst weaknesses and limitations, and recognized by other religions, government, and community leaders.

3. Methodology

This article is compiled using interview method, conducting interviews to respondents and utilizing books as references.

4. About GKJTU Pulosari.

Historically, GKJTU Pulosari is a church originally founded by the followers of Kyai Sadrah, a Missionary in Java, which in 1900 was taken by a Mission institution named Salatiga Zending. GKJTU Pulosari located in Gereja Hamlet, RT 25 / RW 06, Pulosari Village, Pulosari Sub-District, Pemalang urban-village, Central Java 52355. There are approximately 300 church members from children to elderly. Since 2013, the church has been served by a Reverend named Rev. Juwasto, S.Th, after about 18 years without a reverend. The ministry was served by the reverend along with 7 elders and deacons. The reverend graduated from a university while the others graduated from Senior and Junior High Schools. The church members are 90% farmers, 5% employees and 5% traders.
5. GKJTU Pulosari’s congregation and Its neighborhood

As mentioned above, GKJTU Pulosari is located at Gereja Hamlet RT 25, Pulosari Village, Pulosari Sub-District, Pemalang Regency, Central Java. To help the readers to have a clearer view, I will describe GKJTU Pulosari more specifically.

5.1. Pemalang Regency

5.1.1 Geography

Pemalang Regency is in Central Java, precisely on the north coast of Java Island, it is located between 109° 17’ 30” - 109° 40’ 30” East Longitude and 8° 52’ 30” - 7° 20’ 11” South Latitude. The land area is 111,530 hectares include 38,694 hectares of rice fields and 72,836 hectares of dry land.

The borders of Pemalang Regency:
- North side: Java Sea
- East side: Pekalongan Regency
- South Side: Purbalingga Regency
- West side: Tegal Regency.

Pemalang Regency is divided into 14 Sub-Districts covering 222 villages/urban villages.

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3 https://bappedasemarang.wordpress.com
Types of landform found in Pemalang Regency:

1. Coastal area
   Area with altitude between 1-5 meters above sea level. This area includes 18 villages and 1 urban village located in the Northern part.

2. Lowland area
   Area with altitude between 6-15 meters above sea level. This area includes 98 villages and 5 urban villages located in the Northern part.

3. Plateau Area
   Area with altitude between 16 - 212 meters above sea level. This area includes 35 villages, located in the central and Southern parts.

4. Mountainous area
   Divided into two, such as:
   - Areas with altitude between 213 - 924 meters above sea level. This area includes 55 villages, located in the Southern part.
   - Areas with altitude of 925 meters above sea level. This area includes 10 villages and bordering Purbalingga Regency in the south.
5.1.2. Demographics

In 2016, Pemalang Regency’s population was 1,292,573 with 639,797 men, and 652,776 women.\(^4\) Considering that the data was taken about two and a half years ago, surely the number of populations now is increasing. Pemalang is a Sub-District with the highest number of populations, 177,602 people. Whereas the Sub-District with the smallest number of populations is Warungpring Sub-District (38,846 people)\(^5\). As for religion data, in Pemalang Regency there are six religions and beliefs, with the following data\(^6\):

- Islam: 1,490,948
- Protestant Christian: 4,761
- Catholic: 2,690
- Buddha: 88
- Hinduism: 271
- Konghuchu: 190

Pemalang Regency has 876 mosques and 3634 musalla. It also has Nur Kalam Great Mosque located in the west of the Pemalang Regency square. For Christian, there are around 32 Protestant Churches and 15 Catholic Churches. For Hinduism, there is a Pura named Pura Satya Darma. For Konghuchu, there are two Temples named Tjeng Gie Bio

\(^4\) ........*Pemalang dalam angka 2017*, (Pemalang: BPS Kabupaten 2017), page 78
\(^5\) Ibid...
\(^6\) https://jateng.bps.go.id
and Hok Tek Cheng Sin. For Buddhism, there is one Vihara named the Parama Maitreya Vihara\(^7\).

5.2 Pulosari Sub-District

Pulosari Sub-District is geographically located in the southern part of Pemalang, precisely on the slopes of Mount Slamet. It consists of 12 urban villages with most of the resident are farmers. In 2018 the population is around 58.032 people\(^8\). There are only two religions, Muslim and Christian, whereas there is still religious tradition even though there is no institution that covers it. It has one religious organization named PCNU Pulosari. However, people in Pulosari Sub-district acknowledge that there are Muhamadiyah and LDII but there is no legal institution for that\(^9\). There are also Ansor Youth Movement and Fathayat Nahdatul Ulama. There are community organizations such as Pancasila Youth. For Christians itself, there is no organization at this Sub-District level because the small amount of Christians.

