Responding Islamophobia: The Role of Islam Nusantara and Chinese Muslims on Anchoring Wasatiyah Islam

Abd A'la

In 1997 Runnymede Trust issued a report on anti-Islam in Europe under the title *Islamophobia: Still A Challenge for Us All.* This report is considered to be one of the earliest research popularizing the term of Islamophobia.

Truthfully, Islamphobia being attached to certain groups in various European countries refers to a very long history. Anti-Islam, hatred of Islam, or the like arose in the incidence of the conflicts between Europe and Muslims from the Middle East region and its surrounding. It can be traced back to the history when the Europeans had defeated Arab Muslims and since then ruled the fifteenth century Spain. In 1409, the campaign of forced conversion was inaugurated in the area. The inquisition was then instituted. Anti-Islam and Muslims continued to be reinforced. In 1556, Philip II promulgated a law requiring the remaining Muslims to abandon their languages, worship, institutions and manner of life. Finally, Philip signed the order of expulsion in 1609 resulting in the forcible deportation in mass of practically all Muslims on Spanish soil.¹

As Europe seized the Islamic world through its colonialism, anti-Islam, harassment and insult to Islam developed through the study of Orientalism. Referring to Lewis's work, Edward Said states, in Lewis's view (and certainly many other Orientalists) proclaiming that Islam is an irrational herd or mass phenomenon, ruling Muslims by passions, instincts, and unreflecting hatreds.² Then, anti-Islam and Muslims continued to strengthen during the 1979 Iranian revolution and reached its peak after the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Anti-Islam and Muslims that developed into Islamophobia continued to spread in various parts of European and American countries.

The study of Islamophobia and its answers has been widely observed. But the reality shows that the phenomenon of Islamophobia is not reduced significantly, if it does not grow strength. On the other hand, its resolution efforts, as one of the themes raised at this International Conference, remain very significant to continue.

This paper will discuss the role of Indonesian Islam in participating in eliminating and minimizing the spread of Islamphobia. Indonesian Islam with all its characteristics has considerable potential to be involved in explaining the true Islam, and spreading the noble values that form the basis of Islamic teachings in this life. One of the characteristics of Indonesian Islam is the contextualization of Islamic values and teachings into real-life history, including the role of Chinese Muslims who participated in introducing and spreading Islam in the archipelago.

Islamophobia in the Contemporary Context

Entering the 21st century, Islamophobia presents a very clear face of some people, figures, groups and European societies. In some Western countries, anti-Muslim and Muslim groups are doing various ways to back Islam and its people into a corner. With their inner hatred, they strive to make Islam and Muslims no longer in Europe or America.

The view of Islam is exacerbated by the involvement of the Western partisan media. The media spreading Muslims or and Islam with all its derivatives as something very ugly that is not worthy to exist, grow, let alone flourish in this century. Through the framing media, Islamophobia is no longer due to terrorism by radical fundamentalist Muslims, but

¹ See Philip K Hitti, History of the Arabs, Tenth Edition, (London: Macmillan), p. 555-556

² Edward W Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 317.

because of hatred for Islam itself.³ Here clearly visible due to media framing, bad public opinion about Islam is formed strongly.

Islamophobia appears in various forms. As Sayyed mentioned, the activities described as Islamophobic can be seen in six main clusters. Firstly, Islamophobia through attack on persons perceived to be Muslims being committed by random individuals or by semiorganized or organized groups acting together. Secondly, one can identify Islamophobia in mosque, cemeteries, business premises. These attacks may include vandalism (broken windows, hurts pig's heads into mosques, graffiti), arson, desecration of Muslim graves. Thirdly, Islamophobia represented by acts of intimidation. The form of intimidation may include marches through areas with large Muslim populations. It may include advertising campaigns of the Qur'an or demonstrations against the building of mosques or cultural centers. What distinguishes these sets of actions is the degree of coordination requiring the expenditure of social and financial capital. The Fourth, Islamophobia may be in favor of the treatment of the peoples in the comparative positions within the same organizations. Such behavior may take the form of harassment, bullying, pointed jokes, distribution of tasks, and assessments of performance in which they are considered to be Muslims. Some of these organizations may be part of an institutional ensemble that makes up the state, while others may be private. The Fifth, Islamophobia refers to incidents in which it is a sustained and systematic elaboration of comments in the public domain insulting Muslims and / or Islam. This disparagement could be more or less subtle. For example, publishing the Qur'an with Muhammad is listed as the author or recycling medieval Christian polemics as the "truth" about Islam or Muslim culture. This form of Islamophobia could be articulated on the internet hate sites, newspapers, magazines, or other media, or may be in factual or fictional programs. The form of Islamophobia can also inform policy and opinion, and may be the ground for state interventions and regulations. It may also be part of the common sense of a society that set of unexamined assumptions and beliefs that circulate in any society. The above five clusters of Islamophobia tend to be carried out by individuals or organizations (private or public). The state may facilitate them through benign neglect or refusal to provide adequate safeguards, or to the issue of such actions, but it is not actively or openly involved in the perpetuation of these incidents. *The sixth* is Islamophobia in which the state (in the form of its functionaries) plays an active role. These can include intensification of surveillance of Muslim populations using technology, agent provocateurs, and paid informers. Such surveillance maybe carried out by what can be described rather loosely as the secret police (that is, state agencies tasked with clandestine operating procedures). In addition to these secret police operations, there is an Islamophobia of the criminal justice system in which those deemed to be Muslims are perceived to be treated less favorably than others. This can be the result of differential sentencing, difference in the frequency of being stopped and searched by police officers. State policies could also be used to restrict expression of Muslimness—for example, limiting the building of mosques, regulating Muslim dress (bans on the burga). What makes these sorts of activities appear to be Islamophobic is the degree to which they place extra burdens on sections of the population which are mostly Muslim.⁴

Reality shows that Islamophobia has far-reaching effects not only on individuals who are victims of treatment from Islamophobic people or groups, but also the Muslim community in general. Some of the worst impacts are related to aspects of psychology and mental health, such as trauma to victims and some European Muslims. Moreover, the effects on political life, economy, and such are also so burdensome to European Muslims.

