



# A CRITICAL STUDY OF THE CONCEPT OF RADICALISM IN THE QUR'AN

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## **Abstract**

This article is a research that discusses the critical study of the concept of radicalism in the Qur'an. This type of research is qualitative research using descriptive analysis method. Data is obtained through library research using the tafsir mauḍūi' method. The results of this study show that there is no command to commit acts of radicalism in the Qur'an. The problem is that radicals often use Quranic verses as justification for their actions, such as verses about jihād. Jihād in the Qur'an consists of many meanings according to the conditions at the time the verse was revealed. In the Makkiah period, the meaning of jihad did not yet indicate the meaning of war because the concentration of the texts was still on the spiritual mental development of the Muslim community. However, in the Medina period, the Qur'anic texts about jihad began to lead to the meaning of physical warfare on the battlefield because the condition of Muslim religious awareness was already solid and they had the ability to fight. This is indicated by the verses of jihad that read qitāl and verses that read jihād fī sabīlillāh. Jihad in the form of war is the last resort to defend body and soul as well as religion so it is not right to make the verses of jihad as a basis for radicalism. The implication of this research is to contribute to the treasure of knowledge related to the critical study of the concept of radicalism in the Qur'an which results in the knowledge that Islam is a teaching that is raḥmatan lil 'ālamīn and strongly opposes radicalism.

**Keywords:** *Critical Study, Radicalism, Qur'an*

## **Introduction**

The drought of *humanity (lost humanity)* has been experienced in several parts of the world which has an impact on various sectors of life. This is caused by several factors, such as social, political, economic turmoil that heats up and racial and ethnic arrogance so that there are a handful of people who take advantage of these conditions to foster deviant thoughts and teachings into the wider community and encourage them to take action

against, one of which is in the name of religious teachings.<sup>1</sup> Religion can display a double meaning. On the one hand, it encourages the creation of harmony and a spirit of togetherness or becomes an integration factor. But on the other hand, religion can also be misused to instill hostility and break social ties.<sup>2</sup> Thus, this is a trigger for the formation of radicalism in religion. Radicalism is present in movements that often use certain terms or slogans in the name of religion. For example, in Islam, the terms "*jihād fī sabīlillāh*" and "martyrdom" are used.

In Islam, the face of radicalism began with the emergence of the Khawarij group, which brought violence to groups that did not agree with their group to the point of killing enemies who did not share their ideology.<sup>3</sup> Initially, the Khawarij were loyal followers of Ali bin Abi Talib (600-661 AD), but along the way, the Khawarij defected and became Ali's opposition. This then resulted in the outbreak of the Shiffin war. The war was actually almost won by Ali's camp, but Muawiyah's camp chose to make peace. To realize the peace, Muawiyah sent his spokesman to meet Ali and Ali agreed to the peace agreement. However, within the ranks of Ali's camp, not all agreed to the decisions he had made. Those who supported Ali's decision became known as the Shi'ah, while those who disagreed with the agreement were the Khawarij.<sup>4</sup> The Khawarij were disappointed with Ali for accepting the peace treaty with Muawiyah, whereas according to them, Muawiyah should be fought into submission.<sup>5</sup> They accused Ali, Muawiyah and his supporters of having disbelieved or having left Islam, so that their blood was halal to be killed. A Khawarij follower named Abd al-Rahman bin Muljam (d. 661 AD) finally succeeded in killing Ali during the dawn prayer. The incident then eventually created a massive split in the Muslim body.<sup>6</sup>

A few centuries after the emergence of the Khawarij era, the seeds of radicalism transformed again in the form of the "Wahabi" movement. It is called wahabi because this movement was pioneered by a scholar named Muhammad bin Abdul Wahhab (1703-1792 AD). At first, Ibn Abdul Wahhab studied Islamic creed and law in Makkah and made Ibn Taymiyyah as one of the role models and main references in emphasizing his stance on Islam. Ibn Abdul Wahhab's enthusiasm in studying Islamic teachings was basically motivated by his disappointment over the decline of Islam at that time, which was marked

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<sup>1</sup>Hamdan Hidayat, "Religious Radicalism in the Perspective of the Qur'an", *Ash-Shahabah* 7, no. 1 (2021): h. 1.

<sup>2</sup>Arifuddin Harisah, *Pluralism of the Sarungan Pesantren and Religious Deradicalization in South Sulawesi* (Yogyakarta: Lembaga Ladang Kata, 2015) pp. 3-4.

<sup>3</sup>Sembodo Ardi Widodo, "Tracing the Traces of Violence in Islam", *UNISIA*, no. 61, 2010: pp. 288-289.