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\(^7\) The source is from the Ministry of Religious Affairs Pemalang Regency 2019

\(^8\) Fajar Eko Nugroho, kecamatan Pulosari dalam Angka 2018, (Pemalang:BPS Kabupaten 2018), page 18

\(^9\) The author’s interview with H. Rozikin as the chairperson of PCNU Pulosari District
5.3 Pulosari Village.

Pulosari Village is in the center of the Government of Pulosari Sub-District. Pulosari Village consists of five hamlets, such as Kranan Hamlet, Tumbu Hamlet, Karangpah Hamlet, Desa Hamlet, and Gereja Hamlet. Pulosari Village itself is currently headed by the head of the village named H Teguh Setyo Widodo Village. Based on the 2017 census, the population of the five hamlets are 8,601 people consisting of 4,308 men and 4,293 women. Gereja Hamlet is unique and special because it is the only hamlet in Pulosari Village with Christians. Gereja Hamlet sounds a bit funny (as in Bahasa Indonesia gereja means church) for some people. Why does it have “gereja” as the name of the hamlet? Because this is the only hamlet that has Christians. The percentage of religions is: 93.4% are Muslims with a total of 7,942 people, and 6.6% are Christians with a total of 571. The Christians is divided into two churches such as GKJFU Pulosari and Surabaya Pentecostal Church (GPPS), whose church members used to be part of GKJFU Pulosari. GKJFU already has a reverend but the Surabaya Pentecostal Church is served by a pastor from GPPS Randudongkal located 17 Km from Pulosari Village. In addition, there is also one small Musholla in Gereja Hamlet located at the left of the entrance gate to Gereja Hamlet. The Musholla was established by an immigrant who married a lady from the hamlet.

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10 https://pulosari.desakupemalang.id
11 Ibid...
5.4 Interfaith Relations.

There has been no interfaith conflicts or interfaith issues in Pulosari Sub-District and Pulosari Village in particular. Everything works harmoniously with no friction, all are equal as there is no discrimination by a certain party, and Christians feels free to express themselves. I think this is something unique, the harmony between Christian and Muslim considering the significant differences between the number of Muslim and Christian. Furthermore, I will describe GKJTU Pulosari agenda to survive in the majority and build a good communication as a minority.

5.4.1 Manifest the meaning of being the light and the salt of the world.

Translating the meaning of light and salt into life can be done in a simple way. We can learn from the activities of GKJTU Pulosari as a small church. Then, what has been done so far?

1. Sharing according to the context where the church exists.

In July-October in Pulosari, there are around 70% of these Sub-Districts that are hit by drought including some of the villages of Pulosari. In this type of situation, the church took part. Trying to be the salt and the light of the world, the church then allocated the church’s budget. With only a few water tanks, to help drought areas. There was one memo-
rable event while distributing water, it coincided with a Muslim recitation. That moment, the church was represented by some committee and by the reverend. This is one of the ways to communicate and get closer to the community. Apart from providing them water, the church also held Christmas action in December. The fund for this action was taken from the church’s budget. The church made a list of people who are in need. Once, there was a Muslim woman who lives alone and in need. We tried to help this woman according to the church’s financial condition. Indeed, this action requires us to be careful because if we are not, there may be potential for problems. Therefore, when GKJTU Pulosari are about to help anyone, the church should always coordinates with the village government.

2. Be a Role Model for others.

As I have stated earlier, there are five hamlets in Pulosari village. From these five hamlets, according to the village government, the head of the village, Gereja hamlet is the most orderly hamlet of all, and it has more awareness related to governance. One of the examples is when there is a program of capital lending from the government for the villagers to have cattle breeding. Gereja Hamlet is the only hamlet that is orderly and obedient
to the rules. There is another example such as the payment of land taxes. Gereja hamlet is the one whose villagers always be the first one to pay the taxes. From these facts, the local government finally noticed something special in the hamlet, including the GKJTU Pulosari whose church membership is 80% of the hamlet’s inhabitants. Therefore, the government also treat us in equality and with no discrimination.

3. Build communication with religious leaders.

Officially there is no institution that covers the interfaith in Pulosari, but the interfaith communication socially runs well. The Christian leader (the writer as the GKJTU Pulosari’s reverend) was also invited in some events which were organized by Muslims. I felt nervous the first time but there was a good communication based on family values and mutual respect. After attending it once, I was then invited to other Muslim events, such as the inauguration of the ANSOR Youth Movement. After that we always take our time to attend to the invitations. Moreover, when the church has events such as Christmas or others, Muslim leaders are also invited, and Muslim youth organizations also take part.
4. Build communication with local government and security forces.