³ Christopher Smith, "Anti-Islamic Sentiment and Media Framing during the 9/11 Decade" *Journal of Religion & Society* (Vol. 15 (2013), p. 2.

⁴ S. Sayyid, "A Measure of Islamophobia "Islamophobia Studies Journal, (Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2014) p. 11-12.

Indeed, anti-Islam and Muslims are also detrimental to the country and the European nation, even mankind as a whole. The lack of integration of the Muslim community into the nation and the country in which they live impacts on the less commitment and the looseness of national cohesion is an unnecessary reality, especially in the Western World being famous for countries with multicultural and multi-religious communities.⁵ The strength of Islamophobia and the state's neglect of it show that the values of democracy and all its derivatives having so far been glorified are nothing more than lip service alone.

Based on the fact above, the issue of Islamophobia becomes our common problem, the problem of all nations around the world. We have cooperatively to accomplish it. Attitudes and movements reflecting anti-Islam and Muslims should not develop. Otherwise, justice and prosperity as the mission of mankind as whole will never be grounded in life.

Tracing the Root of the Problem

The Issue of strength and the spread of Islamophobia in many European and American countries has a very long history and comes to a very complex problem. It involves various aspects in which one with another interconnected. Although religion aspect is emerging so strongly, but we must not simplify the problem.

As revealed briefly in the introduction that European hatred of Islam happened when they overran Spain, it can be stated that anti-Islam and Muslims have emerged since the beginning of conflict-induced contact between Muslim and Christian Europeans. In this case the Crusades became a decisive momentum. Quoted from Al-Sheikh-Ali, Cluck explained that Islamophobia, including the perception of Muslims as the "other" and the perceived superiority of the West, should be seen as emerging from not only the contemporary context of perceived civilizational clash, but also from other factors including European colonialism. It is true what Naved Bakali stated that fear and mistrust towards Muslims and being perceived as a diametrically opposed 'Other' have deeper roots in Europe. Borrowing Paul Weller's phrase, he argued, "Islamophobia is undeniably rooted in the historical inheritance of a conflictual relationship that has developed over many centuries involving the overlap of religion, politics and warfare" Western perceptions of Muslims and Islam began to form as early as the 7th century, when the Islamic faith began to make inroads into the Byzantine Empire.

Once Islamophobia is discussed, the religious factor certainly cannot be ignored. In addition, social, demographic, economic, and political aspects are also as an integral part. In general, politics is one of the main factors. It would not be exaggerated to say that because Islamophobia is originated as a political term, it is still frequently deployed for political ends. The dominant politics of some elite and Western political figures make the demographic factor also a daunting threat. During the past four decades, Muslim population in Europe has increased dramatically through migration and family reunification. For some European societies, the phenomenon is so frightening. This in turn led to increasingly marginalized politics of Muslims and Muslims' cultures, such as the rejection of traditions and cultures of Islamic Arabic and anti-immigration policies.

⁵ Jonas R. Kunst et. al. "Coping with Islamophobia: the Effects Minorities' of Religious Stigma on Muslim Identity Formation" *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, (36: 2012), p. 530.

⁶ Andrea Elizabeth Cluck, *Islamophobia in the Post-9/11 United States: Causes, Manifestations, and Solutions*, MA Thesis (Georgia: The Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia, 2012), p. 36.

⁷ Naved Bakali, *Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Racism through the Lived Experiences of Muslim Youth*, (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2016), p. 11.

⁸ Erik Bleich, "What Is Islamophobia and How Much Is There? Theorizing and Measuring an Emerging Comparative Concept" *American Behavioral Scientist* (November 2011), p. 1593

⁹ See Christine Ogan et. al. "The rise of anti-Muslim prejudice: Media and Islamophobia in Europe and the United States" *The International Communication Gazette* (Vol. 76 (1) 2014) p. 30,

Another important aspect to mention is the strengthening of radical Muslim groups using violent means, such as terrorism, to address Western domination of the world in general, and the Islamic world in particular. We do not close the eyes of a small number of Muslims who regard the West as an enemy to be resisted, and even they seek to destroy it in any way, including terrorism. Therefore the September 11 tragedy clearly exacerbates the image of Islam and Muslims, and in turn makes Islamophobia increasingly stronger and widespread among Western societies.

However, terrorism is not the main cause of Islamophobia. A careful study of survey data yields a surprising finding: animosity toward Islam since 9/11 has not been driven primarily by fear of terrorism. Media framing is more decisive to develop prejudice and stereotyping about Islam and Muslims. The prevailing views of Western society are the images of Muslims being violent, hate Jews and Christians, anti-democracy, anti-modernity, and misogynistic. Again, the main cause is politics which is based on religious justification.

In addition, the aspect that helped fuel the growth and development of Islamophobia and anti-Islam hate crime is the lack of understanding and direct or actual contact of Western society with diverse Muslims from various countries with their diverse cultural backgrounds. Instead of knowing Islam and Muslims in its entirety, Western societies are poked with ugly and evil Islamic images developed by a few of Islamic haters, politicians and ideologues through a variety of ways.

