**Peace in the Islamic Perspective: Concept and Its Relevance in International Relations**

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**Abstract**:

Islam is often described as a religion that emphasizes the use of violence in its da'wah method. The stereotype is formed by a number of literature and media that depicted Islam as a religion of war. This paper aims to analyze the causes of stereotype against Islam, provides an overview of the concept of peace in Islamic perspective, and seek the relevance of the concept of peace in Islam to the study of international relations. Through some literature research, the author finds the stereotype is caused by the gap in the discourse on war and peace in Islam. Islam identifies the concept of peace in three terms consisting of as-silmu, as-shulhu, and al-amanu*.*

**Keywords:** as-silmu, Islam, International Relations, Peace, War.

1. **INTRODUCTION**

The 11th September attack has became a major momentum that influenced a number of changes in the international relations discourses. The concept of security which is initially understood by realists as states’ capacity to deal with threats from other countries in the midst of international anarchy, it must immediately be doubted after 11th September attack. It also has brought up a number of new terms in international relations, such as terrorism, terrorist; as a new actor in international relations, and global war on terrorism; the United States foreign policy which emerged in the Bush administration has also affected the foreign policy of countries around the world.

Several media have been involved in the formation of stereotypes of global society towards Islam and the Middle East. Famous newspapers and electronic media, such as CNN and BBC have intensively broadcast news and stories about the Middle East during the Gulf War I and Gulf War II. Internal conflict has also been a major trend in recent years. Unfortunately, statistics seemed to support stereotypes. Some countries in the Islamic World, such as Pakistan, Libya, Sudan, Ukraine, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan, Iraq, and Syria have been identified as countries with the lowest security index, even Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Turkey, and Palestine are on the alert status (GPI, 2016).

The relation among Islam, war, and terrorism is also often depicted in a number of fictions. The Three Kings portrays the story during the Gulf War I. The Hurt Locker tells the story of explosive disarmament missions in the Second Bay War. We also find other movies, such as Homeland movie, Zero Dark Thirty, United 93, and a number of Western films portray the story of al-Qaeda and Osama bin Laden's actions that might be considered as the threat to the national security.

Literature about 'Islam and War' and 'Islam and Terrorism' seem to be more popular compared with 'Islam and Peace'. Some books which offer the discussion on ‘Islam and Peace’, start the discussion with the concept 'War' in Islam. As if the concept of peace in Islam is valid if Islam is acceptable as both religion and a political system. The term of jihad in Islam seems to be understood as ‘Jihad bil anfus’ (by risking life) or ‘Jihad bis sayf’ (with sword, violence). The concept of jihad is also often equated with the concept of holy wars that have occurred in the West (Firestone, 1999). Although the concept of jihad also includes wars and risking the lives, etymologically, the term of jihad does not take root from the word war like ‘qital’ or ‘harb’, rather it has a broader spectrum.

The stigma of Islam as a common threat has contributed to the emergence of Islamophobia. In fact, the Middle East which is always associated with 'Islam' is not always lulled by wars and may be less compared to the other regions in the world. According to the war historian, Quincy Wright, the number of wars that took place around the world from 1484 to 1945 shows that of 278 wars, 187 wars occurred in Europe while 91 battles took place in other regions (Firestone, 1999).

Most of the stigma of Islam often begins with methodological issues. Western scientists or perhaps orientalists who are not accustomed to Islamic tradition often regard Islam as a religion that merely teaches violence by simply taking a number of relevant verses and hadiths. The research is also supported by references to the history of Islam which tells several cases of communal violence and political conflict. So they come to the conclusion that Islam is a religion that basically justifies acts of violence due .