The communication is built by always notifying the local government about every event that the church will held even though it is not a large-scale activity. When notifying, we come directly to deliver the letter, face to face, and never ask someone else’s favor to send the letter. That’s the reason why there is a good relationship with the government. We do the same way to the Police. We always come to their office and we build good communication from a small talk, the formed a good relationship. A good relationship is proven with the fact that anytime the church holds an event, there will always be a representative from local government and the Police. Furthermore, the Head of the Pulosari Village who is a Muslim, always come to the church at night before Christmas, when we are preparing for Christmas. He does it just for creating togetherness with the church members. GKJTU Pulosari always consider the Police and the local government as family. For example, when the police are on duty for the church, we always invite them to come to our living room and provide snacks and drinks. This is where the conversation finally occurs, discussing about everything. This is how the relationship is established.
5. Build personal relationships.

Building a personal relationship can be made through visitations, not only to the church members but also to the religious leaders formally or just by having a cup of coffee together. Many unscheduled meetings can occur. For example, I could stop by at the Muslim leader’s house just because I was walking around the neighborhood. The same thing happens with the Government officials, the GKJTU Pulosari’s reverend also keeps in touch with village government. We make our time to stop by the Balai Desa (Village Hall) just to say hello. We also build personal relationship with the Head of the Village. One of the examples is congratulate them for the new baby and also pray for their hajj trip. This method is very effective for building a relationship amidst the differences.

6. Conclusion

Peace among religious is a dream for every person who truly lives to his/her faith. Analyzing the description above, there are several things that can be taken. First, harmony is not only achieved by establishing a legal institution, but more on social and personal relations as shown by the GKJTU Pulosari. Maybe in other contexts, there will be different impact, but in the scope of GKJTU Pulosari, it has a tremendous impact. The community leaders, religious leaders and local government are also
open minded. Second, to be a role model wherever we are. The example that has been shown about the Christians in Pulosari, obey the government regulation and see to it that things are done accurately and carefully.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Rev. Juwasto, S.Th., is an ordained pastor of the Gereja Kristen Jawa Tengah Utara since 2013. He was born on 27 August 1982 in Semarang. He is current assigned as local pastor at GKJTU Pulosari, Central Java, Indonesia.
Photo 1: Rev. Juwasto with Habib Luthfi Bin Yahya, community leader, during preparation for his speech at the Great Mosque in Pulosari.

Photo 2: Rev. Juwasto with religious leaders and community leaders during Christmas held at GKJTU Pulosari.
Photo 3: Rev. Juwasto at the inauguration of the GP ANSOR Youth in Pulosari Sub-District

Photo 4: 82nd GKJTU Anniversary attended by MUSPIKA (leaders at the Sub-District level) and Community Leader at GKJTU Pulosari
Photo 5: Distribution of water aid by GKJTU Pulosari.

Photo 6: Rev. Juwasto with community leaders distributing water.
1. Abstraksi.

Seperti kita ketahui bersama Negara Kesatuan Republik Indonesia bukan Negara yang kecil. Beragam budaya terdapat di dalam Negara Indonesia ini. Ada sekitar 300 etnis, sekitar 721 bahasa daerah disamping bahasa resmi yaitu bahasa Indonesia, enam agama resmi disamping aliran kepercayaan yang ada di setiap suku. Ada sebuah tempat dengan jumlah banyak penganut di agama tertentu, ada ditempat lain juga dengan jumlah agama tertentu pula. Ada di sebuah tempat ketika memiliki jumlah penganut yang besar akhirnya mendiskriminati yang sedikit dengan membatasi aktivitas keagamaan

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1 Selanjutnya akan di singkat GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari.
yang jumlahnya sedikit tersebut bahkan disusun peraturan-peraturan daerah yang menguntungkan agama tertentu. Lembaga keagamaan melalui lembaga terkait dan pemerintah sering mencari solusi agar tidak ada gesekan dan konflik dengan mengadakan dialog, mengumpulkan tokoh agama. Namun yang terjadi konflik masih saja terjadi di beberapa tempat di negeri ini.

Apakah ada formula yang tepat untuk mengatasi segala macam konflik keagamaan yang terjadi? Hanya toleransi dan saling menghargai yang dapat mengatasi itu. Hanya bagaimana menerjemahkan toleransi dan saling menghargai itu yang perlu dijawab. Sebagai gereja, sebenarnya juga dituntut untuk ikut menerjemahkan arti toleransi itu. Karena sebuah toleransi akan terjadi kalau kedua belah pihak atau pihak terkait, terkhusus lembaga agama itu ada niat dan kemauan. Sebagai sebuah persekutuan tentunya gereja juga harus berani memulai bukan hanya menunggu. Bukannya tidak mungkin dengan sama-sama menunggu akhirnya yang tercipta adalah kekakuan dan kebisuan antaragama.

