

Understanding Terrorism, Peace, and Tolerance from the *Institute for the Study of Islam and Civilizations* (INSISTS) Activists in Indonesia

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Abstract—Although known as an anti-liberalism Islamic organization, the activists of the Institute for the Study of Islam and Civilizations (INSISTS) also have positions related to terrorism, peace, and tolerance. This paper seeks to explore the perspectives of INSISTS activists on these three issues, which are later discussed in Indonesian national discourse by Indonesian and foreign writers. INSISTS activists are deeply inspired by the thought of Syed Al-Attas, which holds that the problem of the Islamic world—even the world in general—is the “loss of adab.” The contestation of discourse deployed by INSISTS activists is inseparable from their worldview related to the Islam taught by Syed Al-Attas, and efforts to create an Islamic civilization with a moderate approach. INSISTS activists have advantages in the mastery of Islamic Arabic texts—because they are generally derived from Islamic educational institutions such as pesantren—and also others studies written by Western authors. Their study of Islamic and Western texts related to terrorism, peace and tolerance is very interesting to gain alternative thought in viewing the growing and dynamic and vibrant Islamic and wider Indonesian context. This paper seeks to find alternative perspectives related to these three issues, that are expected to be useful for the government in formulating policies in Indonesia.

Keywords—terrorism, peace, tolerance, INSISTS

I. INTRODUCTION

Although known as an Islamic organization that is anti-liberalism, the activists of the Institute for the Study of Islam and Civilizations (INSISTS) also have thoughts related to terrorism, peace, and tolerance, which are increasingly important issues for discussion in the modern world of Indonesia. Terrorism occurs frequently in Indonesia and attacks have taken place not only on embassies, but also hotels, places of worship, even the bus terminal in the capital city of Indonesia, Jakarta. The latter happened—the bus terminal terror—in the midst of the spirit of nations to call for peace and tolerance in multicultural life.

Terrorism is an issue that is still problematic. The issue of terrorism is very much determined by who is in power. On the one hand, when the United States argued that Osama bin Laden (1957–2011) was a terrorist, he was labeled a terrorist. On the other hand, supporters of Bin Laden also used the word “hero” in describing him owing to his consistent struggle for Muslims in Afghanistan—since the Russian war—and that war was won by Afghanistan partnered with the USA. Al-Qaeda, the organization founded by Bin Laden,

was later considered a terrorist entity by the USA because of emergent differences in views—although the two had previously been united when fighting Russia.

In human history, the issue of peace is one that is never resolved. Where there are humans, there are conflicts, from small conflicts between people, households, ethnicities, communities, to conflicts between countries. To manage conflict, people make peace by various means such as binding agreements, or through various diplomatic methods. Since Samuel Huntington (1993) wrote about “the clash of civilizations,” followed by conflicts involving Islam versus the West in various places, the issue of peace has become an unsatisfactory, fruitless meeting for everyone. Peace becomes something difficult, even peace becomes an option that must be exercised after going through a war that took lives.

While the issue of tolerance is a popular issue in a multicultural society, in Indonesia, the issue of tolerance has arisen again with the occurrence acts of terrorism and acts of intolerance in various places, not only in the real world but also in cyberspace. The call to return to *Pancasila* (or *Bhinneka Tunggal Ika*) as a basic concept of united Indonesians has also strengthened in various meetings. However, intolerant acts still occur. Why did that happen? This will be discussed in this paper, based on ethnographic research on INSISTS activists. Although they are not specific in discussing these three issues, but from the attitudes, statements, activities, and various publications they can illustrate how the three feature in the INSISTS activist perspective.

II. INSISTS: A SYNCRETIC-MODERN CONSERVATIVE PLAT FORM ORGANIZATION

Prior to discussing how INSISTS activists think about the three issues above, it is good for us to know more about the style of the organization, in order to facilitate our understanding of the perspectives of its activists. The organization, INSISTS, was established on March 4, 2003 in Segambut Village, Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia, by collaborating students and lecturers from the Indonesian Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization (ISTAC) who share the idea of building a civilization based on an Islamic worldview. When its activities began to spread in Indonesia, the activists involved in the INSISTS study then formed the “INSISTS network,” which began to emerge in 2008, especially since the postgraduate program for regeneration of new Islamic

scholars has been running in several places in Indonesia (Bachtiar, 2016).