<sup>4</sup>Taufani Taufani, "Islamic Radicalism: History, Characteristics, and Dynamics in Multicultural Society in Indonesia", *Asketik* 3, no. 2 (2019): h. 115.

<sup>5</sup>Taufani Taufani, "Islamic Radicalism: History, Characteristics, and Dynamics in Multicultural Societies in Indonesia", p. 116.

<sup>6</sup>Taufani Taufani, "Islamic Radicalism: History, Characteristics, and Dynamics in Multicultural Society in Indonesia", p.116.



by moral and spiritual decline and the proliferation of worship practices to places that were considered sacred or sacred which were widely practiced by Sufis. Capitalizing on strict monotheism and a rigid and literal interpretation of the Qur'an and Sunnah as well as a strong emphasis on the history of the destruction of idols in the Kaaba by the Prophet and his followers, the followers of Ibn Abdul Wahhab's Islamic understanding have destroyed holy and sacred places because they are considered idol nests. They also destroyed the tombs of the Prophet's companions and family in Makkah and Madinah. They also helped destroy the Shi'a pilgrimage site in Karbala where there is the tomb of Hussein. Ibn Abdul Wahhab also denounced the tribes and other Muslim communities that were not in line with his Islamic understanding as polytheists. The Wahabis believe that everything that is un-Islamic is a disbelief that must be fought with jihad or holy war.<sup>7</sup>

The Khawarij were the predecessors of the *takfīri* group. Allah's law was captured in their narrow interpretation. Anyone who does not follow Allah's law in their understanding is labeled a heretic, a disbeliever, and can be fought. In addition to being the predecessor of the *takfīri* group, the Khawarij were the predecessors of the *bugāt* tradition in Islamic history.<sup>8</sup>

As a Muslim-majority country, in Indonesia itself there have been various acts of radicalism in the name of Islam, for example, the Bali I and II bombings in 2002 and 2005, the 2009 Jakarta bombings at the JW Marriott Hotel and the Ritz-Carlton Hotel, the Makassar Cathedral bombing in 2021 and others.<sup>9</sup> It is known that these radical groups are affiliated with al-Qaeda and ISIS which are jihadi salafi groups, where this group is known as the most perfect incarnation of radicalism. They justify violence in the name of "*jihād*".<sup>10</sup>

Based on the explanation of some of the problems above, it can be said that the beginning of the emergence of radicalism is a doctrine or understanding that is deeply embedded in individuals or groups as well as socio-cultural and political problems. They understand the proposition in one perspective or textually only without paying attention to other perspectives as a whole. Religious arguments are exploited and interpreted according to the needs of the group and used as justification for every action carried out personally or collectively, resulting in a reactionary-destructive attitude towards things that are *ikhtilāf*,<sup>11</sup> in other words, the actions played by radicalism groups usually indicate a judgmental attitude towards groups outside them. As a result, it causes tension between

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<sup>7</sup>Taufani Taufani, "Islamic Radicalism: History, Characteristics, and Dynamics in Multicultural Society in Indonesia", pp. 116-117.

<sup>8</sup>M. Kholid Syeirazi, *Wasathiyah Islam*, p. 129.

<sup>9</sup>Kompas.com, "Actions of Radicalism in the Name of Islam in Indonesia", *Kompas.com Official Website*. <https://www.kompas.com/stori/read/2023/07/19/021500779/actions-of-radicalism-in-the-name-of-islam-in-indonesia?page=all> (July 19, 2023).

<sup>10</sup>M. Kholid Syeirazi, *Wasathiyah Islam*, p. 99.

<sup>11</sup>Lub Liyna Nabilata, "Deconstruction of Radical Paradigm in the Quran", *Journal of Islamic Studies and Humanities* 3, no. 1 (2018): h. 46.

fellow Muslims from other Islamic groups and adherents of other religions.<sup>12</sup>

The essence of the teachings of Islam, which emphasizes the principle of mercy for the entire universe, seems to contradict the various incidents of radicalism that have been mentioned. The essence of Islamic teachings is the application of the values of peace, brotherhood, tolerance, decency, and balance in life.<sup>1314</sup> This is inseparable from the way the Prophet Muhammad PBUH taught Islam gently in the midst of the ignorance of Arab society and certainly far from the extreme way as practiced by radicalism.

Therefore, based on the above background in this study the author will examine a critical study of the concept of radicalism in the Qur'an in order to reveal the meaning of the Qur'anic verses related to radicalism as one of the fluctuating problems, meaning that it can occur anytime and anywhere in the life of mankind, especially in the name of religious teachings.

## **Method**

### **1. Type of research**

This type of research is qualitative research using descriptive analysis method. Data is obtained through *library research*, namely data collection by understanding and studying theories from various literatures related to the research.<sup>15</sup> The theories and literature can be in the form of books, journals, previous research results, important documents or records and other literature sources related to the critical study of the concept of radicalism in the Qur'an. Research activities in this method are collecting, reading and recording or quoting important things from the references obtained.