Searching for Solutions; A Perspective of Islam Nusantara

There are several reasons why Indonesia should be involved to solve problems of Islamphobia. First of all, the issue becomes a common issue for the whole nation because it helps in building a more just, peaceful, and equal life right now forward. Moreover, Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world which so far is relatively peaceful and its society lives in harmony even though they have different religions. In addition, Muslims and other believers are recognized as being devout worshipers, and they are also to some degree able to contextualize their religious values and teachings into real-life reality without any significant theological and other obstacles.

In the context of Islam, those are inseparable from the role of the majority of Indonesian Muslim society represented by two major Islamic religious organizations of Indonesia, namely Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. At the same time, these organizations are fully supported by major educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and Islamic Higher Education. They all developed an Indonesian Islam with a characteristic which in Muhammadiyah is called Islam Berkemajuan and in Nahdlatul Ulama is called Islam Nusantara.

Normatively, Islam is only one, namely the revelation and the so-called "Word of God" (*kalam Allah*) which at the same time is described and communicated by the Prophet Muhammad. The "Word of God" has an absolute truth and contains universal principles. To implement this sacred text, Muslims need to develop a certain understanding as an effort to actualize and contextualize the teachings into concrete realities.

At the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims practiced Islamic teachings by following the direct instructions of the Prophet. In addition, especially when they were not with (or away from) the Messenger of Allah, they performed an *ijtihad* (Islamic legal reasoning). The event of the Prophet's dialogue with Mu'adz about the way of settling down religious issues before leaving for Yemen¹¹ in order to carry out the Prophet's commandment explains completely about it. Unlike *kalam Allah*, *ijtihad* has a relative truth and is very

¹⁰ Christopher Smith, "Anti-Islamic Sentiment", p. 1

¹¹ See Abu Dawud Sulaiman al-Asy'ats, *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Vol. 5, (Damascus: Syirkah al-Risalah al-'Aalamiyah, 2009), 444.

contextual. In the hands of these Muslims, Islam then developed into diverse expressions. The core vision of Islam that emphasizes the absolute noble moral value becomes the common ground for all the diversity.

Ijtihad as a means of contextualizing religious teachings into life emerged almost simultaneously with the presence of Islam itself. From time to time, the contextualization continues to develop. In the hands of al-Shafi'i, the contextualization of religion finds its strong point of interest through the proposed methodology of systematic interpretation of Islamic teachings. History goes on, so does the effort of contextualization of Islam continues to develop from time to time, and from one place to another.

All of it shows that Islam - or any religion - cannot be perceived as a model of reality. Islam as a religion which is transmitted solely for the creation of good life is necessarily understood as a model for reality, a teaching that is abstract and general to be contextualized and developed in the reality of life, where between doctrine and reality are not always in structural conformity or similarity. The doctrine as the source and foundation of life needs to be interpreted based on space and time by maintaining its principles and values. The contextualization of the doctrine needs to be developed based on the benefit of life and the public interest as a whole. *Maqashid as-syari'ah* and *al-mashlahah* are benchmarks that cannot be bargained for any personal interest.

Clerics of classical periods have classified *maqashid* (objectives) into three kinds: *dlaruriyat* (essentials; requisites), *hajiyat* (necessaries), and *tahsiniyat* (perfectiveness). In al-Juwaini's view, the teacher of al-Ghazali, *dharuriyat* encompasses trust, soul, thought, personal property, and money. He insisted Islam must protect all these five. Almost the same as his teacher, al-Ghazali argues that the basic human needs to be protected are trust, soul, thought, descent, and wealth. Ibn Abd al-Salam, al-Qarafi, and al-Syathibi also develop a similar kind of identification.¹³

When Islam came to the Nusantara archipelago through the meritorious services of Walisongo (nine saints; clerics), such things of *maqasid* became their basis in contextualizing Islam. In doing *da'wah*, they were not just guarding the basic human rights, but also highly appreciated the culture, arts and local wisdom. They made use of local art performances, such as *wayang* (traditional performance using puppet) which was very popular among communities, *tembang* (a kind of local song) and mask dance, as a medium to introduce Islam into local communities. Sunan Giri, in particular, presents Islam through children's games. Thus, the presence of Islam in the Nusantara communities has gained relatively no resistance, and has been far from the use of violence. Even the people, to some degree, did not regard Islam as something foreign, coming from outside.

Islam with such identification has been one of the characteristics of Islam that has been flourished in the Nusantara archipelago. It has become an intrinsic part of the country. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to call that this kind of practical expression of Islamic teachings *Islam Nusantara* model.

Not only doing dialogue with the local culture, but Islam Nusantara also has dialogue with the West and the culture or traditions of the East. Surely as far as it is not contrary to the principles of Islamic teachings and values.

The so-called *Islam Nusantara* has been increasingly much more popular when the founders of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the successor generation attempted to disseminate it further. The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) with Pancasila as its

 $^{^{12}}$ Bassam Tibi, *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (Boulder- Sa Francisco – Oxford: Westview Press, 1991), 11.

¹³ See also Jasser Auda, *Maqasid al-Shariah As Philoshophy if Islamic Law: A Systems Approach*, (London – Washington: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008), 16 *ff.*

¹⁴ See Agus Sunyoto, Atlas Wali Songo (Depok: Pustaka IIMaN, 2016), 179 ff.

philosophical basis finds firm legitimacy through NU. This can be traced from KH Hasyim Asy'ari's Resolution of Jihad which put forward the ideological basis for the struggle to defend the homeland of Indonesia as *jihad*. Similarly, it can be traced from the results of NU national deliberation (*musyawarah nasional*) in Situbondo in 1984 which confirmed the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as a final form that should not be questioned and disputed from the theological and religious side in general. Islam Nusantara deserves to be a reference for the global Muslim community, since the existence of Indonesia as a country with the world's largest Muslims population throughout the history is relatively reflective of peace and prosperity in comparison to other Muslim countries.