Based on INSISTS's ideas, INSISTS study activists created several collaboration networks in Indonesia that were inspired by the Bayt Al-Hikmah Study Center in the past, which was established with various community contributions (Zarkasyi, 2013). Tiar Anwar Bachtiar (2016) in his doctoral dissertation notes that there are at least 9 institutions that can be referred to as INSISTS networks, namely: INPAS Surabaya, PIMPIM Bandung, PSPi Solo, Islamic Thought Institute (IPI)/Adab Institute Yogyakarta, Depok Islamic Study Circle (DISC) UI Depok Mosque, Indonesia Without JIL (ITJ), Center for Gender Studies (CGS) Jakarta, Indonesian Intellectual and Ulama Council (MIUMI) Jakarta, and Muslimah Community for Islamic Studies (KMKI). The establishment of this network was not initially planned by the founder of INSISTS; even INSISTS did not intend to recruit members. However, as related by Bachtiar (2016) and Zarkasyi (2013), INSISTS opens itself to study groups, foundations, organizations, which are not formally bound to synergize disseminating an Islamic worldview. The presence of INSISTS and its network, in addition to spreading the ideas of Islamic civilization, is built on science and is also a response to Liberal Islamic thought, which has been developed since 1970 by its leaders such as Nurcholish Madjid (1939–2005), A Mukti Ali (1923–2004), and Harun Nasution (1919–1998) who brought the idea of “Islamic reform” or the application of Western understanding into Islamic thought (Zarkasyi, 2012; Husaini, 2015). The idea of Islamic liberalism was then criticized by several figures, such as M. Rasyidi (1915–2001) and Daud Rasyid, who criticized the movement through the book they published. Later, the liberal idea was adopted by young leaders in Nahdlatul Ulama and Muhammadiyah, which caused debate both in the two institutions and in other Islamic organizations. INSISTS's presence participated in criticizing the idea of Liberal Islam (originating from the West) in various writings in print, electronic, books, social media, and various INSISTS programs that were not sporadically produced, but through an epistemological process, “to islamize” the thoughts that came from the West (Zarkasyi, 2016). INSISTS researchers also involved in criticized scientifically to Liberal Islam activists with their arguments based on research without blasphemy, and became “a new models in respond to liberal thinking” (Husaini, 2015).

The existing documents indicate that INSISTS formulated its vision, mission and objectives to clarify and reformulate the methodology of Islamic thought and civilization that is relevant to the problems faced by Muslims such as in the fields of science, education, history, civilization, politics, economics, social and gender equality. For this reason, INSISTS also conducts various activities such as intensive studies in the form of discussions, seminars, workshops, conferences, research and writing issues in the field of Islamic thought and civilization. In addition, INSISTS also raises endowment funds which are directed to the establishment of an independent and professional institute for the study of international Islamic thought and civilization.

In the process of creating integration within the organization, INSISTS chooses to use a syncretic-modern Indonesian conservative platform. According to Martin van Bruinessen (2011, 2014), conservative Islam is defined

as a flow that rejects all modern, liberal, or progressive interpretations of the teachings of Islam, and adheres to the established religious doctrine and social order. Conservative Islamic activists, in van Bruinessen's view again, tend to be famous for their “objections to the idea of gender equality and opposition to power and modern hermeneutic approaches to religious texts.” Meanwhile, syncretic-modern is characterized by the mixing of religion, tradition, nationalist ideology, and social media; contrasted with syncretic-traditional which is characterized by the mixing of religion, tradition, and the past.

In Haidar Bagir's perspective (in van Bruinessen, 2014: 4), the problem of conservatism in Islam can actually be viewed from a global religio-historical and geopolitical perspective. Religio-historical symptoms can be traced back to the period of the Caliphate of Ali with the formation of schools, one of which was the Khawarij, who considered Muslims not in line with them to be infidels. This phenomenon reappeared when the initial Salafism was formed with the figure of Ibn Taymiyyah (1263–1328) who was referred to as a contemporary Islamic activist. Later, their obduracy was increasingly crystallized, due to disappointment that Muslim society tended to accommodate modern civilization. While in geopolitics, writes Haidar Bagir, conservatism is also fueled by political and economic imbalances when religious groups have privileged access to government, wealth, and important positions in government and cultural life. This contestation is sharpened by the involvement of foreign governments (America and Europe) who do not want to lose their grip on the region by supporting certain regimes. The involvement of these superpower countries perpetuates—or exacerbates—the symptoms of conservatism and sectarian conflicts borne of them. In addition, Martin van Bruinessen (2014) wrote that since the 1970s and 1980s, America (with the support of European countries) has wanted to ensure that as much Islamic revival as possible moves under the American sphere of influence.

