



ISSN: 2230-9926

Available online at <http://www.journalijdr.com>

IJDR

**International Journal of
DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH**

International Journal of Development Research
Vol. 5, Issue, 04, pp. 4170-4176, April, 2015

Full Length Research Article

RELIGION IN POSTMODERN REALITY

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ARTICLE INFO

Article History:

Received 12th January, 2015
Received in revised form
11th February, 2015
Accepted 19th March, 2015
Published online 29th April, 2015

Key words:

Postmodernism,
Religion

ABSTRACT

Postmodernism is a term usually used in any kinds of fields like art, architecture, anthropology, sociology, geography, philosophy and religion. Each field has its definition about postmodernism. Due to this fact, the definition of postmodernism varies and there is no fixed definition of it. As one of the abstract terms in philosophy, postmodernism is in the abstract cognitive. On the other hand, it appears nowadays as concrete evidence and can be examined by people. The appearance of various or plural insights on religion insists a tolerant way of think towards others' thought. Hence, in one side reality of postmodernism bears a dialog among religions which are based on a belief that there is the sameness of spirit of each religion; and at the other side deep comprehension to religion fundamentally comes up.

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INTRODUCTION

Postmodernism almost overlaps with post modernity because both of them are using the term post. Postmodernism refers to the philosophical criticism over worldview, epistemology and modern ideologies. While on the other side, post modernity refers to the situation and social arrangements of information and technological product, globalization, fragmentation, lifestyle, too much consumerism, market deregulation, money and public facilities, age of the nation and the re-search of traditional inspirations. However, the use of the suffix "ism" in postmodernism impresses that postmodernism is a system of certain single thought, postmodernism is a concept of thought. The prefix "post" itself is often being argued for it indicates the breaking relationship between thought totally from every pattern of modern thought. Post (after) means something that comes afterward, therefore, postmodern is a termination of a modern thing or the negation of a modern thing (Touraine, 1995). Postmodern can also be considered as the correction of certain aspects in modernity. Giddens considered postmodern as a form of modernity that has been wiser and more self-conscious. While Habermas considered it as only a stage in an unfinished modernity project. According to Bryan S. Turner, the relationships between modernism and postmodernism are whether postmodernism is a belief that is reactionary or

progressive depends on the way we perceive it, whether postmodernism is an anti modernism or something beyond it (Turner, 1990). Postmodernism appears first in the field of art, which is associated as an art in postmodernism pattern. Postmodernism art is marked by several things, such as the lost of border between art and daily life, the breakdown of the border between high culture, low culture and pop culture, the mix of electrical, parody, abstract, irony, courage style and celebrates the culture of "surface" regardless of the "depth", the lost of originality and intelligence and to the assumption that art can only reverse the past.

In the field of social and economy, Daniell Bell states that postmodernism is marked by the development of opposite tendencies, together with the freedom of instinctual power, the development of excitement and intention brings the logic of modernism to a different pole in the end. This happens especially through intensities of community structural intense (Smart, 1990). In the field of culture, Frederich Jameson defines postmodernism as a cultural logic that in general, brings transformation in cultural situation. Jameson relates the stages of modernism with monopoly capitalism, while postmodernism is related to the World War II capitalism. He believes that postmodernism emerged based on the domination of reproduction technology in global multinational capitalism (Turner, 1990). For Jean Baudrillard, postmodernism is marked by the inside explosion or the diffusion of every area border and the differentiation of low-high culture, performance and reality, and every other binary opposition

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that are kept by social theories and traditional philosophy after all this time. This shows the termination of every form of positivistic, huge references and the final forms of the previous theories such as, reality, historical meaning, power and revolution. Thus, when modernity is called as a process that increases the difference of fields of life along with its social fragmentations and its alienates, and post modernity can be interpreted as a process of differentiation and the inside explosion and the diffusion of every fields, Lyotard strengthens it by defining postmodernism as a period when everything is to be legitimized (Lyotard, 1984).