### **2. Method**

In this study, the main object of study is the verses of the Qur'an. Therefore, the author adopts several approaches to investigate these verses in more depth, including the Tafsir Science approach and the historical sociological approach.

The writing method used in this research is the *mauḍū'ī* (thematic) method, which is a method used by the mufassir by collecting verses of the Qur'an from various chapters and related to the issue or topic previously determined. Then, the interpreter discusses

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<sup>12</sup>Maksum Haufi Hubaeib and M. Yusron Shidqi, "Reconstruction of the Interpretation of Radicalism Verses in the Perspective of Tafsir Al-Marâghî and Fî Zhilâl Al-Qur'ân", *Hikami* 4, no. 1 (2023): h. 52.

<sup>13</sup>Muhammad Nur Jamaluddin, "The Form of Islam Rahmatan lil 'Âlamin in the Life of the Nation in Indonesia", *ADLIYA* 14, no. 2 (2020) pp: 274.

<sup>14</sup>Setyo Kurniawan, "The Urgency of Gentleness in the Method of Da'wah of the Prophet Muhammad", *Al Ashriyyah Journal* 8, no. 1 (2022): h. 57.

<sup>15</sup>Miza Nina Andlini et al, "Qualitative Research Methods of Literature Study", *Edumaspul* 6, no. 1 (2022): h. 973.



and analyzes the content of the verses so that they become a unified whole.<sup>16</sup> The type of research or thematic research used in this study is conceptual thematic, which is research or research on certain concepts that are not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an, but substantially the idea of the concept is contained in the Qur'an.<sup>17</sup> For example in the title of this research "Critical Study of the Concept of Radicalism in the Qur'an". The term "radicalism" is clearly not explicitly mentioned in the Qur'an, but verses that talk about the misunderstanding of radicalism adherents can be found in various verses. This can be found through the terms "*gulūw*" and "*jihād*".

### 3. Data Source

The data sources in this research consist of two, namely primary data and secondary data. Primary data is the data source that is the main reference in this research. Primary data include verses of the Qur'an and books of interpretation related to radicalism. Secondary data are supporting data sources that complement the research, such as dictionaries or *mu'jam*, books or books, journals, important documents or records and previous studies related to radicalism.

### 4. Data Collection Method

In the process of collecting data, the author uses *library research*, namely by searching and then reviewing literature and references related to the research topic.

### 5. Interpretation Technique

From the data analysis that has been done before, the author will explain the content and purpose of the verse by referring to several books of interpretation. The interpretation approach applied in this research uses several interpretation techniques, namely Qur'anic interpretation, sunnah interpretation, linguistic interpretation and systemic interpretation.

### 6. Data Processing and Analysis Techniques

In the process of processing and analyzing data, this research uses the steps of the *mauḍū'i* or thematic interpretation method. The process of processing and analyzing data is based on the steps of the *mauḍū'i* interpretation method, including the following.<sup>18</sup>

- a. Determining the problem to be discussed, in this case the problem is the verses related to radicalism.

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<sup>16</sup>M. Quraish Shihab, *Grounding the Qur'an: The Function and Role of Revelation in Public Life* (Cet. XI; Bandung: Mizan, 1995), p. 87. 87.

<sup>17</sup>Abdul Mustaqim, *Research Methods of Al-Qur'an and Tafsir* (Yogyakarta: Idea Press Yogyakarta, 2014), p. 62. 62.

<sup>18</sup>Abu Hayy al-Farmawi, *al-Bidayah fi al-Tafsir al-Maudu'i* (Cairo: al-Hadarah al-'Arabiyah, 1976), pp. 49-50.

- b. Collecting verses related to the problem, in this case the researcher must choose the object of interpretation, namely one particular theme or term and collect verses related to the theme discussed. Therefore, in this research, the verses that will be the theme of the research are verses that contain the terms *gulūw*, and *jihād*.
- c. Arranging the verses chronologically, according to the order of revelation and understanding of *asbāb al-nuzūl*. If this is not possible, then the important thing is to find the connection through logical structure.
- d. Understanding the correlation (*munāsabah*) of the verses in their respective surahs.
- e. Organizing the discussion in a perfect framework
- f. Supplementing it with relevant traditions and explanations from experts.
- g. Studying the verses as a whole by compiling verses that have the same meaning, or compromising between the *'ām* and *khāṣ*, the *mutlaq* and *muqayyad* or those that outwardly seem contradictory so that they can meet in one mouth.