With these characteristics of *Islam Nusantara* in carrying out Islamic mission, *rahmatan lil alamin*, together with *Islam Berkemajuan* carried by Muhammadiyah to a certain degree gives significant results. The face of Islam which friendly, tolerant, compatible to democracy and modernism, and appreciate gender equality is truly visible and grounded into everyday life. Indonesian Islam needs to be introduced further to various societies and nations, especially in European and American countries.

The role of Chinese Muslims

Growing and flourishing Islam in Nusantara islands is not only supported by Malay ethnic as an earliest ethnic inhabited the Archipelago. Indonesian Islam also cannot be separated from the supports of other ethnics and other nations, such as Arab and Chinese. Indonesian Islam since its inception has been supported and spread by various nationalities and ethnic groups, at least by the three mentioned ethnic groups.

Without ignoring other ethnicities, the role of China in addition to Malay is undoubtedly enormous. A historian mentions that Sunan Ampel, one of Walisongo's figures, was born by a Chinese mother from Yunan, South China, with the original name of Bong Swi Ho.¹⁵ Many other historians said that Sunan Ampel came from Champa.

Regardless of the controversy, the figure of Admiral Cheng Hoo as a Chinese Ming Dynasty envoy presented a luminous reality about the role of Chinese in Islam in the archipelago. Quoting from various sources, Al Qurtubi explained that Cheng Ho's fleet involved 62 large ships and 225 junks (boats) on which sailed 27,550 marines, astronomers, politicians, map makers, doctors, traditional healers, preachers, ethnographers, etc. From 1405 to 1433, Cheng Ho led seven expeditions and visited more than thirty-seven countries. It ranges from Nusantara seaports, notably from Palembang, Banten, Cirebon, Semarang, Gresik, to Surabaya, from Ceylon, Cochin, Calicut, Ormuz, Jeddah, to Mogadishu and Malinda, from Champa to India, from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea and the coast of Kenya. Cheng Ho's expeditions far surpassed later European expeditions such as those commanded by Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan, Francis Drake and so forth. 16

It is very interesting that during the struggle against the Portuguese I fifteen century, Islamic Demak Kingdom had collaborated with Chinese communities that had existed for centuries and were internationally renowned for their ability in building ships and forging weapons. A Chinese figure by the name of Liem Mo Han (known as Babah Liem) was widely celebrated by the Javanese not only as the local Chinese leader during Demak's struggle but also as the architect of several mosques in Java notably the famous Mantingan mosque in Jepara (near Demak). Designed by Liem Mo Han, components of the Mantingan mosque like tiles and ceramics were brought in from Macao. Babah Liem was a Chinese Muslim, the Chinese ambassador for Demak, and the leader of Nan Lung ("The South

¹⁵ *Ibid*, p. 226.

¹⁶ Sumanto Al Qurtuby, "The Tao of Islam: Cheng Ho and the Legacy of Chinese Muslims in Pre-Modern Java" *Studia Islamika*, (Vol. 16, No. 1, 2009) p. 56-57.

Dragon"), a Java-based Chinese overseas union that functioned as a social organization to preserve the Chinese heritage and culture. This overseas Chinese association was established by Java's local Chinese communities in the aftermath of Cheng Ho's expeditions.¹⁷

In line with that finding, Mahfud –based on Tan Ta Sen research –stated that today Islam in Indonesia cannot be separated from China contributions, especially Zheng He. In Tan's article, he cites that Zheng He's voyages took place within the larger context of "culture contact" in China and beyond. He illustrates the peaceful impact of culture contact and demonstrates how such cultural influences not only led to the transmissions, conversions and transferences, involving inner Asian Muslims from China and Yunnan Muslims, as well as Chams, Javanese, Malays, Arabs and Indians, but also enabled many Chinese in the Malay world to retain non-Muslim cultural traits. ¹⁸

Thus it can be said that the role of Chinese Muslims in Indonesian Islam lies not only in the process of Islamization, but also in other areas. Furthermore, they also have significant contributions in the development of architecture, making weapons, even tradition. Besides strengthening Indonesia's rich Islamic nuances, it also reinforces the inclusive, friendly, tolerant and lofty as characters of Indonesian Islam.

Closing Remark

Islamophobia is a challenge for all nations and all religions' followers. After all, it will inhibit the spreading out of justice, peace, and equality. It is therefore our duty and responsibility to strive to dismiss the views, attitudes, and behaviors representing hatred for Islam, or even to other religions.

Intense dialogue between Indonesian Islamic bearers with the world community, especially Western societies that do not know the diversity of Muslims undoubtedly has to be conducted. This dialogue needs to involve all levels of society, especially Western grassroots communities that have been fed up with stereotyping and negative prejudices about Islam. Moreover, movements and activities that can introduce true Islam are also important to be scheduled. Indonesian Islamic bearers need to be actively involved in all these activities.

-

¹⁷ *Ibid*, p. 60.

¹⁸ Choirul Mahfud, "The Role of Cheng Ho Mosque: The New Silk Road, Indonesia-China Relations in Islamic Cultural Identity" *Journal of Indonesian* Islam (Volume 08, Number 01, June 2014), p. 26.

Responding Islamophobia:

The Role of Islam Nusantara and Chinese Muslims on Anchoring Wasatiyah Islam

Abd A'la

In 1997 Runnymede Trust issued a report on anti-Islam in Europe under the title *Islamophobia: Still A Challenge for Us All*. This report is considered to be one of the earliest research popularizing the term of Islamophobia.

