Religion as an Instrument Of Peace

Ineke Tombeng[1]*, Deny Adri Tarumingi[2]
UKIT Tomohon

Corresponding Author: Ineke Tombeng ineketombeng@gmail.com

A R T I C L E I N F O	A B S T R A C T
  	This paper focuses on the discourse on religion as an instrument of peace. The basic idea behind this is the emergence of various discriminatory and violent treatments in the name of religion. This reality contradicts the essence and purpose of religion as a source of inspiration, spiritual, ethical, and moral foundation for the formation of a peaceful global community. After exploring the various views on religion, violence and peace itself, my opinion is that in an effort to become an instrument of peace, religions must abandon their dogmatism and institutional arrogance and even their superiority over other religions. Redefining the essence and purpose of religion, mutual acceptance and recognition of existence are the best paths to authentic peace in Indonesian.

INTRODUCTION

In a lexical sense, "religion" is "a belief or feeling about something divine, wonderful and surprising. This belief is expressed through obedience, respect, and worship using sacred texts/languages, symbols, and ritual actions. Because religion is a belief system, or an attitude of submission / surrender to the forces that control humans so that it shapes and orients the entire life of individuals and communities to the salvation of the present and the future. The various approaches above are indeed enriching insight but it must also be said that they easily lead us to understand religion as something primitive and outdated, untrustworthy, unenlightened, and strange in a modern rationality.

In addition to the several approaches above, there is one philosophical/theological approach. Philosophically/theologically, religion can be defined as "an instrument that regulates the relationship with The Absolute." According to the Dutch theologian/dogmatician, Hendrikus Berkhof, this depiction has the advantage of defining the positive and even unique side of religion and its contribution to human life in a peaceful and harmonious relationship.

The purpose and objective of this paper is to reaffirm the roles and responsibilities of religions as instruments of peace. In order to get an initial picture, I make a systematic discussion as follows: First. Introduction. Second. Religion and violence. Third. Religion as an instrument of peace. Fourth. Our Indonesian reality. Fifth. Closing, contains conclusions and recommendations.

METHODOLOGY

The research method aims to guide work procedures in collecting and analyzing material or information of a scientific nature, so research methods using Qualitative research methods are needed as standard guidelines that are scientifically determined so that problems can be discussed thoroughly. Secant's sermon stated that methodology is an absolutely mandatory element in scientific research and development.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION
Religion and violence

In his critical survey of Christians' attitudes towards other religions, Paul F. Knitter confronts us with an unavoidable reality: we actually face not only one religion but many world religions with their ultimate answers to various questions about life. This fact is painful because awareness of the plurality of religions itself will raise various questions that have never been considered before: Why are there so many different religions?" If there is only one God, wouldn't it be appropriate for there to be only one religion? Are there religions that are all true, or are they all false? Do these religions have something in common in them? How are these religions related? Are these many religions basically just one? More specifically, how does my religion relate to other religions? Can I learn something from other religions or even learn more from them than I learn from my own religion? Why am I sucked into one religion and not another?

Mahatma Gandhi, as quoted by Richard Attenborough, said: "Religions are different paths that will meet at the same point. What does it matter if we take different paths as long as we reach the same goal?" . If so, is religion a problem? Charles Kimball's answer, is "yes and no" depending on how one understands a religion

As a consequence, religions, to borrow Syed Vahiduddin's expression, are "at a crossroads" or more precisely a crisis. According to him, the crises faced by religions, both as personal concerns and as communal commitments, include crises of religious awareness as well as crises related to issues of relevance and identity in today's reality. At the same time, in religions there is also a new enthusiasm emerging, namely efforts to redefine, reformulate and reinterpret and even reinterpret religion and its relevance to contemporary situations. This process often causes friction/conflict which results in verbal, psychological and physical violence

Keith Ward, British theologian and philosopher, re-raises a series of provocative questions raised by modern society: Is religion really dangerous? Does religion do more harm than good? Is religion a force for evil or even "the root of all evil?" Even though Ward does not agree with the questioners (modern/post-modern society), this kind of question suggests that apart from having a soteriological (salvation) dimension, religions also show their terrible face in the form of terror.