2. Pendahuluan

Kerukunan umat beragama di tengah keanekaragaman agama adalah hal yang tidak mudah untuk dilakukan. Tidak mudah lagi apabila jumlah yang beraneka ragam itu tidak seimbang. Sebagai contoh kelompok A dengan jumlah 95% sedangkan kelompok B hanya 5%. Kebanyakan yang terjadi adalah yang 95% ini lebih mendominasi bahkan menganggap yang 5% ini tidak ada.
Tidak perlu jauh-jauh, kita lihat saja dalam lingkup gereja yang berlatar belakang etnis yang terjadi hal-hal yang biasa disepakati adalah usul dari jumlah etnisnya yang lebih besar. Lalu apakah artinya tidak mungkin akan adanya sebuah kerukunan bahkan keharmonisan dengan kondisi itu? Nanti dulu, ternyata tidak semua seperti itu. Sebagai contoh di wilayah kecamatan Pulosari, kabupaten Pemalongan, Jawa Tengah, ada sebuah bentuk kerukunan walaupun jumlah penganut agama jauh dari kata imbang. Agama Islam sekitar 99 persen sedang Kristen hanya sekitar 1%.\(^2\) Yang terjadi bukan diskriminasi namun sebuah kerukunan yang sangat luar biasa. Melalui tulisan ini akan dipaparkan apa saja yang dilakukan oleh GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari sebagai salah satu gereja yang ada di kecamatan Pulosari sehingga tetap hidup sebagai Gereja di tengah-tengah kekurangan dan keterbatasannya, bahkan mendapat pengakuan keberadaannya dari agama lain, pemerintah, dan tokoh Masyarakat.

3. Metode Penulisan

Untuk melengkapi tulisan ini, dalam penulisannya penulis menggunakan metode wawancara dengan berbagai narasumber dan dari beberapa buku.

4. Sekilas tentang GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari

Dalam sejarahnya GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari merupakan gereja yang asal mulanya didirikan oleh pengikut Kyai

\(^2\) Perbandingannya adalah 58.032 penganut agama Islam dan 571 Penganut agama Kristen yang terdata di Kecamatan Pulosari.

5. **GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari dan yang menyekitarinya.**

5.1. Kabupaten Pemalang.³

5.1.1. Letak Geografis.

Kabupaten Pemalang berada di Jawa Tengah, tepatnya dijulur Pantai utara Pulau Jawa, letak geografisnya terletak diantara 109° 17' 30" – 109° 40' 30" Bujur Timur (BT) dan 8° 52' 30" – 7° 20' 11” Lintang Selatan (LS). Kabupaten Pemalang memiliki luas wilayah 111.530 ha dimana meliputi tanah sawah seluas 38.694 ha dan tanah kering seluas 72.836 ha. Luas wilayah Kabupaten Pemalang ditandai dengan batas-batas sebagai berikut:

- Sebelah Utara: Laut Jawa
- Sebelah Timur: Kabupaten Pekalongan
- Sebelah Selatan: Kabupaten Purbalingga
- Sebelah Barat: Kabupaten Tegal

Secara administrasi, Kabupaten Pemalang terbagi atas 14 kecamatan yang meliputi 222 desa/kelurahan.

Secara topografi, Kabupaten Pemalang terdiri dari:
1. Daerah dataran pantai

Yaitu daerah dengan ketinggian antara 1-5 meter diatas permukaan air laut. Daerah

³ https://bappeddapemalang.wordpress.com
ini meliputi 18 desa dan 1 kelurahan terletak dibagian utara wilayah Kabupaten Pemalang.

2. Daerah dataran rendah

Yaitu daerah dengan ketinggian antara 6 -15 meter diatas permukaan laut. Daerah ini meliputi 98 desa dan 5 kelurahan terletak dibagian utara wilayah Kabupaten Pemalang.

3. Daerah dataran tinggi

Yaitu daerah dengan ketinggian antara 16 – 212 meter diatas permukaan laut. Daerah ini meliputi 35 desa, terletak di bagian tengah dan selatan wilayah Kabupaten Pemalang.