The choice of conservatism can be seen from how INSISTS formulates its vision, mission, and objectives, namely, to clarify and reformulate the methodology of Islamic thought and civilization that is relevant to the problems faced by Muslims, such as in the fields of science, education, history, civilization, politics, economics, social, and gender equality. INSISTS activists appear to be critical of all interpretations—both classical and traditional, even against establishment—and anti-liberal thinking. In their eyes, the Western Orientalist approach must be critically reviewed. The choice of conservatism—as van Bruinessen views it—seems inseparable from the influence of their teachers in Malaysia, namely Syed Naquib Al-Attas. In their various writings, there is a great respect for the figure of Al-Attas, because of his intelligence, consistency and high morality. The results of the thoughts and ideas of Al-Attas about “islamization of science” and adab were then received into Indonesia, even contextualized in the Indonesian situation.

Apparently, INSISTS activists also think that Islam in Indonesia seems vulnerable to being influenced by the thoughts of Islamic liberalism as developed by Harun Nasution, Nurcholish Madjid, and younger people, such as Ulil Abshar-Abdalla or Lutfi Assyaukanie (both born in 1967). For this reason, they develop the ideas of Islamization

of science or seeing everything based on Islamic perspectives. In addition, efforts to reinstate Islamic treasures as civilizations that have triumphed and had influence in the Western world are also felt important by them. They believe that at present the concept of secularism is on the brink of collapse, and they want to offer an Islamic perspective as a solution to the problems of science and humanity.

In disseminating its ideas, INSISTS activists also use knowledge and technology—syncretic-modern ones—such as newspapers, internet pages and social media to spread their ideas. They use technology tools for seminars, workshops, book operations, and various other activities. The publication of *Islamia* and *Islamia magazines* in the *Republika* newspaper cannot be separated from the use of information technology such as printing, internet, and also distribution using vehicles such as motorbikes and cars. In this context, INSISTS activists, as actors, are closely reliant on the tools of modernity to spread their ideas to the public. In this context, technology influences how humans interact with one another and also how humans interact with the technology itself. Based on my research, INSISTS activists also carried out translations (also transformation in various forms) using technology in spreading the ideas of Al-Attas. At this point, INSISTS carries out design, construction and learning derived from the basic thinking of Al-Attas, which they have developed. Through the translation process, INSISTS manages the available resources to reinforce ideas and social relations with other institutions in Indonesia. INSISTS made two translations of Al-Attas's ideas in Indonesia, namely, direct translation and indirect translation (oblique translation). Direct translation is carried out on the texts of Syed Al-Attas through literal translation, while indirect translation through taking, adapting, and reformulating the core points of the original text that matches the target audience in Indonesia.

In spreading their thoughts, INSISTS activists saw that the issue of Islamic Khilafah Islamiyah was not popularized, but was suppressed to create national integration. Tiar Anwar Bachtiar (2016) writes that INSISTS studies related to Islamic politics are not so much compared to their studies and criticisms of the liberal Islamic movement. The consistency of INSISTS as an intellectual movement is very prominent in this realm. In the case of the Islamic State or the Islamic Khilafah issue, INSISTS does not respond by supporting the establishment of the Caliphate, but rather, seeks to explore the roots of political thought in Islamic history that have succeeded in supporting the birth of superior Islamic civilization in the past (Bachtiar, 2017: 374). INSISTS activists also discuss Islamic politics with the concept of shura by examining the thoughts of Al-Farabi, Al-Baqillani, Al-Ghazali, and Al-Mawardi who wrote Islamic political theory in the days of the Abbasid Caliph. They are *ahl al-halli wa al-aqd* whose numbers are not limited because there is no argument that limits the number. Similarly, the election of head of state by *ahl al-halli wa al-aqd*, is like the existence of a contract (agreement) in trading and marriage (Bachtiar, 2017: 379). In the position of not supporting or contradicting the issue of the Islamic Caliphate, INSISTS wants to locate in “the middle path,” which is a way of study and dialogue about the core of Islamic politics. As Muslims with the thought of the Islamic worldview—as they teach in various places—INSISTS recognizes the importance of Islam as a guide to life, but on the issue of the Khilafah Islamiyah, they did not want to rush

to conclude that the khilafah must be accepted or rejected. In the context of Indonesians, INSISTS seems to want to be accepted by Indonesians by not being confrontational towards the Pancasila system. In fact, Adian Husaini (2009) writes that Pancasila values are compiled from various values and inspirations of Islamic teachings. In line with this, although INSISTS is based on Islamic thought, they are not fixated on any of the Islamic political systems that have become controversial in Indonesia such as the Khilafah Islamiyah.