Truthfully, Islamophobia being attached to certain groups in various European countries refers to a very long history. Anti-Islam, hatred of Islam, or the like arose in the incidence of the conflicts between Europe and Muslims from the Middle East region and its surrounding. It can be traced back to history when the Europeans had defeated Arab Muslims and since then ruled the fifteenth-century Spain. In 1409, the campaign of forced conversion was inaugurated in the area. The inquisition was then instituted. Anti-Islam and Muslims continued to be reinforced. In 1556, Philip II promulgated a law requiring the remaining Muslims to abandon their languages, worship, institutions and manner of life. Finally, Philip signed the order of expulsion in 1609 resulting in the forcible deportation in the mass of practically all Muslims on Spanish soil.[1]

As Europe seized the Islamic world through its colonialism, anti-Islam, harassment and insult to Islam developed through the study of Orientalism. Referring to Lewis's work, Edward Said states, in Lewis's view (and certainly many other Orientalists) proclaiming that Islam is an irrational herd or mass phenomenon, ruling Muslims by passions, instincts, and unreflecting hatreds.[2] Then, anti-Islam and Muslims continued to strengthen during the 1979 Iranian revolution and reached its peak after the tragedy of September 11, 2001. Anti-Islam and Muslims that developed into Islamophobia continued to spread in various parts of European and American countries.

The study of Islamophobia and its answers has been widely observed. But the reality shows that the phenomenon of Islamophobia is not reduced significantly, if it does not grow stronger. On the other hand, its resolution efforts, as one of the themes raised at this International Conference, remain very significant to continue.

This paper will discuss the role of Indonesian Islam in participating in eliminating and minimizing the spread of Islamophobia. Indonesian Islam with all its characteristics has considerable potential to be involved in explaining the true Islam, and spreading the noble values that form the basis of Islamic teachings in this life. One of the characteristics of Indonesian Islam is the contextualization of Islamic values and teachings into real-life history, including the role of Chinese Muslims who participated in introducing and spreading Islam in the archipelago.

Islamophobia in the Contemporary Context

Entering the 21st century, Islamophobia presents a very clear face of some people, figures, groups and European societies. In some Western countries, anti-Muslim and Muslim groups are doing various ways to back Islam and its people into a corner. With their inner hatred, they strive to make Islam and Muslims no longer in Europe or America.

The view of Islam is exacerbated by the involvement of the Western partisan media. The media spreading Muslims or and Islam with all its derivatives as something very ugly that is not worthy to exist, grow, let alone flourish in this century. Through the framing media, Islamophobia is no longer due to terrorism by radical fundamentalist Muslims, but because of hatred for Islam itself. [3] Here clearly visible due to media framing, bad public opinion about Islam is formed strongly.

Islamophobia appears in various forms. As Sayyed mentioned, the activities described as Islamophobic can be seen in six main clusters. Firstly, Islamophobia through an attack on persons perceived to be Muslims being committed by random individuals or by semiorganized or organized groups acting together. Secondly, one can identify Islamophobia in mosque, cemeteries, business premises. These attacks may include vandalism (broken windows, hurts pig's heads into mosques, graffiti), arson, desecration of Muslim graves. Thirdly, Islamophobia represented by acts of intimidation. The form of intimidation may include marches through areas with large Muslim populations. It may include advertising campaigns of the Qur'an or demonstrations against the building of mosques or cultural centers. What distinguishes these sets of actions is the degree of coordination requiring the expenditure of social and financial capital. *The Fourth*, Islamophobia may be in favor of the treatment of the peoples in the comparative positions within the same organizations. Such behavior may take the form of harassment, bullying, pointed jokes, distribution of tasks, and assessments of performance in which they are considered to be Muslims. Some of these organizations may be part of an institutional ensemble that makes up the state, while others may be private. The Fifth, Islamophobia refers to incidents in which it is a sustained and systematic elaboration of comments in the public domain insulting Muslims and / or Islam. This disparagement could be more or less subtle. For example, publishing the Qur'an with Muhammad is listed as the author or recycling medieval Christian polemics as the "truth" about Islam or Muslim culture. This form of Islamophobia could be articulated in the internet hate sites, newspapers, magazines, or other media, or maybe in factual or fictional programs. The form of Islamophobia can also inform policy and opinion, and maybe the ground for state interventions and regulations. It may also be part of the common sense of a society that set of unexamined assumptions and beliefs that circulate in any society. The above five clusters of Islamophobia tend to be carried out by individuals or organizations (private or public). The state may facilitate them through benign neglect or refusal to provide adequate safeguards, or to the issue of such actions, but it is not actively or openly involved in the perpetuation of these incidents. The sixth is Islamophobia in which the state (in the form of its functionaries) plays an active role. These can include intensification of surveillance of Muslim populations using technology, agent provocateurs, and paid informers. Such surveillance may be carried out by what can be described rather loosely as the secret police (that is, state agencies tasked with clandestine operating procedures). In addition to these secret police operations, there is an Islamophobia of the criminal justice system in which those deemed to be Muslims are perceived to be treated less favorably than others. This can be the result of differential sentencing, the difference in the frequency of being stopped and searched by police officers. State policies could also be used to restrict expression of Muslimness—for example, limiting the building of mosques, regulating Muslim dress (bans on the burqa). What makes these sorts of activities appear to be Islamophobic is the degree to which they place extra burdens on sections of the population which are mostly Muslim.[4]

Reality shows that Islamophobia has far-reaching effects not only on individuals who are victims of treatment from Islamophobic people or groups, but also the Muslim community in general. Some of the worst impacts are related to aspects of psychology and mental health, such as trauma to victims and some European Muslims. Moreover, the effects on political life, economy, and such are also so burdensome to European Muslims.