4. Daerah pegunungan

Terbagi menjadi dua, yaitu :
5.1.2. Kondisi Kependudukan


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Agama</th>
<th>Jumlah Penghayat</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Islam</td>
<td>1.490.948</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kristen Protestan</td>
<td>4.761</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Katholik</td>
<td>2.690</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budha</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hindu</td>
<td>271</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Konghuchu</td>
<td>190</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Untuk tempat ibadah agama Islam di Kabupaten Pemalang dengan jumlah Masjid

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4 ...., Pemalang dalam angka 2017, (Pemalang: BPS Kabupaten 2017), hal. 78
5 Ibid....
6 https://jateng.bps.go.id

5.2. Kecamatan Pulosari.

Kecamatan Pulosari secara Geografis terletak di Pemalang bagian Selatan tepatnya di lereng Gunung Slamet. Terdiri dari 12 kelurahan yang penduduknya sebagian besar petani dengan jumlah penduduk pada tahun 2018 sekitar 58.032 jiwa. Sedangkan untuk penganut agama hanya ada dua yaitu Islam dan Kristen, sedang untuk penghayat kepercayaan secara fakta masih ada meski tidak ada lembaga agama yang menaungi aliran kepercayaan ini. Untuk ormas keagamaan secara lembaga hanya ada satu yaitu PCNU cabang Pulosari meski menurut sumber ada juga penganut lain seperti Muhamadiyah dan LDII meski sangat sedikit namun secara lembaga tidak ada. Untuk organisasi sayap

7 Sumber kementrian agama kabupaten Pemalang tahun 2019.
8 Fajar Eko Nugroho, Kecamatan Pulosari dalam angka 2018, (Pemalang: BPS Kabupaten 2018),hal. 18.
9 Wawancara penulis dengan H. Roziqin selaku ketua PCNU Kecamatan Pulosari
ada Gerakan Pemuda Ansor dan Fathayat Nahdatul Ulama. Selain itu ada Organisasi kemasyarakatan yang lain Pemuda Pancasila. Untuk agama Kristen sendiri tidak ada wadah di tingkat Kecamatan dikarenakan jumlahnya yang tidak banyak.

5.3. Desa Pulosari.


10 https://pulosari.desakupemalang.id
11 Ibid....

5.4. Hubungan antar agama.

Desa Pulosari secara Khusus dan di Kecamatan Pulosari secara umum tidak ada konflik atau isu antaragama yang terjadi. Semuanya berjalan harmonis tidak ada gesekan, semua hidup berdampingan dan sejajar tidak ada diskriminasi oleh pihak tertentu dan orang Kristen juga bebas berekpresi. Inilah yang menurut penulis sesuatu yang unik, dimana satu duku atau satu tempat yang berada di satu Kecamatan dengan presentase yang berbeda jauh antara penganut agama Kristen dan Agama Islam semua dapat berdampingan. Untuk lebih jelasnya penulis akan mengajak melihat apa saja yang dapat kita lihat di tempat ini dan apa dilakukan oleh GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari sehingga di tengah mayoritas yang minoritas ini mampu bertahan bahkan ada komunikasi yang terbangun baik, serta hal-hal apa saja yang sudah dilakukan.
5.4.1. Mewujudnyatakan arti terang dan garam di tengah dunia.

Menerjemahkan arti terang dan garam kedalam kehidupan dapat dilakukan dengan cara yang sederhana. Melihat apa yang dilakukan oleh GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari yang kecil ditengah lingkungan yang menyekitarinya kita dapat belajar dari Gereja ini. Lalu apa saja yang dilakukan selama ini.

1. Berbagi sesuai konteks gereja berada.

Pada bulan Juli-Oktober di daerah Pulosari ada beberapa daerah, ada sekitar 70% dari Kecamatan ini yang dilanda kekeringan termasuk sebagian desa Pulosari. Dalam situasi seperti ini Gereja ini ambil bagian. Gereja mengalokasikan anggaran dalam rangka mewujudnyatakan menjadi garam dan terang di tengah dunia. Meski hanya beberapa tanki air gereja ini membantu daerah yang kekurangan air itu. Ada satu peristiwa yang sangat mengesankan dimana pernah suatu ketika saat penyaluran air ternyata mau ada acara pengajian umat Islam, disitulah akhirnya Gereja yang diwakili beberapa Pengurus dan Pendeta dapat berkomunikasi dan baur dengan masyarakat atau umat lain yang akhirnya dapat saling kenal. Selain bantuan air Gereja juga di bulan Desember mengada-
kan aksi Natal. Dimana dalam aksi ini juga di-
ambil dari Kas Gereja. Saat melakukan aksi ini
gereja mendata siapa saja yang betul-betul
membutuhkan dari sisi materi. Suatu ketika
ternyata ada seorang ibu yang beragama Is-
lam yang hidup sebatang kara yang betul-
betul memprihatinkan dan akhirnya ibu ini
dibantu oleh Gereja, tentunya dengan ke-
mampuan dana yang ada. Memang ini mem-
butuhkan kehati-hatian karena apabila tidak
hati-hati dapat-dapat menjadi masalah. Maka
saat akan ada penyaluran GKJTU Jemaat Pulo-
sari selalu koordinasi dengan pemerintah De-
sa.