However, not all violence in this world has a religious basis. In reality, a lot of violence occurs in the name of religion. From time to time, both print and electronic media present news about terror in the name of religion; bombings by extremist groups; massacre of religious minority groups in a number of areas. The question is whether religion still inspires its adherents to use force, legitimize violence, and celebrate death in the name of religion? Apologetically (rhetorically), it might be very easy to say that the content of religions is basically "non-violence". It is humans, both individuals and collectives, who distort the essential meaning and sanctity of religion itself. In fact, the roots of violence can actually be traced back to religions. That is why religion always has the potential to become a vehicle for violent tendencies. If we examine major religions, apart from the spread of religion which is also related to the use of violence, religious texts also reflect acts of violence, for example sacrificial rites, the use of violence for higher religious purposes (torturing oneself as part of piety (the path to salvation).

Regarding religious praxis which often does not match (in line) with the essence and purpose of religion itself, Aloysius Pieris, who is also quoted by Yewangoe, talks about the ambivalence of religion. According to Pieris, every religion has two faces at once, namely liberating and enslaving both psychologically and socially. On one hand, in its enslaving face, religion is psychologically superstitious (superstition), enslaved by ritualism, dogmatism, transcendentalism; while sociologically, religion tends to legitimize an oppressive status quo. On the other hand, in the face of liberation, psychologically, it frees mankind from inner sins and sociologically, it is seen in the power of religion to carry out radical social changes

Regarding the relationship between religion and violence, Kimball is of the view that religion, when manifested into human traditions and institutions, can be corrupted and in turn become "evil." In his view, there are three most dominant/relevant tendencies. First, absolute truth claims. When certain interpretations of truth claims are seen and understood in a rigid and literal way, and the only truth that demands uniformity, then this is the beginning of the danger of destroying religion, making religion evil, and ultimately destroying human life. Second, the claims of absolute truth not only cause abuse of the Scriptures but also encourage a very passionate missionary by using all means to "save sinners" both in the circle of adherents of one's own religion and in the circle of adherents of other religions. Third, at a harsher level, the declaration of a "holy war" in order to achieve an agenda that is contrary to the sanctity.

and nobility of religion. John Galtung even includes violence in the name of religion as part of "cultural violence" (along with ideological violence, language, art, empirical science as a means of legitimizing direct violence and structural violence, such as symbols, songs or marches, troop parades, or portrait displays. certain figures. Violence, said Galtung, is anything that prevents a person from actualizing his potential properly. Galtung then distinguishes between direct and indirect violence, or personal violence and structural violence.

Religion as an Instrument of Peace

One of the (perhaps the only) historical events that raised the theme of the relationship between religion and peace was the First Congress of the Parliament of Religions in 1893. The congress which was held in Chicago, USA on September 11-16, 1893 as part of the Columbian Exposition was attended by around 8000 participants from various world religions. This congress is also a milestone for the recognition of the differences in other religions outside of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, as well as the initiation of Dialogue between Faiths and Beliefs.

The growing openness to the goodness and truth of other religious traditions gives hope for the formation of a new era for the history of religious thought. Even though conflicts between religions continue to tarnish the common life, it cannot be denied that individuals do start grawing to be aware of diversity, acknowledge each other, and accept their existence. This means that every religious tradition has a strategy to be able to recognize and accept the diversity of religions and belief systems as a necessity.

Hans Küng, expert on theologians of religions, in "Celebration of the Hundred Years of the Parliamentary Congress of Religions (1993)" reaffirmed the following commitments: "There is no world peace without peace between religions; there is no interreligious peace without world peace." The message contained in this statement is an affirmation of the essence of religion, namely as the foundation for building civilization and world peace. This call is also based on an acknowledgment that every person (individual) has religious spiritual beliefs and that in every religion, there are values of brotherhood and peace. Within that point of view, religions must be returned to their essence, namely as

a source of values, ethics, and morals to build a global community that is peaceful and civilized.