Indeed, anti-Islam and Muslims are also detrimental to the country and the European nation, even mankind as a whole. The lack of integration of the Muslim community into the nation and the country in which they live impacts on the less commitment and the looseness of national cohesion is an unnecessary reality, especially in the Western World being famous for countries with multicultural and multi-religious communities. [5] The strength of

Islamophobia and the state's neglect of it show that the values of democracy and all its derivatives having so far been glorified are nothing more than lip service alone. Based on the fact above, the issue of Islamophobia becomes our common problem, the problem of all nations around the world. We have cooperatively to accomplish it. Attitudes and movements reflecting anti-Islam and Muslims should not develop. Otherwise, justice and prosperity as the mission of mankind as a whole will never be grounded in life.

Tracing the Root of the Problem

The Issue of strength and the spread of Islamophobia in many European and American countries has a very long history and comes to a very complex problem. It involves various aspects in which one with another interconnected. Although the religion aspect is emerging so strongly, we must not simplify the problem.

As revealed briefly in the introduction that European hatred of Islam happened when they overran Spain, it can be stated that anti-Islam and Muslims have emerged since the beginning of conflict-induced contact between Muslim and Christian Europeans. In this case, the Crusades became a decisive momentum. Quoted from Al-Sheikh-Ali, Cluck explained that Islamophobia, including the perception of Muslims as the "other" and the perceived superiority of the West, should be seen as emerging from not only the contemporary context of the perceived civilizational clash but also from other factors including European colonialism. [6] It is true what Naved Bakali stated that fear and mistrust towards Muslims and being perceived as a diametrically opposed 'Other' have deeper roots in Europe. Borrowing Paul Weller's phrase, he argued, "Islamophobia is undeniably rooted in the historical inheritance of a conflictual relationship that has developed over many centuries involving the overlap of religion, politics and warfare" Western perceptions of Muslims and Islam began to form as early as the 7th century, when the Islamic faith began to make inroads into the Byzantine Empire. [7]

Once Islamophobia is discussed, the religious factor certainly cannot be ignored. In addition, social, demographic, economic, and political aspects are also as an integral part. In general, politics is one of the main factors. It would not be exaggerated to say that because Islamophobia is originated as a political term, it is still frequently deployed for political ends.[8] The dominant politics of some elite and Western political figures make the demographic factor also a daunting threat. During the past four decades, the Muslim population in Europe has increased dramatically through migration and family reunification. For some European societies, the phenomenon is so frightening. This, in turn, led to increasingly marginalized politics of Muslims and Muslims' cultures, such as the rejection of traditions and cultures of Islamic Arabic and anti-immigration policies. [9] Another important aspect to mention is the strengthening of radical Muslim groups using violent means, such as terrorism, to address Western domination of the world in general, and the Islamic world in particular. We do not close the eyes of a small number of Muslims who regard the West as an enemy to be resisted, and even they seek to destroy it in any way, including terrorism. Therefore the September 11 tragedy clearly exacerbates the image of Islam and Muslims, and in turn makes Islamophobia increasingly stronger and widespread among Western societies.

However, terrorism is not the main cause of Islamophobia. A careful study of survey data yields a surprising finding: animosity toward Islam since 9/11 has not been driven primarily by fear of terrorism.[10] Media framing is more decisive to develop prejudice and stereotyping about Islam and Muslims. The prevailing views of Western society are the images of Muslims being violent, hate Jews and Christians, anti-democracy, anti-modernity, and misogynistic. Again, the main cause is politics which is based on religious justification.

In addition, the aspect that helped fuel the growth and development of Islamophobia and anti-Islam hate crime is the lack of understanding and direct or actual contact of Western society with diverse Muslims from various countries with their diverse cultural backgrounds. Instead of knowing Islam and Muslims in its entirety, Western societies are poked with ugly and evil Islamic images developed by a few of Islamic haters, politicians and ideologues through a variety of ways.

Searching for Solutions; A Perspective of Islam Nusantara

There are several reasons why Indonesia should be involved to solve problems of Islamophobia. First of all, the issue becomes a common issue for the whole nation because it helps in building a more just, peaceful, and equal life right now forward. Moreover, Indonesia is a country with the largest Muslim population in the world which so far is relatively peaceful and its society lives in harmony even though they have different religions. In addition, Muslims and other believers are recognized as being devout worshipers, and they are also to some degree able to contextualize their religious values and teachings into real-life reality without any significant theological and other obstacles.

In the context of Islam, those are inseparable from the role of the majority of Indonesian Muslim society represented by two major Islamic religious organizations of Indonesia, namely Muhammadiyah and Nahdlatul Ulama. At the same time, these organizations are fully supported by major educational institutions such as Islamic boarding schools and Islamic Higher Education. They all developed an Indonesian Islam with a characteristic which in Muhammadiyah is called Islam Berkemajuan and in Nahdlatul Ulama is called Islam Nusantara.

Normatively, Islam is only one, namely the revelation and the so-called "Word of God" (*kalam Allah*) which at the same time is described and communicated by the Prophet Muhammad. The "Word of God" has absolute truth and contains universal principles. To implement this sacred text, Muslims need to develop a certain understanding as an effort to actualize and contextualize the teachings into concrete realities.

