

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

A. Background of Study

After the events of 9/11 at The World Trade Center, instigated by the al-Qaeda group in the name of Islam, Muslims in the United States Faced negative stigma that resulted in discrimination and injustice.¹ From October 7 to December 4, 2023, CAIR (*Council on American-Islamic Relations*) reported a 216% increase in Islamophobia case requests, totaling 1,238 during this period.² The phenomenon of Islamophobia can also be observed in Muslim-majority countries, such as Indonesia. According to Amisryah Tambunan from the Indonesia Ulama Council, the high degree of multiculturalism in Indonesia contributes to the issue of Islamophobia. In Indonesia, this phenomenon is further influenced by right-wing extremists who aim to establish an Islamic state, such as

¹Cut Khaila Tiara Putri et al., "Analisis Stigma Buruk Terhadap Agama Islam Akibat Peristiwa 9/11", *Nusantara : Jurnal Pendidikan, Seni, Sains, dan Sosial Humaniora*, vol. 1 (2023), pp. 1–16.

²Ismail Allison, *CAIR to Release Updated Civil Rights Data Showing "Staggering, Ongoing" Increase in Complaints of Islamophobia, Anti-Arab Bias Over Past Two Months* - (6 Dec 2023), https://www.cair.com/press_releases/cair-to-release-updated-civilrights-data-showing-staggering-ongoing-increase-in-complaints-of-islamophobia-anti-arab-bias-over-past-two-months/, accessed 2 Jul 2024.

the group Jama'ah Islamiyah Movement.³ Several terrorist attacks occurred in Indonesia over the last two decades, including the Bali bombings and the bomb attacks in Surabaya and Sidoarjo.⁴

Islamophobia refers to hostile rhetoric and attitudes towards Islam, often stemming from fear or misconceptions, particularly heightened after the September 11, 2001 attacks that resulted in the deaths of thousands.⁵ Dr. Dahlia Fahmy, as reported by the Al-Jazeera English Youtube channel, explained that after the events of September 11, 2001, there has been an increase in cases of Islamophobia directed toward Muslims. This phenomenon peaked during Donald Trump's campaign, where Islamophobia was a central part of his political strategy to win the 2016 presidential election, Dr. Dahlia emphasized that Islamophobia in the United States constitutes a form of racism that the public has widely accepted.⁶

³Abdillah Abdillah and Suci Triana Putri, "Islamophobia: Ancaman Multikulturalisme di Indonesia", *Jurnal Politik Profetik*, vol. 10, no. 1 (2022), pp. 1–16.

⁴"Daftar Kasus Ledakan Bom di Indonesia 2 Dekade Terakhir", *nasional*, <https://www.cnnindonesia.com/nasional/20210328150157-20-623072/daftar-kasus-ledakan-bom-di-indonesia-2-dekade-terakhir>, accessed 24 Jul 2024.

⁵Felly Fana and Abdul Salam, "Gejala Perkembangan Islamophobia di Amerika Serikat Pasca Peristiwa 9/11 (2001-2017)", *Jurnal Pendidikan Tambusai*, vol. 8, no. 2 (2024).

⁶Sami Zeidan, Dahlia Fahmy, *Being Muslim in the US | Center Stage*, www.youtube.com/watch?v=oqIE_IMI7Ts, accessed 3 Jul 2024.

Discourse regarding Islam as a potential threat has emerged in the media and has been discussed by various Western figures and political experts. According to Fred Halliday, to maintain the dominance of capitalism, the West requires an enemy. With the defeat of communism, Islam has become the new focal point of concern as a potential adversary for the West.⁷ The collapse of communism has heightened the West's fear of Islam, which is considered a "Satanic Kingdom" that raises forces challenging the new world order and threatening global stability.⁸

Samuel P. Huntington popularized the concept of "The Clash of Civilizations," which posits that after the end of the Cold War, global conflicts shifted from ideological and economic issues to clashes between different civilizations. One of the civilizations identified in this discourse is Islamic civilization, which Huntington argued possesses significant potential to challenge the Western democratic system. This has drawn the West's attention, viewing it as a potential threat that requires careful observation.⁹ Esposito, an orientalist who supports Islam, argues that the