In the last stage, the method of data analysis is used to select and sharpen the subject matter, then project it in conceptual form and investigate its content into a series of limited notions. So for the effective work of this method, the researcher will use scientific reasoning with inductive thinking or logic as his work analysis knife, namely putting forward statements that have a unique and limited scope to compile arguments that end with general statements.<sup>19</sup>

## Research Results

### 1. Understanding Radicalism

The word *radicalism* comes from the Latin *radicalis*, which means to hit or have roots. While *radicalis* comes from the word *radix* which means root. The terms *radical* and *radicalism* contain the idea that political change must come from the roots or from the most basic sources of a society.<sup>20</sup> In the Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary, it is stated that, "*Radical is believing or expressing the belief that there should be great or extreme social or political change*"<sup>21</sup>, meaning, radical is believing or expressing the belief that there should be great or extreme social or political change. The term radical was first recognized after Charles James Fox described the idea in 1797. At that time, Charles James Fox called for "Radical Reform" in the government system in Great Britain (England). The reform was used to describe a movement that supported parliamentary revolution in the country. Eventually, the ideology of radicalism began to develop and blend with the

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<sup>19</sup>Amsal Bakhtiar, *Philosophy of Science: Revised Edition* (Jakarta: Raja Grafindo Persada, 2012), p. 203.

<sup>20</sup>Muhammad Salik and Mokhammad Syaifuddin, *Social Media and Efforts to Maintain Islamic Moderation* (Malang: Edulitera, 2024), p. 29. 29.

<sup>21</sup>Cambridge University, *Cambridge Advanced Learners Dictionary* (Singapore: Cambridge University Press, 2008), p. 1170. 1170.





ideology of liberalism.<sup>22</sup>

In the religious sphere, radicalism is defined as religious movements that seek to totally overhaul the existing social and political order by using violence.<sup>23</sup> Radicalism is a movement that holds conservative views and often uses violence in teaching their beliefs.<sup>24</sup> In fact, there is not a single religious teaching that legitimizes or advocates violence. The biggest factor that triggers religious radicalism is the misunderstanding of religious texts as explained in the previous background.

The term radicalism basically comes from the West, which is often associated with "Islamic fundamentalism". In the Western tradition, the term Islamic fundamentalism is often exchanged with other terms such as "Islamic extremism" as Gilles Kepel did or "Radical Islam" according to Emmanuel Sivan and there are also terms "integrationism, "revivalism" or "Islamism".<sup>25</sup> These terms are used to indicate the symptoms of an "Islamic revival" followed by militancy and fanaticism that is sometimes very extreme. Compared to other terms, "radical Islam" is most often equated with "fundamentalist Islam". Because fundamentalism departs more from literalism in interpreting religious texts and ends up in actions with narrow insights that often give birth to destructive actions and blame others.<sup>26</sup>

The definition of radicalism according to several figures including:

1. Adeed Dawisha

Radicalism is a mental attitude that leads to actions aimed at weakening and changing the established political order and replacing it with a new system.<sup>27</sup>

2. Sartono Kartodirdjo

Radicalism is a social movement that thoroughly rejects the ongoing social order and is characterized by strong moral resentment to oppose and be hostile to the privileged and powerful.<sup>28</sup>

3. Eko Ariwidodo

Radicalism is an ideology created by a group of people who want drastic social and

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<sup>22</sup>Sahid Wibowo Apriyanto, *Preventing and Overcoming Radicalism* (Sukoharjo: CV Graha Printama Selaras, 2022), p. 3. 3.

<sup>23</sup>A. Rubaidi, *Islamic Radicalism, Nahdlatul Ulama & the Future of Islamic Moderatism in Indonesia* (Yogyakarta: Logung Pustaka, 2007), p. 33. 33.

<sup>24</sup>Harun Nasution, *Rational Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1995), p. 124.

<sup>25</sup>Roxanne L. Euben, *The Enemy in the Mirror, Islamic Fundamentalism and the Limits of Modern Rationalism* (Jakarta: Serambi, 2002), pp. 41.

<sup>26</sup>Junaidi Abdillah, "Religious Radicalism: Deconstructing the Interpretation of Violent Verses in the Qur'an", *Journal of Kalam* 8, no. 2 (2014), p. 283. 283.

<sup>27</sup>Adeed Dawisha, *The Arab Radicals* (New York: t.p, 1986), p. 14.