2. Menjadi Teladan bagi yang lain.

Seperti penulis sampaikan sebelumnya
desa Pulosari ada lima dukuh. Dari kelima
dukuh inilah yang menurut pemerintah desa
dalam hal ini Kepala Desa Dukuh Gereja yang
paling tertib dan memiliki kesadaran lebih
berkaitan dengan kepemerintahan. Salah satu
contoh ketika ada program dari pemerintah
peminjaman modal, penggaduhan ternak.
Dukuh Gereja adalah satu-satunya tempat
yang tertib dan taat akan aturan yang ada.
Ada hal lain lagi yaitu pembayaran pajak bumi
bangunan dukuh Gereja adalah tempat yang
selalu pertama lunas. Dari sinilah akhirnya
pemerintah desa atau kecamatan melihat ada
yang istimewa termasuk didalamnya adalah jemaat GKJTU Pulosari yang jumlahnya sekitar 80% dari dukuh Gereja ini. Sehingga dari pemerintahpun juga memandang setara bahkan lebih dan tidak mendiskriminasi.

3. Menjalin komunikasi dengan tokoh agama.

kepemudaan juga diterjunkan untuk ikut ambil bagian.

4. Menjalin komunikasi dengan pemerintah lokal dan aparat keamanan

percakapan bukan hanya berkaitan dengan tugas namun hal-hal lain. Dari sinilah terjalin hubungan kekeluargaan.

5. Menjalin hubungan secara personal.

Maksud dari menjalin hubungan secara personal adalah, Gereja melalui Pendeta Jemaat di GKJTU selain berkunjung ke rumah Jemaat juga tidak melewatkan perkunjungan ke tokoh agama yang ada di wilayah Pulosari walau hanya sekedar mampir minum kopi. Bahkan banyak pertemuan yang tidak diagenda, sebagai contoh awalnya tidak sengaja ke rumah tokoh agama Islam tersebut, dikarenakan lewat kebetulan ada di depan rumah akhirnya mampir. Demikian dengan pejabat Pemerintah, selain berkunjung ke rumah Jemaat Gereja melalui Pendeta GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari juga selalu menjalin hubungan dengan perangkat desa. Salah satu hal yang dilakukan adalah sama, meski tidak ada tujuan namun selalu meluangkan waktu untuk mampir ke Balai Desa walau hanya sekedar bercerita. Selain itu bersama dengan majelis dan beberapa Jemaat juga menjalin hubungan pribadi dengan kepala desa yang menjabat. Salah satu contoh yang pernah dilakukan adalah datang ke rumah kepala desa saat istri melahirkan. Saat mau naik haji juga datang, malah Pendeta GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari
mendoakan saat akan berangkat haji. Cara ini sangat efektif untuk membangun sebuah hubungan di tengah keberbedaan.

6. Kesimpulan
Terwujudnya sebuah kerukunan antarumat beragama adalah dambaan setiap orang yang betul-betul menghayati agamanya. Mencermati uraian yang sudah diuraikan ada beberapa hal yang dapat ambil bahkan dapat diadopsi. Pertama sebuah kerukunan ternyata bukan hanya dicapai dengan dibentukknya sebuah forum-forum resmi, justru apa yang dilakukan oleh GKJTU jemaat Pulosari lebih kehubungan sosial dan personal. Mungkin di konteks lain berbeda budaya tetapi di lingkup GKJTU Jemaat Pulosari sangat luar biasa dampaknya disamping tokoh-tokoh masyarakat, agama dan pemerintah juga memiliki pemikiran yang terbuka. Kedua adalah dengan memberi contoh dimana kita berada, contoh yang sudah diuraikan bagaimana warga Kristen di wilayah Pulosari yang sebagian besar warga GKJTU taat aturan pemerintah dibanding dengan yang lain disamping hal-hal lain yang dilakukan juga dengan kecermatan dan kehati-hatian.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Rev. Juwasto, S.Th., is an ordained pastor of the Gereja Kristen Jawa Tengah Utara (GKJTU) since 2013. He was born on 27 August 1982 in Semarang. He is current assigned as local pastor at GKJTU Pulosari, Central Java, Indonesia.
Foto 1: Pendeta Juwasto bersama Habib Luthfi Bin Yahya, tokoh masyarakat, kemanan saat persiapan pengajian di Masjid Agung Pulosari

Foto 2: foto bersama tokoh agama, tokoh masyarakat saat Natal badan Kerjasama Gereja kabupaten di GKJTU Pulosari.
Foto 3: Pendeta Juwasto saat menghadiri pelantikan GP ANSOR di Kecamatan Pulosari

Foto 4: HUT GKJTU ke 82 di GKJTU Pulosari dihadiri oleh MUSPIKA, Tokoh Masyarakat.
Foto 5: Penyaluran bantuan air oleh GKJTU Jemat Pulosari.