One of the global forums that promote authentic interfaith dialogue is "Interfaith Friendship" as a multi-religious dialogue proposal agreed upon by theologians and religious leaders from various Christian and Jewish sects who are members of the Elijah Board of World Religious Leaders. The motivation and essence of "interfaith friendship" according to this forum is God's love in God's act of emptying Himself as a force that transforms a friendship from a utilitarian motive to a true friendship based on mutual trust, mutual recognition, and mutual acceptance. There are three purposes of interfaith friendship. First, it saves us from prejudice; provide an objective and honest understanding of the faith of our fellow human beings through direct interaction with their daily situations. Second, leading to a clear and rich understanding of our own faith (self-spirituality); and third, developing our ability to be able to authentically articulate our faith to others of different religions and belief systems.

According to theologian Andreas A. Yewangoe, the fundamental problem that must be answered is the reform of religion. But Yewangoe also asked: Is it possible to do religious reform? If possible, who and how to do that? For Yewangoe, not all of the questions above can be answered, in contrast to the definition (essence and purpose) of religion itself. According to him, although religion is a relation with The Absolute, religion also touches with concrete reality. Even reality, such as culture, is a factor that determines the existence of religion. In other words, religion is not in an emptiness. Religion deals with perception, interpretation (interpretation), and hermeneutics which are human activities in space and time. It is in these circumstances that religious messages can deviate and even contradict the essence of religion. This is where, Yewangoe argues, opens opportunities for enslaving religious characters, as Pieris says. Symbolism, dogmatism, and institutionalism. By this kind of perspective the religion reform becomes possible, and even a must. This means that religion must radiate the light of peace for the common good. This means that religion must be more critical, not only of others but especially of itself. Is open to ? honestly dealing with various teachings and interpretations that have enslaved their people. On the other hand, religion should be more committed to the interpretation and reinterpretation of the essence and goals to be liberated. In other words, religion must be able to reconstruct itself to face various challenges that appear new or even completely new.

On a different occasion, Islamic theologian Komarudin Hidayat put forward an interesting idea about the revival of religion in the Post-Religion era. According to him, in the post-religion era, religions are encouraged to reinterpret their role within the framework of common interests for the benefit/welfare of all mankind. According to him, religions must come out of their respective fortresses and join hands to give answers to the Others (sang Liyan) who are victims of humanitarian problems. Religions can no longer monopolize status as the sole solution provider. On the other hand, said Komarudin, religions are called to put their position of truth before other truths through ethical, humanistic, and spiritualistic dialogue. In this way religion is no longer being pitted against and

used as an object of debate to determine who loses and who wins. The mission of religions in the context of this understanding is no longer focused on attracting and bringing down other religions. On the other hand, religions need to give and receive great and noble religious values, which are manifested in the form of sincere cooperation in overcoming various humanitarian crises. In essence, the post-religion era encourages all religious orientations to be directed to "Sang Liyan" (the Others). The goal is to make religious values as inspirational and productive motivators in spreading goodness, truth, and peace.

Referring to Komarudin's approach related to the role of religion as an instrument of peace, it would be better if I put forward Darius Dubut's view. According to the Islamologist who is active in Interfaith Dialogue, this effort must start from a critical awareness of "the earth as a common home, a place to meet the sacred." Awareness like this will see various terrorized violence in the name of religion as a global death, a threat to all creation on earth. From this perspective it can be said that humans, regardless of religion and belief system, can live in peace only when they are in togetherness, not only with fellow human beings but also with all of God's creation. This means that interfaith relations and cooperation for peace and justice must include peace and justice with the universe. It means that, it is communal (communal) life that must be the main point and center of concern for religious communities, as well as a common theological foundation for developing interfaith relations and cooperation. Within the framework of this understanding, Dubut then emphasized that interfaith religious communities for peace are not only through joint action for peace but also learn to listen to each other as brothers and sisters, study each other's scriptures, and reflect together. The goal is to sharpen commitment and spiritual sensitivity, and build consensus as a collective action. Here, said Dubut, dialogue is not only a way of life, or something that is engineered for a pragmatic interest, but also as a liberation praxis.