⁷Adian Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat* (Jakarta: Gema Insani, 2015). Hal 179

⁸*Ibid.* hal. 180

⁹Samuel P. Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order* (New York: Simon & Schuster, 1996); Satnis Klau, "Benturan Peradaban Samuel P. Huntington (Sebuah Analisis Perang Pemikiran Barat - Islam Dalam Tinjauan Komunikasi) | Al Qodiri: Jurnal Pendidikan, Sosial dan Keagamaan", *Al-Qodiri*, vol. 19, no. 3 (2022),

portrayal of Islam as an enemy of the West has not only emerged after the Cold War but is also a consequence of the West's competitive nature for global influence.¹⁰

According to Esposito, US policymakers and the mass media often perceive the Islamic World and its movements as a monolithic entity, focusing solely on extremism and terrorism.¹¹ From the above discussion, This thesis will explore how Esposito's perspective as an orientalist influences his view of Islamophobia, mainly focusing on aspects of Islam that many in the West tend to overlook. By examining various Islamic teachings that Esposito studied, the research will reinforce the significance of religion. It will employ a philosophical approach and descriptive analysis methods to clearly understand of Esposito's thoughts on Islamophobia.

<http://ejournal.kopertais4.or.id/tapalkuda/index.php/qodiri/article/view/4543>, accessed 24 Jan 2024.

¹⁰Husaini, *Wajah Peradaban Barat*. hal 179

¹¹*Ibid.* hal 180

B. Problem Formulation

This study examines Islam in the Western world based on the background provided. The specific research problems can be framed as follows :

1. How does John L. Esposito concept Islamophobia?
2. What impact does Esposito perceive Islamophobia has on Muslims in the west?

C. Purpose of Study

The objectives of the discussion proposed by the researcher are as follows:

1. To explain John L. Esposito's views on the prevalence of Islamophobia in Western society.
2. To explore the impact of Islamophobia on Muslims in the West from Esposito's perspective.

D. Significance of Study

Completing this research is expected to provide both theoretical and practical benefits for readers and future researchers. The anticipated theoretical and practical uses of this research include the following:

1. Theoretical Significance

Theoretically, this research aims to contribute to scientific treasures, and provide valuable insights for the broader community, particularly for students in the Faculty of Ushuluddin, Department of Comparative Study of Religion at the University. It focuses on addressing their intellectual development needs.

2. Practical Significance

Practically, this research is intended to serve as a reference and guide for writing scientific papers. Additionally, it aims to offer alternative solutions to issues faced by the community, especially concerning contemporary topics related to Islamophobia directed towards Islam and Muslims.

E. Previous Study

To enhance the understanding of the research discussion, this study builds upon previous research regarding the concept of Islamophobia to determine the position and originality of this thesis, including:

*First, Thesis Analisis Framing Islamophobia dalam Film Bulan Terbelah di Langit Amerika*¹², by Fahdina Inas Maulaya 2021, faculty of

¹² Fahdina Inas Maulaya, "Analisis Framing Islamophobia dalam Film Bulan Terbelah di Langit Amerika", *Institut Agama Islam Negeri Jember* (2021).

Da'wah at Institut Agama Islam Negeri Jember. This thesis discusses the concept of framing Islamophobia through the film *Bulan Terbelah di Langit Amerika*. It employs a descriptive qualitative method for the research. The focus is primarily on the discussion of da'wah messages and elements of Islamophobia depicted in the film "Bulan Terbelah di Langit Amerika."

The difference that the researcher will discuss in this study is to explain the concept of Islamophobia from the view of one of the orientalist figures, John L. Esposito.

*Second, Thesis Paradigma Islamophobia (Analisis Wacana Kritis Teun Van Gijk pada Novel Bumi Cinta Karya Habibirahman El Shirazy)*¹³ by Salbia 2022 at the faculty of Ushuluddin, State Islamic Institute of Palopo. This thesis employed qualitative descriptive research methods, The data sources were obtained through a literature study. The research analyzes the paradigm of Islamophobia, focusing on the stereotype of Islam as a radical religion linked to terrorism, as depicted in the novel "Bumi Cinta" by a non-Muslim author from Europe. The author further develops the research by

¹³ Salbia, "Paradigma Islamophobia (Analisis Wacana Kritis Teun Van Dijk pada Novel Bumi Cinta Karya Habiburahman El Shirazy)", *Institusi Agama Islam Negeri Palopo* (2022).

examining the concept of Islamophobia and the stereotypes against Muslims through the lens of John L. Esposito's thoughts.