III. THE INFLUENCE OF SYED AL-ATTAS'S

When asked by American scholar Hamza Yusuf “what is the main problem that affects the Islamic world?” Syed Naquib Al-Attas responded, “the loss of manners/*adab*,” a quote from an interview on Youtube. According to Adian Husaini, “losing manners/*adab*” makes people rude, and that is the key of the whole crisis that Muslims today face (Ardiansyah, Hafidhuddin, Mujahidin, and Syafrin, 2017). Based on this idea, terrorism, war, and intolerance occur because of the loss of *adab* in the Muslim community. In the Indonesian context, in Pancasila there is “a just and civilized humanity” which is the foundation for a just and civilized life.

According to Al-Attas, *adab* means putting something in place. Including the important manners is *adab* to the ruler. If the ruler is right then he is supported, if wrong then it is the people's obligation to convey the truth. However, Adian Husaini disagrees if “a just and civilized humanity” is defined by permissive deviations like Lia Eden (born 1947) claiming to be Gabriel (*Malaikat Jibril*), and LGBT. According to him, “this is an example of unjust and civilized thinking because it discards religious considerations in view of social phenomena” (Husaini, 2015: 21).

The INSISTS activists are very inspired by Syed Al-Attas's thought that the problem of the Islamic world, and even the world in general, is “the loss of *adab*.” Contestation discourse built by INSISTS activists is independent of their Islamic world view, as taught by Syed Al-Attas, and the attempt to create Islamic civilization with a mid-century approach that is not trapped in blind fanaticism to various traits in thought and action. The writings of INSISTS activists are usually never separated from the thoughts of Syed Al-Attas who they consider to be one of the brilliant thinkers and the important Muslim figures of the twenty-first century (Widodo, 2009).

Who is Syed Al-Attas? Syed Muhammad Naquib Al-Attas is a descendant of *ahlu al-bait* (Prophet Muhammad's descendants) born in Bogor, West Java, on September 5, 1931. Al-Attas is a descendant of *sayyid* in the Ba'lawi family in Hadramaut with lineal links to Imam Husein ra, the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad. At age 5, Al-Attas was sent by his parents to school at Ngee Heng Elementary School (1936–1941) in Singapore, and then returned to Indonesia during the Japanese occupation, and continued school at Madrasah Al-'Ur watu al-Wutsqa (1941–1945) in Sukabumi. In 1951 he joined the Malay Regiment. He then went on to study at University of Malaya (Singapore) from 1959 to 1962 at McGill University (his thesis on Nur ad-Din ar-Raniri guided by Prof. Dr. H.M Rasjidi). From 1962 to 1965, Al-Attas continued his education at SOAS University of London, with a dissertation title *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri*. His Professor's work at Universiti

Kebangsaan Malaysia is titled *Islam in Malay History and Culture* (Husaini, 2015). In 1965 after completing his education at SOAS, he was appointed Head of the Literature Department of the Faculty of Malay Studies, University of Malaya, Kuala Lumpur. From 1968 to 1970 he served as Dean of the Faculty of Literature at the same campus. He is also responsible for maintaining the Malay language as a medium of instruction in faculty and university environments, facing the opposition of other lecturers who did not approve. In 1970, and in his capacity as one of the Founders of Senior UKM (National University of Malaysia), Al-Attas also tried to replace the English language as the medium of instruction in UKM with Malay. Later in 1985, Al-Attas founded the ISTAC (International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization) in Kuala Lumpur.

Al-Attas's intellect has turned to thinking about Islamic scientists such as Imam Al-Ghazali, Imam Al-Asy'ari, Nur ad-Din ar-Raniri, Hamzah Fansuri, Shadr ad-Din Shirazy, and classical Philosophers and Mutakallim. Thanks to the vastness of his knowledge, Al-Attas is known as a master of various disciplines, such as theology, philosophy and metaphysics, history, literature, and language, as well as Islamic science. Al-Attas is also a productive and authoritative writer, who has contributed to the new Islamic discipline and studies of Malay civilization. This scholar also mastered other skills such as Architecture, which he applied himself to the ISTAC campus building, and Calligraphy. In the field of calligraphy, Al-Attas held a calligraphy exhibition at Tropen Museum, Amsterdam in 1954. He also published three basmallah calligraphies written in the forms of Pekakak, Ayam Jago, and Fish in some of his books (Husaini, 2015). Syed Al-Attas is in direct contact with Western education and Islamic education (traditional Islamic education) and also recognizes public education. Al-Attas has a theory about the non-neutrality of science, the worldview of Islam, the history of Islam in the Malay Archipelago, the philosophy of science, language and the concept of happiness, justice and education. On one occasion in Mecca, Al-Attas conveyed his ideas and desires to base Islamic education on the correct metaphysical foundation and addressed the major issues facing Muslims, namely, the science issue and the idea of islamization of contemporary science. The Orientalists and Western scholars consider that religious and metaphysical issues are not the subject of knowledge and beliefs. Al-Attas then aims to set up an ISTAC (International Institute of Islamic Thought and Civilization) college in Malaysia with the luxury of a typical architecture of Islamic civilization. According to him the function of an object is not only thought, but also there is a value of esthetism that has the goal of development of the soul.