Our Indonesian Reality

How about in Indonesia? We all agree that the diversity or plurality of Indonesia is a necessity and even a divine grace. However, if this reality is not managed wisely, it will create problems. One of the most serious issues is "pluralism vs. anti-pluralism" (inclusivism vs. exclusivism). Pluralism is very clear to make room for differences in beliefs (religion). But for the anti-pluralists, recognizing and accepting those with different beliefs is a sin. Anti-pluralism vehemently rejects various religions/religious sects. The true religion is one, namely the religion itself.

Azyumardi Azra, an Islamic theologian and former Chancellor of IAIN Syarif Hidayatullah Jakarta, identifies five factors that cause violence in the name of religion in Indonesia. First, the publication/distribution of writings by certain religious parties/groups about other religions which are considered by its adherents to be inconsistent with what they believe in, and because of this, simply considered to defame their religion. In this case, as well, are included writings (often the source is not clear) which contains "plans" for the spread of certain religions. Second, efforts to spread religion aggressively. Third, the use of

residential houses as places of worship together or the construction of houses of worship in communities belonging to other religions. Fourth, the stipulation and implementation of provisions that are considered discriminatory and limit the spread of certain religions. Fifth, mutual suspicion regarding the position and role of religion in the Indonesian nation state.

In my opinion, the five factors above are triggered by three realities, namely: First, the opening of the faucet of democracy, better known as the "Reformasi 1998". Second, decentralization is misinterpreted as the freedom of local governments to create public policies that are different from the center. Third, the widespread social injustice that reputed to be as the failure of a secular government (which adheres to Western-style democracy) which is strengthen the aspiration to establish an Islamic state. Referring to the description above, it can be said that in order to avoid conflict/violence and create peace, it requires not only religious awareness, self-declaration as a religious person or the most religious person/nation, but religious maturity or maturity. What is meant by "religious maturity or maturity" is humbly admitting one's religion/belief without prejudice/judging but at the same time affirming our own religious position.

Now let us learn from the conflict happenend in Ambon, Poso, and many other places in this country. Among all the conflict and violence that had happened in these area, when religion becomes the trigger factor, what shauld be fight for is on making religion an instrument of peace and reconciliation. The urgent task that should be done especially by the leader of religion is to build and develop the critical awareness within the followers about the importance of living together in peace and justice. They should be given the comprehension that peaceful society is not all without any conflict. For it is one part of community. The good peaceful society is a society is a group of people living without any violence act by any reason in cluding religion.

As instruments of peace, religions, through their leaders, are responsible for promoting the importance of interfaith dialogue. In this type of dialogue, the actors of the dialogue step forward beyond tolerance and harmony. The reason is because tolerance is a passive attitude or status quo to the reality of existing religious differences. Likewise, harmony only emphasizes a state of peace, without conflict or contention. On the other hand, dialogue is a process that aims to build and develop a community together based on the reality of these differences. According to Sumanto Al-Qurtubi, in inter-faith dialogue, all parties involved in the dialogue are united by a common commitment, namely a commitment to life. This is why in dialogue everyone gives their best for their religious treasures for the sake of a better life together. In dialogue, the uniqueness and differences of each religion are respected and appreciated, not relative.

The substantive message of these assertions is that an inclusive interfaith theology must begin with the radical approach promoted by John S. Dunne, as Kautsar A. Noer refers to, namely the courage to "pass over" and then "go back" (coming back) with new spiritual riches.