<sup>28</sup>Sartono Kartodirdjo, *Ratu Adil*, pp. 38.

political change or reform by using violent means.<sup>29</sup>

#### 4. Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt

Radicalism is the process of seeking, finding, adopting, growing and developing an extreme belief system that becomes a means for terror behavior.<sup>30</sup>

#### 5. Shaykh Yusuf al-Qardhawi

The term radicalism is called *al-Taṭarruf al-Dīnī*. Radicalism is a form of practicing religious teachings improperly or practicing religion by taking a *ṭarf* or side position. Usually it is the heavy, burdensome and excessive side. So that it will lead to a hard and rigid attitude. Overdoing it on the hard side is as bad as overdoing it on the dismissive and condescending side. Unreasonable exaggeration has three disadvantages: first, it displeases human nature, second, it cannot be long-lived and third, it is prone to violating the rights of others.<sup>31</sup>

From some of the above definitions, it can be concluded that radicalism is a movement that aims to make drastic changes or reforms in the social and political spheres by means of violence. Radicalism tends to lead to negative things so that from the beginning it is necessary to prevent or reform the mindset where radicalism stems from thinking errors that have the opportunity to give birth to extreme actions. This is certainly far from the basic principles of Islamic teachings which are *rahmatan lil 'ālamīn*.

### 2. The Essence of Radicalism in the Qur'an

Essence means essence, core and main thing.<sup>32</sup> So, if it is called the essence of radicalism, it can be interpreted as the essence of radicalism, in this case the essence of radicalism in the Qur'an. In the Qur'an there is no command to commit acts of radicalism. The main problem is that radicals often make religious arguments, such as making the texts of the Qur'an as a defense for the actions they take. Therefore, this discussion point will criticize the terms related to radicalism in the Qur'an.

#### Interpretation of the Meaning of *Jihād*

The word *jihād* is derived from three letters, namely ج - ه - د (*jim, ha, da*) which means *المشقة* (hardship, tribulation) or its equivalent.<sup>33</sup> According to Ragib al-Ashfahani,

<sup>29</sup>Eko Ariwidodo, "Shifting Paradigm of Modern Islamic Fundamentalism as Islamized Space Autonomy in Indonesia", *Karsa: Journal of Social and Islamic Culture* 25, no. 1 (2017): h. 249-283.

<sup>30</sup>Mitchell D. Silber and Arvin Bhatt, *Radicalization in the West: The Homegrown Threat* (New York: New York Police Department, 2007), pp. 1-90.

<sup>31</sup>Yusuf al-Qardhawi, *al-Shahwah al-Islamiyyah: Bayna al-Juhad wa al-Tatharruf* (Cairo: Bank al-Taqla, 2001), pp. 23-29.

<sup>32</sup>Language Development and Guidance Agency, *Big Indonesian Dictionary*, pp. 452.

<sup>33</sup>Abu al-Husain Ahmad Ibn Zakariyya, *Maqayis Al-Lughah* (Cairo: Dar al-Hadis, 2008), p. 177.





the words *jihād* and *mujāhadah* mean to exert oneself against the enemy. He also divided it into three meanings, namely fighting against real enemies, fighting against the devil, and fighting against lust.<sup>34</sup> Meanwhile, in *Lisan al-'Arab*, jihad means fighting the enemy, devoting all abilities and energy in the form of words, deeds or everything according to ability.<sup>35</sup>

In the Qur'an, the word jihad is repeated 41 times with various derivative forms, namely: جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدُ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ، جَاهِدْ. While the expression of the word *jihād* as a *maṣdar* (infinitive) form is repeated four times, namely in QS al-Taubah/9: 24 (جَاهِدْ)، QS al-Hajj/22: 78 (جَاهِدْ)، QS al-Furqān/25: 52 (جَاهِدْ) and QS al-Mumtaḥanah/60: 1 (جَاهِدْ).<sup>36</sup>

The meaning of jihad has evolved, namely the difference in conception between the meaning of jihad in the Makkah and Medina periods. In the Makkah period, the meaning of jihad presented in the Qur'an has not shown the meaning of war because the concentration of the texts is still on the spiritual mental development of Muslim society in various dimensions,<sup>37</sup> such as the Qur'an being used as a means of jihad ( QS al-Furqān/25: 52 ), jihad to face the pressure of the polytheists ( QS al-Naḥl/16: 110 ), jihad against lust ( QS al-Ankabūt/29: 6 and 69 ), jihad in keeping promises ( QS al-An'ām/6: 109, QS al-Naḥl/16: 38 and QS Fāṭir/35: 42 ) and jihad that means coercion ( QS Luqmān/31: 15 ). However, in the Medina period the Qur'anic texts about jihad began to lead to meanings oriented towards physical warfare on the battlefield. This shift in the meaning of jihad was due to the condition of Muslim religious awareness that was already strong and they had the ability to fight.<sup>38</sup> The term jihad in the Qur'an is expressed more in the Medina period, namely 33 times in 29 verses, compared to the Makkah period, which is 8 times in 6 verses.<sup>39</sup>

The jihad verses revealed in the Medina period mostly mean "war" or in Arabic called قتال (*qitāl*),<sup>40</sup> in this case referred to as physical war. In addition, jihad in the sense of war is also always juxtaposed with lafaz *fī sabīlillāh*. According to Muhammad Husain al-Taba'taba'i, the expression of jihad followed by *fī sabīlillāh* means jihad in the sense of

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<sup>34</sup>al-Raghib al-Ashfahani, *Mu'jam Mufradath Alfazh Al-Qur'an* (Beirut: Dar al-Kutub al-'Ilmiyyah, 2004), pp. 114.