According to Al-Attas, the solution to the problem of the people is the Islamization of contemporary science. One of the ways he does this is by establishing an ISTAC campus in Malaysia that aims to conceptualize, clarify, elaborate, and define Islamic key concepts for cultural, educational, scientific and epistemological problems encountered by Muslim at present age. On this campus, he invited other scientists to teach like Wan Mohd. Wan Daud, Alparslan Acikgenc, Sami K.Hamarmeh, Ahmad Kazemi Moussavi, Hassan El Nagar, Cemil Akdogan, Malik Badri, Mehmet Ipsirli, Paul Lettinck, Muddathir Abdel ar-Rahim, Omar Jah, and Ugi Suharto. Moreover, some of the works of Al-Attas are *Ar-Raniri and the Wujudiyah of the 17th Century Aceh*

(1969), *The Mysticism of Hamzah Fansuri* (1970), *The Correct Date of the Terengganu Inscription* (1970), *Islamic In History and Malay Culture* (1972), *Islam and Secularism* (1978), *Prolegomena to the Metaphysics of Islam: An Exposition of the Fundamental Elements of the Worldview of Islam* (1995), and *Brochures for Muslims* (2001). These books, though not widely circulated in Indonesia, are a reference in the minds of INSISTS activists and networks that are scattered across various places in Indonesia.

IV. DISCUSSION OF TERRORISM, PEACE, AND TOLERANCE

The discussion of these three issues will reveal how they are interpreted by INSISTS activists, which influences their way of thinking and acting. So far, INSISTS activists have discussed more about the issue of terrorism, peace and tolerance, in the form of studies, as well as criticism of thoughts which they think are inappropriate, or do not rely on Islamic worldview which refers more to the thoughts of Syed Al-Attas. Therefore, INSISTS studies are more focused on criticism and reconceptualization of knowledge based on Islam. From their writings, it appears that they are anti-terrorism activists, love peace, and prioritize tolerance as long as that tolerance does not conflict with their Islamic thinking.

Regarding terrorism, Syamsuddin Arif (born 1971) quotes the Austrian-English philosopher Wittgenstein (1889–1951) who wrote that “a word is determined by its use.” The word terrorism also cannot be separated from its use. So, people can be referred to as ‘terrorists’ or ‘heroes’ very much depending on the perspective used in seeing that. Soedirman and Gatot Soebroto, for example, were considered terrorists by the Dutch Colonial Government, but in the eyes of the Indonesian people they were freedom fighters. Similarly, George Washington and his friends were considered dissidents, and rebels by the British Empire, but are considered heroes by Americans (Arif, 2017, p.164). Syamsuddin Arif concludes that a civilized society is a society that does not do all kinds of acts of terror verbally or non-verbally, horizontally or vertically (Arif, 2017, p.166).

In the aftermath of 9/11 terrorism in the United States that destroyed the twin towers of the World Trade Center (WTC), Islam became the accused and made the competing project of liberalization even more smooth. Adian Husaini (born 1965) criticized the tendency of certain groups to attach terrorism to jihad as in the news who wrote that “in the room of a suspected terrorist a book of jihad was found.” (Ibrahim, 2016). According to Adian, such framing is not accurate because it can give the impression that jihad—which is sacred in Islam—also influences acts of terrorism. In fact, terrorists do make jihad verses as a justification for their activities, but that practice was not approved by INSISTS activists. In line with Adian, Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi (born 1958) noted that the post-terrorist liberalization movement was carried out by various NGOs, study groups and young Muslims in various campuses, through various means such as newspapers, magazines, electronic media (radio and television) and book publishing. According to Zarkasyi, “this movement is more like a social political movement than a scientific discourse,” which can be seen from the high enthusiasm of the young people to criticize friends, scholars, Islamic history, tradition, creed, standard Shariah law, Al-Qur'an Usmani Mushaf, which looks like “extreme anger and hatred” or “intellectual

puberty” (Zarkasyi, 2012, p.116-117). Some of the issues raised by young people include pluralism, multiculturalism, gender equality, feminism, democratization, humanism, freedom, and human rights, which are considered by Zarkasyi to be correlated with the trend of thinking in the West to realize civil society. In line with that, “the project of liberalization of Islamic thought,” based on Zarkasyi’s perspective, there was also the idea of religious pluralism, which gave birth to an inclusive Islamic understanding and pluralist Islam.

Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi (2017) wrote that in 2016, the secretary of the British Foreign Minister Philip Hammond, noted that around 1,500 Britons tried to join ISIS and since 2012 an estimated 800 people have succeeded in entering Syria. If the number is correct, then that is a worrying development. Compared to Indonesia, which has a population four times that of the UK, logically ISIS followers should come from Indonesia, not from the UK. This is an important question, namely how to trace the roots of radicalism or intolerance based on demography? Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, who had studied in England, wrote that Muslims in the UK, which number around 3.5 million in 2016 or 5.5 percent of the UK population, 5.5 percent are Muslims, divided into 2.3 percent from India, 1.9 percent are from Pakistan, and the rest from Bangladesh and others. The problem is that as many as 5.5 percent of Muslims do not live in the same region as British, native to the UK, but they make their own communities which account for 10 percent of the population in the West Midlands, North West, Yorkshire, and Humber. Whereas, in the London region, the Muslim population was spread by 36 percent in Tower Hamlets and 24 percent in Newham. Zarkasyi writes, it is not surprising that at Aston, one of the Birmingham regions, for example, some schools only have students who are Muslim or Asian, and there are no British students. This fact is proof that differences in residence have resulted in a lack of frequency of interaction between Muslims and the British. (Zarkasyi, 2017).

This may cause an exclusive attitude among Muslims. However, quoting from Zarkasyi (2017), although Muslims live exclusively, a survey shows that 82 percent of Muslims are willing to live side by side with British people, while only 63 percent of non-Muslim Britons have a positive view to Muslims. This fact shows that actually Muslims and British are equally willing to live side by side. In Zarkasyi’s notes, the problem of interaction and integration has an impact not only on relations between Muslims and British, but also between Muslims and British Muslim converts. Quoting Mohammad Fuad, administrator of the Muslim College of London, Zarkasyi wrote that many British Muslim converts feel alienated because they are not considered part of the Muslim community. That is, an exclusive attitude based on race can cause mutual suspicion, even against fellow Muslims, and especially against non-Muslims. Exclusive attitudes in social interaction are very likely to be the cause of radical and extreme actions, including in carrying out religious practices. If it is true that the root of extremism in the UK is the exclusive attitude of Muslim society, then the root of exclusivity needs to be traced from family care and school education. In the view of students in Manchester, family is the biggest factor that influences the views of a Muslim child. Most education of Muslim families in the UK produces children who have exclusive or even permissive attitudes. According to

Zarkasyi, children’s education is very rarely found which results in moderate attitudes. Besides family is school education; Zarkasyi quoted the Guardian newspaper, which wrote that a third of British public schools were religious schools (600 secondary schools, 6,400 elementary schools, generally a Christian school. There are only seven Muslim schools, there are two Sikh schools and 36 Jewish schools. However, there are 114 private Islamic schools that are self-supporting. School conditions like this may cause a lack of integration and interaction between Muslims and other British people. In fact, public and private schools should be a place of integration and the cultivation of tolerance, togetherness and awareness about social pluralism. Zarkasyi (2017) commented that the demographic conditions of people who are fragmented by ethnicity, race, and religion are social facts, while educational institutions have not become the main means of tolerance education, togetherness, and moderate attitudes.

Meanwhile, about the issue of peace, Syamsuddin Arif also quoted Hans Kung, a professor from Tübingen University, who stressed the importance of interfaith dialogue, because world peace was impossible to achieve as long as interfaith conflicts were not resolved. He pointed out that figures like M. Natsir who fought for Islamic politics were not wrong. Indonesia is not a secular country, but also not a religious state. For this reason, the constitutional struggle of groups in Indonesia is reasonable (Arif, 2017, p.55).

Other INSISTS activists, namely Adnin Armas (born 1972) criticized the Government of Myanmar who, according to him, was unfair to the Rohingya Muslims. Armas argued, “to realize world peace on the basis of justice for all, Myanmar officials who come to Indonesia must be boycotted” (Wahyudi, 2015). This is a consequence of the suffering experienced by Rohingya citizens. About 1.1 million Rohingya Muslims have no nationality and live in discriminated conditions, among 51.5 million Myanmar residents, the majority of whom are Buddhists. Nearly 140,000 people were displaced in deadly clashes with Buddhists in the western state of Rakhine in 2012. In Indonesia alone, there are currently around 1,700 Rohingya refugees living in temporary shelters in Aceh, after their boats were rescued by local fishermen.