Foto 3: Pendeta Juwasto bersama tokoh masyarakat saat penyaluran air.
“You are the salt of the earth. But if the salt loses its saltiness, how can it be made salty again? It is no longer good for anything, except to be thrown out and trampled underfoot.” (Matthew 5:13 NIV)

Sisters and brothers, greetings of peace and hope amidst a pervasive culture of violence, terrorism and extremism affecting peoples across nations, religions, race. Yet, we continue to pursue that ever elusive peace, indeed, in striving to be salt of the earth!

Allow me to tell you a story of mission, of an attempt to be salt in a conflict-ridden Mindanao and how we continue to strive for justice and peace, and the most difficult challenge of forgiveness and reconciliation.
Marawi City

Marawi City, also known as the Islamic City of Marawi, is located on the shores of Lake Lanao. It is the capital of Lanao del Sur. The people of Marawi are called the Maranaos and speak the Maranao language. They are named after Lake Lanao. Marawi was known as Dansalan, meaning “a place where ships anchor”, when it served as the capital of Lanao province from 1907 to 1940. (World Heritage Encyclopedia)

Resistance to Colonial Rule

The Moro people had consistently resisted colonial rule, which they see as a threat to their survival and identity as a people. The Spaniards tried but never succeeded in subduing and converting the Muslims. So were the Americans and the Japanese. Centuries of conflict have led to deep mutual suspicions. Muslims see Christians as bullies and land grabbers eager to destroy Islam; Christians view Muslims as treacherous, vengeful, cruel, and ruthless.

However, in spite of historical hostilities, some missionaries succeeded in making a difference, bridging gaps, and overcoming suspicions, discrimination and hatred and whose commitment, determination and dedication would influence future relations among Christians and Muslims.
Dr. Frank Charles Laubach (1884-1970) came to the Philippines with his wife Effa Seely in 1915. He was a Congregational Christian who developed interest in the Philippines, especially on the Moro people and on the relations between Muslims and Christians. While working among Muslims in Lanao, Dr. Laubach developed the “Each One Teach One” literacy program, which eventually spread in various parts of the world and was used to teach millions of people to read in their own language.

Dr. Laubach established base in Dansalan in 1940. In June 1941, the Madrasah High School opened with 23 students, among them the children of prominent religious leaders and politicians. Unfortunately, the school had to close when the Second World War broke out in December 1941.

**Dansalan College**

Dansalan College is a legacy of the early literacy work of Dr. Frank Laubach. Established in 1950, it remained as the only Christian school in Marawi City. Eventually, the college served as the premiere institution of the province and produced some of the best leaders of Lanao del Sur. Before the siege it had a 99% Muslim student population.

Dansalan also established the Dr. Peter Gowing Center, a research and study center on Christian-Muslim relations. The center aims to contribute to the easing of tensions and the promotion of peace and justice among
Christians, Muslims and people of other faiths. It remains as the richest repository of resources on Christian-Muslim relations and continues to bring in researchers and scholars from many countries around the world.

The women contributed to the body of knowledge taught in the college. Maisie Van Vactor collected documents, materials and resources on Islam and Filipino Muslims, which contributed to the setting up of the Dansalan Research Center. She also encouraged the promotion of Muslim weaving.

The late highly regarded sociologist Dr. Peter Gow-ing, then director of the Dansalan Research Center, en-riched the collections of Christian-Muslim literature and Maranao culture in Mindanao.

Over the years members of the faculty and staff who were Christians and Muslims became partners in development striving to provide quality education to the youth. They seek to unite Muslims and Christians in friendly relations, exemplify in their lives the best of their culture, commit themselves to ease the tension, and promote peace and development.

Over 60 years of hard work and struggle, amidst intermittent wars and conflicts, Dansalan College gained recognition for its academic achievements and progressively expanded physically. Its buildings and grounds, surrounded by ancient shady trees, served as a beautiful
sanctuary of peace for students, teachers, parents and guests.

We all have experienced some form of violence – at home, in school, in the workplace, even in church. In the Philippines, we have had a long history of colonization, decades of dictatorship and martial rule, internal wars and conflicts, militarization, rebellion and resistance.

Dansalan College has a share of the history of violence in Marawi City. Former CEOs of the school Rev Lloyd Van Vactor (his wife Maisie died while he was in captivity) and Mr. Eulalio Maturan were kidnapped. Dr. Fedelinda Tawagon, the current President, also experienced harassment.

Not only was people who are victims of violence but also the trees in the School farm. But in the aftermath of the last spate of environmental violence, with the deliberate destruction of a thousand mahogany trees in the agricultural farm, Dansalan College decided to create a peace garden.