<sup>35</sup>Ibn Manzhur, *Lisan Al-'Arab*, jil. 1 (Cairo: Dar al-Ma'arif, t.th), pp. 710.

<sup>36</sup>Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi', *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfazh al-Qur'an al-Karim* (Cairo: Dar al-Kutub al-Mishriyyah, 1364 AH), pp. 182-183.

<sup>37</sup>Kasjim Salenda, *Terrorism and Jihad in the Perspective of Islamic Law*, p. 175.

<sup>38</sup>Kasjim Salenda, *Terrorism and Jihad in the Perspective of Islamic Law*, pp. 176-177.

<sup>39</sup>Muhammad Fuad 'Abd al-Baqi', *al-Mu'jam al-Mufahras li Alfazh al-Qur'an al-Karim*, pp. 182-183.

<sup>40</sup>Achmad Warson Munawwir and Muhammad Fairuz, *Al-Munawwir Dictionary of Indonesian-Arabic Version* (Surabaya: Pustaka Progressif, 2007), p. 659.

war, while those not followed by *fī sabīlillāh* tend to indicate jihad in a general sense.<sup>41</sup>

Therefore, based on the explanation of the meaning of jihad above, this discussion will focus on the verses of jihad in the Madaniyah period, especially the verses of jihad with the word *qitāl* and the verses of *jihād fī sabīlillāh* which means war.

#### a. Jihad Verses with *Qitāl* Verses

*Qitāl* is rooted in the word *qatl* which is composed of the letters *qaf*, *ta* and *lam* which has the basic meaning of subjugation and killing (إِذْلَالٌ وَإِمَاتَةٌ).<sup>42</sup> According to al-Raghib al-Isfahani *qatl* means removing life from the body (إِزَالَةُ الرُّوحِ عَنِ الْجَسَدِ).<sup>43</sup>

Broadly speaking, the Qur'an uses this word to indicate 4 meanings namely: killing, fighting, declaration of woe and curse by Allah and knowing something with certainty. This number is spread over 130 verses. While those that talk about war amount to 47 verses. The meaning of fighting and killing is the most popular meaning of the others.<sup>44</sup>

For more details, here are the verses about jihad in the form of *qitāl*.

QS al-Ḥajj/22: 39

أُذِنَ لِلَّذِينَ يُقَاتِلُونَ بِأَنَّهُمْ ظَلُمُوا ۖ وَإِنَّ اللَّهَ عَلَىٰ نَصْرِهِمْ لَقَدِيرٌ (39)

Translation:

Permission is given to those who are oppressed because they are oppressed. Verily, Allah is mighty in their defense. (QS al-Ḥajj/22: 39)<sup>45</sup>

The first verse that was revealed commanding jihad in the sense of fighting is QS al-Ḥajj/22: 39. This verse was revealed when the Prophet Muhammad PBUH and his companions were expelled from the city of Makkah.<sup>46</sup> Allah swt. has prescribed jihad at the right time, because in the past when they were in the city of Makkah, the polytheists were more numerous. Had the Muslims been ordered to fight with the majority when they were less than ten percent, it would have been difficult for them. When the polytheists did wrong, expelled the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) from their neighborhood,

<sup>41</sup>Muhammad Husain al-Thabathaba'i, *al-Mizan fi Tafsir al-Qur'an*, jil. 5 (Beirut: Muassasah al-'Alami li al-Matbuat, 1983), pp. 328.

<sup>42</sup>Abu al-Husain Ahmad Ibn Zakariyya, *Maqayis al-Lughah* (Cairo: Dar al-Hadis, 2008), pp. 762.

<sup>43</sup>al-Raghib al-Ashfahani, *al-Mufradat fi Gharib al-Qur'an* (Maktabah Nazar Musthafa al-Baz, t.th), p. 508. 508.

<sup>44</sup>Muhammad Suaib Tahir, 'Qital in the Perspective of the Quran', *Nida' Al-Qur'an*, 3.1 (2018).

<sup>45</sup>Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag", *Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia*, 2022, <https://quran.kemenag.go.id>, (December 27, 2024).