Third, a thesis *Pengaruh Islamophobia Terhadap Kebijakan Luar Negeri Amerika Serikat pada Masa Pemerintahan Donald Trump*¹⁴ was written by Devi Olivia Purba in 2021 at University of Jayabaya, Jakarta. This research was conducted as part of the International Relations Study Program within the Faculty of Social and Political Sciences. The study employs a descriptive qualitative research approach, utilizing analytical methods to assess the influence of Islamophobia on the foreign policy of the United States during Donald Trump's administration, particularly in Muslim-majority countries.

This research distinguishes itself by examining the influence and impact of Western democracy on Islamic and Western relations through the perspective of John L. Esposito..

Fourth, Thesis *Hubungan Islam dan Barat (Studi atas Pemikiran John L. Esposito)*¹⁵ by M. Salman Hamdani 2007 with the Comparative

¹⁴Devi Olivia Purba, "Pengaruh Islamophobia terhadap Kebijakan Luar Negeri Amerika Serikat pada Masa Pemerintahan Donald Trump", *Universitas Jayabaya Jakarta* (2021).

¹⁵Salman Hamdani, "Hubungan Islam dan Barat (Studi atas Pemikiran John L. Esposito)", *Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta*, p. 2007.

Religion study program, faculty of Ushuluddin, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta. This thesis employs a descriptive qualitative method to analyze John L. Esposito's insights on the relationship between Islam and the West. It discusses the dynamics of this relationship from the time of the Crusades to the Islamic Revolution, highlighting how these events have contributed to the perception of Islam in the West as a religion associated with violence. This misunderstanding often stems from a lack of comprehension regarding the concept of Jihad in Islam.

A unique aspect of this study is its examination of John L. Esposito's views on Islamophobia, which has further deteriorated the image of Islam in Western societies. The thesis also explores the impact of Islamophobia on Muslims living in the West.

Fifth, Thesis *Konsep Agama dan Politik Menurut John L. Esposito (Studi terhadap buku Islam dan Politik)*¹⁶ by Abd. Fatah Hidayat, 2007 with the Jinayah Siyasah study program, Faculty of Sharia, Sunan Kalijaga State Islamic University, Yogyakarta. This academic work employs a descriptive qualitative method, utilizing a literature review of John L.

¹⁶Abd. Fatah Hidayat, "Konsep Agama dan Politik Menurut John L. Esposito (Studi terhadap buku Islam dan Politik)", *Universitas Islam Negeri Sunan Kalijaga Yogyakarta* (2007).

Esposito's book, "Islam and Politics." The analysis aims to explore Esposito's perspectives on the inseparable relationship between Islam and politics.

The research addresses the interconnectedness of politics and Islam, contrasting it with the Western democratic system, which promotes secularization—the separation of politics and religion. The researcher seeks to provide an in-depth examination of the concept of Islamic politics and the resistance to Western democratic values, which has contributed to the rise of Islamophobia.

The researcher is particularly interested in this subject because John L. Esposito provides a unique perspective on Islam. Unlike many others, he does not view Islam solely through the lens of the conflicts associated with it, which have contributed to the rise of Islamophobia in Western society. Instead, Esposito takes a holistic approach to Islamic teachings in his study of the religion. This research focuses specifically on Islamic issues, setting it apart from Esposito's broader perspective.

F. Theoretical Framework

In this study, the researcher utilized a philosophical approach to explore the background and direction of the character's thoughts.¹⁷ This study investigates the thoughts of John L. Esposito regarding Islam and the events that contribute to Islamophobia in Western society. The researcher aims to analyze Esposito's perspective on Islam, which contrasts with that of orientalist figures who often seek to highlight negative aspects of the religion. This analysis addresses misunderstandings prevalent in Western society by examining various events and phenomena that have led to the rise of Islamophobia, all framed through the insights of John L. Esposito.