That is, crossing boundaries by showing a sympathetic understanding of one's own religion towards other religions and returning with a new outlook into one's own religion. A spiritual pilgrimage that is relevant today. This kind of spiritual pilgrimage requires humility and willingness to take perspectives from other religions in order to understand one's own religion. It is called a "spiritual pilgrimage" because in every encounter it is hoped that what Diana L. Eck calls a "spiritual dialogue" that goes beyond theological or doctrinal dialogues carried out. In "spiritual dialogue," the priority is not on religious truth claims, not articulating theological problems that arise from religious plurality, but focusing on exploring the deepest meanings of religion for life, mutual enrichment, and deepening shared spirituality.

Of course, it must also be criticized that the complexity of the problems in Indonesia in recent years does not only stem from the reality of the plurality of religions and beliefs but also the plurality of ethnicities, traditions, cultures, and socioeconomic status. In this context, the reality shows that religion, through texts, religion, is actually being used and used as a means of justifying violence which in many cases is caused by political, social and economic factors.

Then, what about Pancasila as a unifier. In the discourse of the humanities in Indonesia, Pancasila is understood as a "civil religion". Regardless of agreeing or not with this naming, one historical-political fact that must be acknowledged is that Pancasila, as the basis of the state, is the constitutional, social, political, and cultural capital for the realization of an "interfaith dialogue laboratory" for the sake of a peaceful and harmonious Indonesia. However, the acceptance of Pancasila as a constitutional, social, political and cultural basis is not enough. Acceptance of Pancasila "theologically" becomes very important, because Pancasila must also be understood and accepted from the perspective of faith and can be explained in religious languages. Theological acceptance of Pancasila is important as a basis for developing a peaceful, just and prosperous life together. Accepting Pancasila theologically means accepting the reality of religious pluralism, not only constitutionally, socially, politically, and culturally, but also theologically.

It is within this framework of thought that we need a constrictive-contextual "cross-faith theology". This interfaith theology, according to Nelman A. Weny, has three criteria: First, the result of the redefinition and reinterpretation of religion which refers to John Hick's thesis on inclusive God which has many names. Second, starting from experience with the "Holy One." Third. Theology that is born from the spirituality of the religions themselves, which includes language, expressions, myths, narratives, symbols, and also daily experiences. In this context, every theological formulation of religions must be formulated and expressed in such a way according to the background of the adherents. This interfaith theological paradigm allows us to get out of the grip of absolute claims and the absolute truth of religion itself. The key is that every religious (leader) must abandon his arrogance for the sake of a dialogical encounter.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

As of this writing, the Indonesian people are still struggling with efforts to encourage religions to continue to play their roles and responsibilities as a means or instrument of peace. The Minister of Religion as a result of the ressufle, Yaqut Cholil Quomas, a Nahdlatul Ulama figure, in his remarks immediately after his inauguration (December 13 2020), explicitly emphasized that religion should be an inspiration, not an aspiration. This affirmation, of course, departs from the fact that so far, religion has tended to be used more than once many times as an instrument to channel the interests of certain class Ormas. The impact of religious abuse is the emergence of discriminatory and violent attitudes and actions in the name of religion. There is not enough space for me to detail these cases, but what is certain is that various demonstrations using certain religious symbols clearly threaten peaceful life in Indonesia. Cases of "coercion" to use uniforms with certain religious motifs for students of other religions in West Sumatra; the efforts of certain religious groups to hinder the construction of Christian houses of worship in several places in Indonesia; hate speech with religious sentiments on social media, emphasizes that religions in Indonesia have not fully played their role/responsibility as instruments of peace. We still need to work hard involving all religions in this country. Systematic efforts must be encouraged consistently and appropriately.