On the issue of tolerance, according to Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi, intolerance that occurs in the West occurs because it adheres to secularism, which makes a person reject anything that is religious in the public space. That perspective was influenced in the 16th and 17th centuries when the religious sects in Europe fought with and killed one another. Furthermore, Zarkasyi wrote, over time the conflicts that took many victims were not necessarily religious, but political conflicts such as the Gulf War and the US invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan (2002: 155). One important thing according to Zarkasyi is “tolerance without pluralism.” He rejects tolerance as campaigned for by pluralists who “respect and believe in the truth of other religions” (Zarkasyi, 2011). On the contrary, Zarkasyi agreed on the importance of interfaith tolerance, but did not agree if tolerance was directed to religious pluralism that acknowledged the truth of other religions. Zarkasyi asked, “if Islam recognizes the truth of other religions, why does Islam invite other religions to convert to Islam?” (2002: 160).

In the history of Islam, Islam has shown various vignettes of tolerance that are not only in the text, but also in the life of the preaching of Muslims. Zarkasyi gave an example of how the tribes in the Arabian Peninsula converted to Islam voluntarily because of their admiration for the Prophet Muhammad and the concept of monotheism he brought. In the time of Umar bin Khattab, Muslims controlled the city of Jerusalem without war. In fact, at that time Islam became a mediator in the conflicts between Christian sects that often occurred in *Kanisah Al-Qiyamah*. Also, the story of peaceful life in Cordoba during the period of Islamic rule until the establishment of a peaceful Islamic society in Indonesia, for example, occurred without war (2002: 160-164). Meanwhile, Syamsuddin Arif explained that the pattern of Islamic and non-Islamic relations is full tolerance, living together with peaceful coexistence, along with other religious people, as practiced by Rasulullah (*the Messenger of Allah*) in Medina, Baghdad, Andalusia, and other areas (Arif, 2017, p.100).

Other INSISTS activists, namely Anis Malik Toha (born 1964) argue that life without tolerance is very unlikely, but tolerance is not pluralism because of religious pluralism, but precisely the enemy of religions. Similar to Hamid Fahmy Zarkasyi's opinion, Toha argued that "Most media consider religious pluralism to be the same as religious tolerance." Even though the two terms are different entities, which are not the same. The difference is, religious pluralism is acknowledging other religions as valid and authentic. According to Toha, "Valid and authentic is actually an acknowledgment that other religions outside one's religion are legitimate." While tolerance only recognizes the existence of other religions as a symptom of pluralism, without having to eliminate beliefs in one's own religion, we do not have to acknowledge that the religion of others is valid in their faith, valid and authentic. Tolerance, in short, appreciates differences. According to Toha, tolerance exists because there are differences. If there is no difference, then the term tolerance does not appear.

The conclusion of Toha's statement is that tolerance is a necessity for individuals who adhere to religion. They cannot exist without tolerance. But tolerance is not pluralism. He is only limited to respecting adherents of other religions and the rights of his life. While religious pluralism, in essence, will destroy the existing religion. When he claims to have the most correct interpretation of religion, he wants to force other ideologies to be abandoned and his interpretation of religion to be adopted. At its extreme edge, the target of religious pluralism is to eliminate religions. At a minimum, it will allow religions to exist without the spirit or essence of these religions. According to Toha, followers of religious pluralism forbid the existence of truth claims, but they claimed that they were the most righteous, and the existing religions were wrong." (Arrahmah.com, 2007).

Currently, in Indonesia, the concept of Islamic Nusantara is still running particularly in the Nahdlatul Ulama organization. This concept cannot be separated from the view that Muslims tolerate the local culture in the archipelago. In the view of INSISTS activist Ugi Suharto (born 1966), Nusantara Islam is incorrect in its terminology. Even if Islam Nusantara was intended to consider local wisdom or 'urf—a habit in a place that could be used as a legal basis—Suharto offered other terms, namely "Fiqh Nusantara" (*Nusantara Fiqh*), "Masyarakat Islam Nusantara" (*Nusantara Islamic Society*), or "Budaya Islam Nusantara" (*Nusantara Islamic*

Culture). In this archipelago, according to Ugi, liberal understanding can enter. Islam itself already has a concept of tolerance with the term *Washaton* (Syahid, 2018).

Tolerance in Indonesia is also practiced in the form of greetings that combine various greetings of Islam, Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism, as stated on September 21, 2018 by presidential and vice presidential candidate (Prabowo-Sandiaga Uno and Joko Widodo-Ma'ruf Amin), two presidential pairs, the vice president was invited to deliver his speech. Joko Widodo began his speech by delivering greetings:

"Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim, assalaamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, selamat malam, salam sejahtera bagi kita semuanya, om swastyastu, namo buddhaya, salam kebajikan." (Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim, assalaamu'alaikum warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, good evening, good wishes to all of us, om swastyastu, namo buddhaya, greetings of benevolence).