Islamophobia refers to the societal fear or hatred towards Muslims and Islam¹⁸. The emergence of Islamophobia following the 9/11 incident in America caused some Westerners to feel fear, concern, and prejudice towards Islam and its followers. This phenomenon manifests not only through spoken and written language but also leads to harmful behaviors that are both physically and psychologically destructive. As a result,

¹⁷Peter Connolly (ed.), *Approaches to the study of religion*, Reprinted edition (London: Continuum, 2002).

¹⁸Muhammad Saiful Asyari, *Islam Watch dan Kebencian Atas Islam: Sanggahan Modern Terhadap Penafsiran Sūrah al-Fātiḥah Menurut "Islam Watch"* (2015), <https://repository.uinjkt.ac.id/dspace/handle/123456789/25824>, accessed 4 Dec 2023.

Muslims, who are a significant population in the Western world, often experience mental and physical terror.¹⁹

Samuel P. Huntington argues that while there are many civilizations in the world, Islam remains the only one that remains strong today. Therefore, it is essential to pay close attention to Islam, as it has the potential to pose challenges to Western civilization.²⁰ According to Western perspectives, the Islamic threat began with the Iranian revolution in 1979. Initially, Iran was a monarchy, but it became into a republic governed by Islamic law.²¹ The West became concerned that the Iranian revolution could overthrow secular politics and democracy.²²

John L. Esposito is an expert on Islam, who according to some represents a perspective that diverges from the mainstream views of Islamic scholars in the West. A rational approach characterized Esposito's alignment with Islam, as he closely follows the current political developments related to the religion.²³ John L. Esposito is a Western scholar who has conducted

¹⁹Muhammad Rafi', "Tarik Menarik Islamophobia di Amerika", *Madrasatuna : Jurnal Pengajaran dan Kajian Islam*, vol. 1 (2021), p. 4. Hal 4

²⁰Huntington, *The clash of civilizations and the remaking of world order*. Hal. 20

²¹Kiki Mikail, "Iran di Tengah Hegemoni Barat (Studi Politik Luar Negeri Iran Pasca Revolusi 1979)", *Tamaddun: Jurnal Kebudayaan dan Sastra Islam*, vol. 13, no. 2 (2013), <https://jurnal.radenfatah.ac.id/index.php/tamaddun/article/view/154>, accessed 3 Jan 2024.

²² John L. Esposito, *Bahaya Hijau : Kesalahpahaman Barat terhadap Islam Terj. Sunarto*, 1st edition (Yogyakarta: Pustaka Pelajar, 1997). Hal 7

²³ *Ibid.* hal 1

numerous studies and observations on Islam, focusing on various aspects of research directly in Muslim countries. His perspective on Islam differs from that of earlier Western scholars, who often portrayed a negative or skewed image of the religion.²⁴

G. Methods of Research

A specific research method is essential for addressing existing problems when preparing scientific research. This research method consists of the researcher's systematic steps or procedures to collect data. The ultimate aim is to achieve results that align with the researcher's objectives and can be applied to various purposes.²⁵ This study employs a systematic research method to compile scientific knowledge to achieve its objectives. The researcher utilizes qualitative research techniques, with the primary data sourced from library research and content analysis. Those can be considered in scientific research include the scientific method, data quality, objectives, and the practical relevance of the findings. This study explicitly examines Islamophobia through the perspective of John L. Esposito, a

²⁴Badarussyamsi Badarussyamsi, "Islam di Mata Orientalisme Klasik dan Orientalisme Kontemporer", *TAJDID: Jurnal Ilmu Ushuluddin*, vol. 15, no. 1 (2016), pp. 17–40.

²⁵Prof. Dr. Sugiyono, *Metode Penelitian Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D* (Bandung: Alfabeta, 2013).

Western Orientalist who supports Islam. The methods employed in this research include:

1. Type of Research

To determine a truth, it is essential to gather evidence supporting it that truth. This necessitates conducting scientific research. In this study, the researcher employs a qualitative research approach, which emphasizes understanding the broader social context being examined. This includes the locations, individuals, and activities that interact synergistically. By focusing on this social situation, the aim is to acquire new and insightful information.²⁶ The method used in this study is descriptive analysis, aimed at exploring the concept of Islamophobia from the perspective of John L. Esposito.