The journey to peace in order to create an Indonesia that is not only religious but peaceful is still long, steep, and tortuous. Some of the problems we face are: First, there is a feeling of discomfort among certain religious groups with different beliefs. Second, the defense of religion is normative but at the same time gives a negative label to other religions. Third, there is a glaring distance/gap between religion as a belief system and religious practices (recommending adherents to respect other religions while limiting the presence of other religions). Fourth, covertly, certain religious groups claim to have more rights in this country while other religions are often perceived as immigrants/Western religions/colonial religions.

Nevertheless, we still have basic rights that must be more concreted, namely the rights and freedom of religion/belief as a weapon against violent discrimination with a religious impression. That right is freedom. In implementation, there are indeed many interpretations and meanings. However, the basic principles of freedom of religion are: First, the freedom of every citizen to choose a religion or determine the religion to be embraced. Second, spreading missions and da'wah without violence (coercion) or exploiting the poverty situation of the community. Third, freedom to change religion/belief. Changing religion should be understood as a process of seeking truth and salvation. Fourth, freedom to study other religions (cross-border spirituality). Fifth, giving space for certain religions/beliefs to live and/or develop in Indonesian. Sixth, freedom of religion requires the state to be firm and act fairly to all religions/beliefs in Indonesian.

REFERENCES

Al-Qurtuby, Sumanto. Islam and Christianity: Post-conflict Dynamics and the Future of Peace in Ambon. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2018.

Arifin, H.M. Uncovering the Mysteries of the Teachings of the Great Religions. Jakarta: Golden Trayon Press, 2004.

Aritonang, Jan S. History of the Encounter of Christianity and Islam in Indonesia. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004.

Armstrong, Karen. Fields of Blood: Religion and the History of Violence. London: Penguin Random House, 2015.

Attenborough, Richard. 152 Gandhi's Wise Words About Everyday Life, Cooperation, Faith, and Peace. Trans. Christiany Lo. Jakarta: Gramedia, 2012.

Azra, Azyumardi. "Islam and Christianity in Indonesia: The Roots of Conflict and Hostility." In Religion and Culture in Asia Pacific: Violence or Healing?, ed. Joseph A. Camillery. Carlson South Victoria: Pax Christi & Vista Publications, 1999.

Berkhof, Hendrikus. Christian Faith: An Introduction to the Study of Faith. Trans. Sierd Woudstra. Grand Rapids: Wm.B. Eerdmans, 2002.

Beuken, Wim, and Karl-Josef Kuschel et al., eds. Religion as a source of violence? Yogyakarta: Student Library, 2003.

Darmaputera, Eka. Religion with Common Sense. Yogyakarta: Gloria Cyber Ministries, 2002.

Dubut, Darius. "One Earth, Common House of Worship: Interfaith Dialogue and Common Vocation." In New Mission in Plurality: Cross-Faith and Cross-Cultural Theology, ed. Darius Dubut et al., 175-201. Tomohon UKIT Press, 2018.

Effendi, Djohan. "Religious Plurality in Indonesia: Reality and Problems." In Religion and Dialogue: Enlightenment, Peace, and the Future, ed. Soegeng Hardiyanto et al, 443-454. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003.

Frederiks, Martha. "Kenosis as a Model for Interreligious Dialogue." Missiology: An International Review XXXIII/2, (2005): 211-222.

Goshen-Gottstein, Alon, ed. Friendship across Religion: Theological Perspective on Interreligious Friendship. New York: Lexington Books, 2015.

Hidayat, Komaruddin. "Religious Plurality and Indonesia's Future." In Religion and Dialogue: Enlightenment, Peace, and the Future, ed. Soegeng Hardiyanto et al., 203-214. Jakarta BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003.

———. "Religious Revival in the Post-Religion Era." Nurcholish Madjid Memorial Lecture I. Nurcholish Madjid Auditorium: Paramadina University Jakarta, 7 December 2007.

Juergensmeyer, Mark. Terrorism of Religious Defenders. Trans. Amen Rozany Pane. Yogyakarta: Tarawang Press, 2003.

Kimball, Charles. When Religion Becomes Evil. New York: HarperCollins Publishers, 2003.