But nothing compares to state violence, international terrorism and the use of extreme measures to achieve political and ideological goals. In Mindanao particularly, radical Islamist groups and Islamist separatist forces have carried out major bombings against civilians and civilian property.
The Marawi Siege

The Philippine government had been receiving reports of unusual activities in the city and of the increasing number of armed groups roaming the streets of Marawi. Also reported was the sighting of Isnilon Hapilon, affiliated with the ISIS and had been appointed as “Emir of all Islamic State forces in the Philippines” (Al Naba). He was in Marawi consolidating the Abu Sayyaf and the Maute group with the ISIS.

On May 23, 2017, government forces launched a military operation to arrest Isnilon Hapilon. The Abu Sayyaf opened fire and asked reinforcement from the Maute group, then deployed in various places in the City.

The Maute group attacked Camp Ranao, took over government buildings, burned the city jail, occupied the main street, set Saint Mary's Church (Roman Catholic) on fire, killed the chief of police, and took a priest and several churchgoers hostage. Power and communication lines were shut down. In the darkness, burning houses and buildings, gunfire, and chaos pervaded the streets. They roamed the streets of Marawi, dressed in black, waving the ISIS flag.

The Destruction of Dansalan College

On the same day, elements of the Maute group forcibly entered the premises of Dansalan College. They burned the administration building which had the offices
and library, the science laboratory, the chapel, and eight (8) housing units for faculty and staff.

Twenty five (25) teachers who hid in the building were able to escape the next day; seven (7) were taken hostage. As fighting escalated, forty-two (42) other faculty and staff remained trapped in their hiding place until they were able to escape and eventually rescued by Philippine Marines weeks after. The hostages were rescued after months of captivity.

In the ensuing days, the Maute group set up Dansalan College as a stronghold, its high structures as machine gun nests and vantage points for snipers. Because of their presence, the buildings became the target of military airstrikes, and eventually caused the destruction of thirteen (13) more structures and an irreparable damage to properties.

All the buildings and structures in the campus (18 in all) - were destroyed by fire and airstrikes. In just a few hours, the work of 60 years was turned into ashes and empty shells.

**We were shocked, devastated, and angry!**

But the UCCP Council of Bishops issued a statement entitled: A Call for Prayer and Sobriety inspired by the text in 1 Samuel 17:47: “All those gathered here will know that it is not by sword or spear that our God saves.”
There was no time to grieve. Drawing courage and hope from scripture and Biblical experience, the Bishops of the Church issued a call for prayer that the situation does not escalate and that it will soon be resolved; condemned the burning of an institution that welcomed people of all faiths and which served the people of Marawi; called on the constituency to understand the roots of this conflict, remain calm and act responsibly amidst confusion and anger; condemned the declaration of Martial Law and prayed that this would not be used to undermine the ongoing peace talks; declared our stand with the Bangsamoro in their resistance to extremism, and with all Muslim sisters and brothers who adhere to Islam a faith of peace; and prayed for God’s intervention for the transformation of all violent conflicts and turn all energies for the well-being of our land and people.

**Acts of Solidarity**

We are grateful for the varying expressions of love and solidarity from churches, alumni, individuals and groups all over the world - phone calls, text messages, FB posts, prayers, letters of concern and support, visits; facilitating the release and transport of those who were trapped in Marawi, and for the rescue of the hostages.

UEM and partners in the United States sent immediate assistance. Rev. Sonia Parera-Hummel had a radio interview where she spoke about the Marawi Siege and Dansalan College. In Geneva, the Filipino community organized concerts to raise funds. Brokenshire College organized a Dinner for a Cause, and prepared a video presen-
tation based on The DCFI Story on the siege. Silliman University gave a generous amount for the survivors. Local churches, conferences, jurisdictions, ecumenical groups, seminaries, educational institutions, associations and networks extended support.

Rising from the Rubble

Recognizing that it was virtually impossible for the moment to continue operations in Marawi, the Church decided to open the Iligan campus. This is also in response to the plea of parents to open and continue its operation.

Dansalan College continues to fulfill its ministry in formal education in a multi-faith, multi-cultural context. More significantly, in serving an interfaith community in spite of historical conflicts.

The rebuilding of the Marawi campus is a gargantuan dream. Prayers, though they work wonders, will have to be supplemented with mountains of donations. But the leadership of the Church will enable Dansalan College to do Christ’s mission in these changing times in a relevant and appropriate way.”

ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Bishop Melzar Labuntog is the new General Secretary of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines. Before he was elected as General Secretary, he served as Jurisdictional Bishop of Northwest Mindanao Jurisdictional Area for 8 years. He was elected in Cagayan De Oro City in May 2018. The assembly was held on the first anniversary of the Dansalan College in Marawi City in May 2017.