To enhance the depth of the research, the researcher employed a *philosophical approach* to study and analyze the core ideas of John L. Esposito regarding Islamophobia. This approach helps to uncover the meaning behind his thoughts and the attitudes of Muslims in confronting these challenges.²⁷

²⁶ *Ibid.* hal 90

²⁷ Connolly (ed.), *Approaches to the study of religion*. Hal. 106

2. Source of Data

Research data can be classified into two types based on its origin: primary data and secondary data. Primary data is collected directly from the source, while secondary data is gathered indirectly, often through other individuals or sources.

The researcher conducted a literature review to gather relevant information, examining books related to the research topic. This review included both primary sources and secondary sources.

a. Primary Data

The primary data in this study is information about Islamophobia and the thoughts of John L. Esposito, including:

1. *Islamophobia : The Challenge of Pluralism in the 21st Century*, written by John L. Esposito and Ibrahim Kalin, Oxford University Press Press, 2011. Which has the advantage of explaining the phenomenon of Islamophobia in the 21st century and how Muslims face such opposition
2. *Bahaya Hijau : Kesalahanpahaman Barat terhadap Islam*, written by John L. Esposito and translated by Sunarto, Student Literature

Publisher, 1997. This book explains John L. Esposito's thinking about the western misconception of Islam as an alternative ideology and a threat that will hinder globalization and democracy that the west has orchestrated for political and social interests.

3. *Islam: The Straight Path*, written by John L. Esposito translated by Arif Maftuhin, Paramadina Publishers, 2004. Who is noisy about John L. Esposito's views on Islam with two concepts, namely as "insiders" and "outsiders" or non-Muslims
4. *The Islamic Threat: Myth or Reality?*, written by John L. Esposito translated by Alwiyah Abdurahman, Mizan Foundation Publisher, 1994. Which discusses several phenomena that encourage activities to research Islam, whether it is true that Islam teaches terrorism (jihad) or violence? So many of these questions have been studies by several Western scholars
5. *The Future of Islam*, written by John L. Esposito translated by Eva Y. Nukma and Edi Wahyu, Mizan Publishers, 2010. This explains the future of Islam against its challenge in the form of Islamophobia with the increase of Muslims in Europe and America.

6. *What Everyone Needs to Know About Islam*, written by John L. Esposito, Oxford University Press Press, 2002. Which explains and answers the wrong questions about Islam and Muslims.
7. *Metodi Penelitian Pendidikan Kuantitatif, Kualitatif, dan R&D*, written by Dr. Sugiyono. This book is used as a reference in taking research methods.
8. *Approaches to the study of Religion*, written by Peter Connolly. This book helps to explain research methods with a philosophical approach in the field of Religious studies.

b. Secondary Data

Secondary data refers to research involving literature and work conducted by others, which is relevant to the discussion main topic. In this case, the researcher will gather information from various sources such as books, articles, and ebooks pertaining Islamophobia, particularly from the perspective of John L. Esposito.

H. Systematics of Writing

To facilitate the research, the researcher has organized the study into four chapters, outlined as follows:

Chapter One: This chapter provides the background of the study, problem formulation, purpose of the study, significance of the study, previous study, theoretical framework, describes the methods of research method, and explains the systematics of writing.

Chapter Two: In this chapter, the researcher discusses the variables study's, which are divided into two main parts: Islamophobia and John L. Esposito.

Chapter Three: This chapter presents the concept of Islamophobia as articulated by John L. Esposito. It is divided into two parts. The first part explains the concept of Islamophobia, discussing Esposito's understanding of Islam, the declining image of Islam in the West, and the common misunderstandings of Islam in Western discourse. The second part examines the impact of Esposito's perspective on Islamophobia and its implications for Muslims in the West, focusing on the relationship between Islam and the West and the future of Islam in the context of Islamophobic conflicts.

Chapter Four: The last chapter includes three components, which are conclusions, message and suggestions that the researcher wishes to convey through this research, It concludes with a summary and a bibliography.