Then, it was turn for Prabowo Subianto to open his speech with greetings:

"Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim, warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, salam sejahtera bagi kita sekalian, syalom, om swastyastu, namo buddhaya, selamat malam saudara sekalian." (Bismillahirrahmanirrahiim, warahmatullahi wabarakatuh, greetings to all of us, shalom, om swastyastu, namo buddhaya, good night, brothers, and sisters).

According to Adian, such greetings were incorrect by exemplifying that if greetings in Islam were replaced with "Assalaamu'alaikum warahmatu Yahweh wa barakaatu Jesus," then Muslims must not dare to do it, because it is not taught in Islam. Husaini was of the view that prospective Indonesian leaders were Muslim, because they wanted to be called tolerant and wanted to be accepted by all parties and then made a 'syncretic' greeting:

"Keselamatan atas Anda semua, beserta rahmat Allah Subhaanahu Wa-ta'ala, dalam kasih Tuhan Yesus, di bawah perlindungan Sang Hyang Widhi atau Yahweh, dan terpujilah Buddha, juga Tuhan apa saja yang disembah manusia di seantero Nusantara!" (Salvation of all of you, along with the mercy of Allah Subhaanahu Wa-ta'ala, in the love of the Lord Jesus, under the protection of the Lord Hyang Widhi or Yahweh, and blessed be Buddha, also what God is worshipped by people throughout the archipelago!) (Husaini, 2018).

Tolerance is indeed an issue that includes many discussed by INSISTS activists. When criticizing the book *Satu Tuhan Banyak Agama, Pandangan Sufistik Ibn 'Arabi, Rumi dan al-Jili* (Mizan, 2011) by Media Zainul Bahri (lecturer at the Faculty of Ushuluddin and Philosophy of UIN Jakarta), Adian Husaini quoted the opinion of Prijohutomo in the book *Sedjarah Kebudayaan Indonesia I: Bangsa Hindu* (1953), and Paul Michel Munoz in the book of *Kerajaan-kerajaan Awal Kepulauan Indonesia dan Semenanjung Malaysia* (2006), writes as follows,

"...that the number of religions in the world is thousands. Take one example of a religion called Bhairawatantra that existed in Indonesia before the arrival of Islam. Bhairawatantra has the teaching that humans should not hold back lust, humans should even indulge lust. Because if humans are

satisfied with their passions, then their souls will become independent. One of the most esoteric forms of ritual is worship that requires human offerings. The ritual includes offering in the form of drinking human blood and human flesh.” (Husaini, 2011)

In short, in their position as Islamic activists, INSISTS activists see the issue of terrorism, peace, and tolerance as follows.

First, they think that terrorism is not identical with the teachings of holy jihad in Islam. According to them, terrorism is happening not only because of the framing factor of the ruler who calls a person/group of people a terrorist or not, but also because of the global interest in dividing Muslims.

Second, they believe that peace is something that must be realized for everyone. They do not agree with discrimination committed by the state, group, or one person with other people. Everyone has the right to live, but in the framework of society, everyone must obey the rules that have been agreed upon in the constitution.

Third, tolerance is an Islamic teaching that has been practiced for a long time, but tolerance cannot make a Muslim recognize the truth of another religion or view pluralism. In this case, they want to convey that Islam is a true religion and must be acknowledged by all adherents, just as the truth that is believed by other religions is enough to be a belief for its adherents.

The three “syntheses” as a result of ethnography on INSISTS activist activities are important enough to be submitted in a discourse on terrorism, peace, and tolerance in Indonesia. They try to take the middle ground, which does not have to be based on liberalism or extreme radicalism (terrorism), which is called moderate-radicalism. This middle character can be referred to as a characteristic of INSISTS activist thinking. INSISTS activists in this case want to maintain Islamic thought that does not have to be influenced by the thought of pluralism, considered to destroy religion. The motto “Bhinneka Tunggal Ika” which is translated as “Unity in diversity” has a strategic meaning as an Indonesian national identity that makes everyone believe in their own beliefs but must tolerate each other.

V. CONCLUSION

Finally, the author would like to argue that INSISTS activist thinking regarding terrorism, peace, and tolerance is very interesting and should receive deeper scholarly attention. These three issues are very important for the effort to create the integration of a pluralistic nation. INSISTS activists seem to want to restore Islamic thought based on their true thinking—as Syed Al-Attas thought—without following the Western world-view such as pluralism. At this point, they show a strict perspective internally—as a Muslim—but still show tolerance toward fellow nations of different religions and backgrounds.

ACKNOWLEDGMENT

The author thank to the Indonesia Endowment Fund for Education (LPDP) for supporting this research and Universitas Indonesia for insight and expertise that greatly assisted the research until publishing this work.

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