At the time of the Prophet Muhammad, Muslims practiced Islamic teachings by following the direct instructions of the Prophet. Besides, especially when they were not with (or away from) the Messenger of Allah, they performed an *ijtihad* (Islamic legal reasoning). The event of the Prophet's dialogue with Mu'adz about the way of settling down religious issues before leaving for Yemen[11] to carry out the Prophet's commandment explains completely about it. Unlike *kalam Allah*, *ijtihad* has a relative truth and is very contextual. In the hands of these Muslims, Islam then developed into diverse expressions. The core vision of Islam that emphasizes the absolute noble moral value becomes the common ground for all the diversity. *Ijtihad* as a means of contextualizing religious teachings into life emerged almost simultaneously with the presence of Islam itself. From time to time, the contextualization continues to develop. In the hands of al-Shafi'i, the contextualization of religion finds its strong point of interest through the proposed methodology of systematic interpretation of Islamic teachings. History goes on, so does the effort of contextualization of Islam continues to develop from time to time, and from one place to another.

All of it shows that Islam - or any religion - cannot be perceived as a model of reality. Islam as a religion which is transmitted solely for the creation of good life is necessarily understood as a model for reality, a teaching that is abstract and general to be contextualized and developed in the reality of life, where between doctrine and reality are not always in structural conformity or similarity. [12] The doctrine as the source and foundation of life needs to be interpreted based on space and time by maintaining its principles and values. The contextualization of the doctrine needs to be developed based on the benefit of life and the

public interest as a whole. *Maqashid as-syari'ah* and *al-mashlahah* are benchmarks that cannot be bargained for any personal interest.

Clerics of classical periods have classified *maqashid* (objectives) into three kinds: *dlaruriyat* (essentials; requisites), *hajiyat* (necessaries), and *tahsiniyat* (perfectiveness). In al-Juwaini's view, the teacher of al-Ghazali, *dharuriyat* encompasses trust, soul, thought, personal property, and money. He insisted Islam must protect all these five. Almost the same as his teacher, al-Ghazali argues that the basic human needs to be protected are trust, soul, thought, descent, and wealth. Ibn Abd al-Salam, al-Qarafi, and al-Syathibi also develop a similar kind of identification.[13]

When Islam came to the Nusantara archipelago through the meritorious services of Walisongo (nine saints; clerics), such things of *maqasid* became their basis in contextualizing Islam. In doing *da'wah*, they were not just guarding the basic human rights, but also highly appreciated the culture, arts and local wisdom. They made use of local art performances, such as *wayang* (traditional performance using puppet) which was very popular among communities, *tembang* (a kind of local song) and mask dance, as a medium to introduce Islam into local communities. Sunan Giri, in particular, presents Islam through children's games. [14] Thus, the presence of Islam in the Nusantara communities has gained relatively no resistance, and has been far from the use of violence. Even the people, to some degree, did not regard Islam as something foreign, coming from outside.

Islam with such identification has been one of the characteristics of Islam that has been flourished in the Nusantara archipelago. It has become an intrinsic part of the country. Therefore, it is not an exaggeration to call that this kind of practical expression of Islamic teachings *Islam Nusantara* model.

Not only doing dialogue with the local culture, but Islam Nusantara also has a dialogue with the West and the culture or traditions of the East. Surely as far as it is not contrary to the principles of Islamic teachings and values.

The so-called *Islam Nusantara* has been increasing much more popular when the founders of Nahdlatul Ulama (NU) and the successor generation attempted to disseminate it further. The Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia (NKRI) with Pancasila as its philosophical basis finds firm legitimacy through NU. This can be traced from KH Hasyim Asy'ari's Resolution of Jihad which put forward the ideological basis for the struggle to defend the homeland of Indonesia as *jihad*. Similarly, it can be traced from the results of NU national deliberation (*musyawarah nasional*) in Situbondo in 1984 which confirmed the Unitary State of the Republic of Indonesia as a final form that should not be questioned and disputed from the theological and religious side in general. Islam Nusantara deserves to be a reference for the global Muslim community, since the existence of Indonesia as a country with the world's largest Muslims population throughout the history is relatively reflective of peace and prosperity in comparison to other Muslim countries.

With these characteristics of *Islam Nusantara* in carrying out Islamic mission, *rahmatan lil alamin*, together with *Islam Berkemajuan* carried by Muhammadiyah to a certain degree gives significant results. The face of Islam which friendly, tolerant, compatible to democracy and modernism, and appreciate gender equality is truly visible and grounded into everyday life. Indonesian Islam needs to be introduced further to various societies and nations, especially in European and American countries.

The role of Chinese Muslims

Growing and flourishing Islam in Nusantara islands is not only supported by Malay ethnic as an earliest ethnic inhabited the Archipelago. Indonesian Islam also cannot be separated from the supports of other ethnics and other nations, such as Arab and Chinese. Indonesian Islam

since its inception has been supported and spread by various nationalities and ethnic groups, at least by the three mentioned ethnic groups.

Without ignoring other ethnicities, the role of China in addition to Malay is undoubtedly enormous. A historian mentions that Sunan Ampel, one of Walisongo's figures, was born by a Chinese mother from Yunan, South China, with the original name of Bong Swi Ho. [15] Many other historians said that Sunan Ampel came from Champa. Regardless of the controversy, the figure of Admiral Cheng Hoo as a Chinese Ming Dynasty envoy presented a luminous reality about the role of Chinese in Islam in the archipelago. Quoting from various sources, Al Qurtubi explained that Cheng Ho's fleet involved 62 large ships and 225 junks (boats) on which sailed 27,550 marines, astronomers, politicians, map makers, doctors, traditional healers, preachers, ethnographers, etc. From 1405 to 1433, Cheng Ho led seven expeditions and visited more than thirty-seven countries. It ranges from Nusantara seaports, notably from Palembang, Banten, Cirebon, Semarang, Gresik, to Surabaya, from Ceylon, Cochin, Calicut, Ormuz, Jeddah, to Mogadishu and Malinda, from Champa to India, from the Persian Gulf to the Red Sea and the coast of Kenya. Cheng Ho's expeditions far surpassed later European expeditions such as those commanded by Christopher Columbus, Vasco da Gama, Ferdinand Magellan, Francis Drake and so forth. [16]