<sup>46</sup>Al-Imam al-Hafizh Ibn Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azhim*, Juz 3, pp. 268-269.



intended to kill him and tortured his companions, some of them went to the land of Habashah and some went to Medina. When they had settled in Medina, they gathered with the Prophet and were ready to help him, so Medina became an Islamic country for them and their refuge. Then Allah swt. prescribed jihad against their enemies. This verse was the first to be revealed for that purpose.<sup>47</sup>

Although the Muslims and the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) had experienced the torture and cruelty of the Quraysh since before the migration to Medina, retaliation and jihad were not physically carried out until Allah swt. gave the command to fight as a permission, not as an obligation for the Muslims of Medina to defend themselves.<sup>48</sup> This is in line with Imam Ibn Jarir al-Thabari's view of QS al-Hajj/22:39 regarding permission to fight for the believers. He interpreted that Allah has authorized the believers to fight against the polytheists because they have oppressed and attacked the believers.<sup>49</sup> It can be said that Imam al-Thabari viewed jihad or fighting (*qitāl*) not as an offensive act but an act of self-protection to defend the existence of the believers. The believers had for years patiently faced the torment of the Makkan polytheists with jihad with sincerity and proselytization until finally Allah swt. revealed the command to fight the polytheists.

In line with the above opinion, this is certainly different from the understanding of radicalism, such as the bombers in several cases that occurred in Indonesia. They carry out their actions against non-Muslims who do not abuse them. Muslims and non-Muslims live peacefully side by side without disturbing or hurting each other. However, all of a sudden this condition changed drastically into something far from the previous condition due to the actions of the bombers based on a wrong understanding of religion, especially the understanding of *jihad*.

Every war during the Prophet's time was only for self-defense or to counter attacks. In this verse, Allah swt. commands the Muslims to fight the People of the Book, because they have four elements that cause them to be hostile to Islam. These four elements include:

- (a) They do not believe in Allah, because they have destroyed the principle of monotheism. They make priests as holy men who have the right to determine things, both regarding regulations related to worship and those related to halal and haram. Likewise, the Christians consider Jesus the son of God, while the Jews also consider Uzair as the son of God. This clearly shows that they all associate partners with Allah in making religious regulations.
- (b) They do not believe in the Last Day, because they think that the life in the Hereafter is just a spiritual life. They do not believe in the Last Day because

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<sup>47</sup>Al-Imam al-Hafizh Ibn Katsir, *Tafsir Al-Qur'an Al-'Azhim*, Juz 3, pp. 269.

<sup>48</sup>Muchlis M. Hanafi et al, *Jihad: Its Meaning and Implementation (Thematic Interpretation)* (Jakarta: Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf al-Qur'an, 2012), p. 110.

<sup>49</sup> Ibn Jarir al-Thabari, *Jami' Al-Bayan 'an Ta'wil Ay Qur'an*, vol. 5 (Beirut: Muassasah al-Risa, 1994), p. 321. 321.

they consider the life hereafter to be a mere spiritual life. They do not believe in the Last Day because there is no confirmation in either the Torah or the Gospel that there will be a day of resurrection and recompense after death, when human beings will rise again as they were before, consisting of a body and a spirit, each of which will enjoy the pleasures of Allah's bounty, as confirmed in the Qur'an.

- (c) They do not forbid what Allah and His Messenger forbid. The Jews do not forbid what Allah forbade in the laws brought by Moses and some of which were naskh-kan by Isa, i.e. declared void. They regarded it as lawful to consume wealth in a way that is not lawful (batil), such as usury and so on, and they followed the ways of the polytheists in the ferocity of fighting and treating captives. The Christians, on the other hand, regard as lawful that which was forbidden by Allah in the law of Moses, which has not been abrogated by the Gospel. In the Torah Allah forbids the fat of meat or the price at which it is sold. The Christians do not consider it haram.
- (d) They do not adhere to the true religion, the religion revealed to Moses and Jesus (a.s.). What they consider religion is actually a method made by their priests based on their thoughts and interests. The reason for this is that the Torah, which was revealed to Moses, and the Injil, which was revealed to Isa, were written long after their deaths. So the Torah and Injil were written based on the understanding of their followers. Even a few centuries after the ascension of Isa they chose four gospels that contradict each other.<sup>50</sup>

#### b. Jihad Verses with *the* Phrase *Jihād fī Sabīlillāh*

The term jihad is also sometimes associated with the term *fī sabīlillāh*, and all are found in verses of the Madaniyah period. The following verses contain the term *jihād fī sabīlillāh* in the sense of warfare.