Knitter, Paul F. No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes toward the World Religions. Maryknoll, NY: Orbis Books, 1999.

———. No Other Name? A Critical Survey of Christian Attitudes Towards the World Religions. New York, Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1999.

———. One Earth, Many Religions: Multi-Religious Dialogue and Global Responsibility. Trans. Nico A. Likumahuwa. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mullia, 2004.

———. Introduction to the Theology of Religions. Trans. Nico A. Likumahuwa. Yogyakarta: Kanisius, 2008.

Kung, Hans. Ethics of Global Political Economy. Trans. Ali Noer Zaman. Yogyakarta: Qalam 2002.

Küng, Hans, and Karl-Joseph Kuschel, eds. A Global Ethics: The Declaration of the Parliament Of the World's Religions. London: SCM Press, 1993.

Lefebure, Leo D. Revelation of God, Religion, and Violence. Trans. Bambang Subandrijo. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003.

Noble, Musdah. "Against Violence in the Name of Religion." In Political Theology: The Call of the Church in the Field of Post-New Order Politics, ed. John Campbell-Nelson Zakaria J. Ngelow, and Julianus Majou, 165-194. Makassar: OASE-INTIM Foundation, 2013.

Neufeldt, Victoria, and David B. Guralnik, eds. Webster's New World Dictionary of American English. Claveland & New York: Webster's New World, 1991.

Noer, Kautsar Azhari. "Passing Over: Enriching the Religious Experience." In Passing Over: Crossing Religious Boundaries, ed. Komarudin Hidayat and Ahmad Gaus AF, 261-289. Jakarta: Gramedia, 2001.

Pals, Daniel L. Seven Theories of Religion: From Animism to E.B. Taylor, Karl Marx's Materialism, to C. Geertz's Cultural Anthropology. Trans. Ali Noer Zaman. Yogyakarta: Qalam, 2001.

Pieris, Aloysius. An Asian Theology of Liberation. Maryknoll: Orbis Books, 1988. Smart, Ninian. "The Nature of Religion: Multiple Dimensions of Meaning." In The Meaning of Life in the World Religion, ed. Joseph Runzo & Nancy M. Martin, 31-52. Oxford: Oneworld, 2001.

Smith, Huston. Human Religions. Trans. Saafroedin Bahar. Jakarta: Indonesian Obor Foundation, 1991.

———. "The Meaning of Life in the World Religions." In The Meaning of Life in the World Religions, ed. Joseph Runzo & Nancy M. Martin, 255-268. Oxford: Oneworld, 2001.

Smith, Wilfred C. Hunting for the Meaning of Religion. Trans. Haidar Bagir. Bandung: Mizan, 2004.

Sumartana, Thomas. "Some Themes of Contemporary Interreligious Dialogue." In Religion in Dialogue: Enlightenment, Atonement, and the Future:, ed. Soegeng Hardiyanto et al, 111-121. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2003.

Thoha, Anis Malik. Trends in Religious Pluralism: A Critical Review. Jakarta: Perspective, 2005.

Ward, Keith. "Religion and the Question of Meaning." In The Meaning of Life in the World Religions, ed. Joseph Runzo & Nancy M. Martin, 11-32. Oxford: Onewold, 2001.

———. Is Religion Really Dangerous? Trans. L. Prasetya. Yogayakarta: Kanisius, 2009.

Weny, Nelman A. "God the Boundary Crosser: Towards a Constructive-Contextual Interfaith Theology." In New Missions in Plurality: A Book Honoring 80 Years of Prof. Dr. Olaf Schumann, author. Darius Dubut et al., 117-134. Tomohon: UKIT Press, 2018.

Yewangoe, Andreas A. Religion and Harmony. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2001.

———. Theologia Crucis in Asia: Views of Asian Christians Regarding Suffering in Poverty and Religion in Asia. Trans. Stephen Suleeman. Jakarta: BPK Gunung Mulia, 2004.