It is very interesting that during the struggle against the Portuguese I fifteen century, Islamic Demak Kingdom had collaborated with Chinese communities that had existed for centuries and were internationally renowned for their ability in building ships and forging weapons. A Chinese figure by the name of Liem Mo Han (known as Babah Liem) was widely celebrated by the Javanese not only as the local Chinese leader during Demak's struggle but also as the architect of several mosques in Java notably the famous Mantingan mosque in Jepara (near Demak). Designed by Liem Mo Han, components of the Mantingan mosque like tiles and ceramics were brought in from Macao. Babah Liem was a Chinese Muslim, the Chinese ambassador for Demak, and the leader of Nan Lung ("The South Dragon"), a Java-based Chinese overseas union that functioned as a social organization to preserve the Chinese heritage and culture. This overseas Chinese association was established by Java's local Chinese communities in the aftermath of Cheng Ho's expeditions.[17] In line with that finding, Mahfud -based on Tan Ta Sen research -stated that today Islam in Indonesia cannot be separated from China contributions, especially Zheng He. In Tan's article, he cites that Zheng He's voyages took place within the larger context of "culture contact" in China and beyond. He illustrates the peaceful impact of culture contact and demonstrates how such cultural influences not only led to the transmissions, conversions and transferences, involving inner Asian Muslims from China and Yunnan Muslims, as well as Chams, Javanese, Malays, Arabs and Indians, but also enabled many Chinese in the Malay world to retain non-Muslim cultural traits.[18]

Thus it can be said that the role of Chinese Muslims in Indonesian Islam lies not only in the process of Islamization, but also in other areas. Furthermore, they also have significant contributions in the development of architecture, making weapons, even tradition. Besides strengthening Indonesia's rich Islamic nuances, it also reinforces the inclusive, friendly, tolerant and lofty as characters of Indonesian Islam.

Closing Remark

Islamophobia is a challenge for all nations and all religions' followers. After all, it will inhibit the spreading out of justice, peace, and equality. It is, therefore, our duty and responsibility to strive to dismiss the views, attitudes, and behaviors representing hatred for Islam, or even to other religions.

Intense dialogue between Indonesian Islamic bearers with the world community, especially Western societies that do not know the diversity of Muslims undoubtedly has to be

conducted. This dialogue needs to involve all levels of society, especially Western grassroots communities that have been fed up with stereotyping and negative prejudices about Islam. Moreover, movements and activities that can introduce true Islam are also important to be scheduled. Indonesian Islamic bearers need to be actively involved in all these activities.

- [1] See Philip K Hitti, History of the Arabs, Tenth Edition, (London: Macmillan), p. 555-556
- [2] Edward W Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979), p. 317.
- [3] Christopher Smith, "Anti-Islamic Sentiment and Media Framing during the 9/11 Decade" *Journal of Religion & Society* (Vol. 15 (2013), p. 2.
- [4] S. Sayyid, "A Measure of Islamophobia "Islamophobia Studies Journal, (Vol. 2, No. 1, Spring 2014) p. 11-12.
- [5] Jonas R. Kunst et. al. "Coping with Islamophobia: the Effects Minorities' of Religious Stigma on Muslim Identity Formation" *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, (36: 2012), p. 530.
- [6] Andrea Elizabeth Cluck, *Islamophobia in the Post-9/11 United States: Causes, Manifestations, and Solutions*, MA Thesis (Georgia: The Graduate Faculty of The University of Georgia, 2012), p. 36.
- [7] Naved Bakali, *Islamophobia: Understanding Anti-Muslim Racism through the Lived Experiences of Muslim Youth*, (Rotterdam: Sense Publishers, 2016), p. 11.
- [8] Erik Bleich, "What Is Islamophobia and How Much Is There? Theorizing and Measuring an Emerging Comparative Concept" *American Behavioral Scientist* (November 2011), p. 1593
- [9] See Christine Ogan et. al. "The rise of anti-Muslim prejudice: Media and Islamophobia in Europe and the United States" The International Communication Gazette (Vol. 76 (1) 2014) p. 30,
- [10] Christopher Smith, "Anti-Islamic Sentiment", p. 1
- [11] See Abu Dawud Sulaiman al-Asy'ats, *Sunan Abi Dawud*, Vol. 5, (Damascus: Syirkah al-Risalah al-'Aalamiyah, 2009), 444.
- [12] Bassam Tibi, *Islam and the Cultural Accommodation of Social Change* (Boulder- Sa Francisco Oxford: Westview Press, 1991), 11.
- [13] See also Jasser Auda, Maqasid al-Shariah As Philoshophy if Islamic Law: A Systems Approach, (London Washington: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 2008), 16 ff.
- [14] See Agus Sunyoto, Atlas Wali Songo (Depok: Pustaka IIMaN, 2016), 179 ff.
- [15] *Ibid*, p. 226.
- [16] Sumanto Al Qurtuby, "The Tao of Islam: Cheng Ho and the Legacy of Chinese Muslims in Pre-Modern Java" *Studia Islamika*, (Vol. 16, No. 1, 2009) p. 56-57.
- [17] *Ibid*, p. 60.
- [18] Choirul Mahfud, "The Role of Cheng Ho Mosque: The New Silk Road, Indonesia-China Relations in Islamic Cultural Identity" *Journal of Indonesian* Islam (Volume 08, Number 01, June 2014), p. 26.