QS al-Nisā'/4: 95

لَا يَسْتَوِي الْقُعْدُونَ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ غَيْرُ أُولَى الضَّرَرِ وَالْمُجَاهِدُونَ فِي سَبِيلِ اللَّهِ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ  
وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ ۖ فَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ بِأَمْوَالِهِمْ وَأَنْفُسِهِمْ عَلَى الْقُعْدِينَ دَرَجَةً ۗ وَكُلًّا وَعَدَ اللَّهُ الْحُسْنَى ۗ  
وَفَضَّلَ اللَّهُ الْمُجَاهِدِينَ عَلَى الْقُعْدِينَ أَجْرًا عَظِيمًا ۖ (95)

#### Translation:

Those believers who sit down (and do not fight) without an excuse are not equal to those who strive in the cause of Allah with their wealth and souls. Allah exalts the degree of those who strive with their wealth and souls over those who sit (do not

<sup>50</sup>Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and its Tafsir (Improved Edition)*, Jil. 4, h. 95.



join the war without an excuse). To each of them, Allah promises the best (reward) (paradise), (but) Allah surpasses those who strive over those who sit with a great reward. (QS al-Nisā'/4: 95)<sup>51</sup>

The above verse was revealed during the battle of Badr. Among the Muslims, there were those who stayed at home, and were not willing to go to the battlefield. Then this verse was revealed to remind them that with such an attitude, they were in a low rank, compared to the rank of those who fought jihad with full faith and awareness. While there are some Muslims who are eager to participate in Jihad, their intentions and desires cannot be carried out because they have an excuse, for example: because they are blind, lame, sick and so on, or they do not have anything to contribute. Such people are not to be equated with those who are reluctant to engage in Jihad, but are to be equated with those who engage in Jihad with their wealth and body and soul. This verse also explains that those who really do jihad with their wealth and body and soul gain a dignity that is one degree higher than those who do not jihad because of an excuse. But that group will be rewarded by Allah, because of their faith and sincere intentions.<sup>52</sup>

The Battle of Badr was the first war fought by the Muslims; it was the beginning of a great war between the Muslims and the Quraysh. Some sources mention that the factor for the war was the Muslims' attempt to ambush the Quraysh trade caravan led by Abu Sufyan. However, the ambush was classified as a special cause, and the general cause was that the Quraysh already hated Islam itself.<sup>53</sup> The Prophet sent a special operation to intercept the Quraysh trade caravan as part of the warfare strategy. The purpose of the ambush operation was not to kill or eliminate lives, nor to seize property that did not belong to them. However, it was understood that it was an official operation carried out by a sovereign state in order to pressure the Quraysh to stop fighting the Muslims. Because during this time, the Quraysh of Makkah easily killed, expelled, confiscated and forced, so that by carrying out the operation they could no longer do it all. Because Muslims have been able to retaliate and threaten the economic path of the Makkah Quraysh. In this way, the Makkah officials had to think more deeply before launching hostilities against the Muslims. Especially if capturing the trade caravans, it is hoped that in this way the Makkah officials will think that Muslims are no longer a slave nation that can be treated arbitrarily. They could have fought back, even taking the Makkan merchants hostage.<sup>54</sup>

From the explanation above, it is clear that the Badr war was a war that was originally caused by the cruelty of the attitude of the Quraysh towards Muslims. As the war was carried out as a form of self-defense against the injustice of the Quraysh. So that in the

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<sup>51</sup>Lajnah Pentashihan Mushaf Al-Qur'an, "Qur'an Kemenag", *Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia*, 2022, <https://quran.kemenag.go.id>, (January 23, 2025) .

<sup>52</sup>Ministry of Religious Affairs of the Republic of Indonesia, *Al-Qur'an and its Tafsir (Improved Edition)*, Jil. 2, h. 246.

<sup>53</sup>Zul Ghafrin and Fachri Syauqi, "Analysis of Muslim Wars from the Prophet's Period to the Abbasid Dynasty: From Self Defense to Civil War", *Hijaz 3* , no.1 (2023) : p. 30.

<sup>54</sup>Ahmad Sarwat, "The Origin of the Battle of Badr", *Rumah Fiqih Indonesia*, <https://www.rumahfiqih.com/consultation/638> (February 15, 2025).

end the Badr war was won by the Muslims. Of course this contradicts the act of radicalism because the Badr machete occurred as a form of Muslim self-defense efforts, not just waging war without any cause from the party being fought in the war.

### **Conclusion**

The teaching of jihad in the form of warfare in Islamic teachings is the last resort taken by Muslims because of conditions that require them to defend their body and soul and religion through warfare. Even the war is inseparable from the rules, such as not killing women, children, the elderly, trees, and other things that are not directly involved as targets of war. And of course this is different from the view of radicalism which considers that *jihad* only means war and can be carried out in the form of sudden attacks to kill yourself.

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