The History of Postmodernism

Although there are several definitions of postmodernism, in general, however, we may conclude that postmodernism tries to question a modern epistemology that is based on clear difference between subject and object. The most important thing that can also be taken as a conclusion is the disbelief of metanarration. It means, there is no global explanation about trusted behavior in the era of purposeful rationality. Jean-Francois Lyotard who was born in Versailles, France in 1924 is the most famous figure of postmodernism. In the beginning, he was a political figure with Marxism point of view, but then, when stating his idea of postmodernism, he let go himself from the Marxism way of thinking. Therefore, postmodernism becomes a basic detachment of totalitarian thought represented by Marxism (although not only Marxism) (Lyotard, 1983). In general, Postmodernism is believed to give new and refreshing things and free us from the hand of modernist theoretical formalism. Like the other theories, postmodernism is not a theory suddenly falls from the sky. The seed of its philosophy has appeared in Nietzsche's philosophy in the late XIX century. In the physics aspect, Thomas Kuhn has started it in his book *"The Structure of Scientific Revolution"*, and in social theory, it appears in C. Wright Mill's imagination sociology that is influenced by Marshall McLuhann's theory of communication, Daniel Bell's theory of postindustrial communication and many other theories.

The theory of Kuhn's paradigm is considered to take big part in the emergence of postmodernism. Kuhn's paradigmatic view becomes the foundation of postmodernism theory that sees no vertical or subordinate relationship between rational and irrational world in reality. Paul Feyerabend's theory of anarchism in *"Against Method"* strengthens the opinion that science cannot defeat other world, such as the magic world. Lyotard also stated in his book *"The Postmodern Condition"* that science has lost its grand narration that is its rationality arguments (Seligman, 1990). Consequently, the absolute truth has also lost its legitimation. According to Lyotard, in a progress society where people's life has been computerized, science no longer gets its credibility based on its truth, but on its function. As a result, science will not be far away from trades and power in the community related. Postmodernism refuses the basic assumptions like ratio that is believed as an autonomic ability to overcome metaphysic and transcendental power, deal with all particular and special experiences, and produce an absolute truth, universal and unscheduled. All of those things are the embedded legitimation tools, according to postmodernism. The famous postmodernism figure is Michael Foucault, Jacques Derrida, and Jean Francois Lyotard.

Postmodernism considers that modernism emphasizes too much on individual rationality and positivism philosophy in defining the reality of the world. Lyotard's postmodern way of thinking is depicted in his book *"The Postmodern Condition and The Different"*. In his book, Lyotard states that the definition of society as a form of unity like in national identity is considered to have lost its credibility. Society as a unity, whether it is interpreted as an organic unity (Durkheim) or as a functional system (Parsons) or that basically is an arranged unity of two opposite powers (Marx) can no longer be trusted in its relation with "uncertainty" of the effort to legitimate "metanarration". Two influential metanarration are the idea that says that science exist for the sake of the science itself (the characteristic of German's idealism) and the idea that says that science emerges for human subject who try to find freedom. On the other hand, post modernity shows that these two targets of knowledge has now started to compete each other and furthermore, there is no basic evident that can be used to overcome these two arguments of targets. Previously, a belief over a narration (such as religion's doctrines) is able to solve a problem. By denying the form of narrative unification as something that is speculative or even emancipatory, legitimation toward knowledge cannot rely only on one grand narration.

As a result, according to Wittgensteins, knowledge is now best understood in the definition of "language game" theory. A language game shows that no concept or theory that can catch language in its totality appropriately, if the effort of doing it is the language game itself. Hence, language game also cannot be trusted for they are also part of the language game itself included in variety of language games. New paradigm in postmodernism emphasizes the unpredictable, uncertainty, catastrophe and of course, paralogy or dicensus. Dicensus denies the existence game rules. Paralogy is impossible to exist if for the sake of new movement to arise in the game, slows down the recognition and refuses the validation (Kellner, 1989). Any statement that claims the existence of certain universality will soon be argued for the universality meant is only a part of the expressed universe. Lyotard tends to use regional approach than universal approach on many problems and fields being discussed. There is no term of single universe, but plural one. Since nothing is universal, whether it is humanity, freedom, development, justice, law, beauty, society or language, that is suitable with a real object, then the effort to make a universal relationship between the real object can only result totalitarianism and as a consequences, the refusal of others arises.

Lyotard way of thinking in *"The Different"* is a precious cure in refusing totalitarianism for when the reduction is being done, everything becomes one thing or one class that means it steps aside all differences. Covering the difference means covering the new ways of thinking and act. In this scientific era, grand narrations are considered impossible, especially about the role and the validity of the knowledge itself. Therefore, there is no such a thing as language game, its anarchism and pluralism get splendid all the time. As a result, it is considered that postmodernism is a dynamic intensification and non-stop effort to look for new experimentation and continues life revolution. If that so, the definition of postmodernism becomes so weird for it turns out

that everything is the characteristics of the modernism itself. Therefore, following this opinion, postmodernism is the intensification of modernism. Not only refusing totalitarian thought of every form of grand narration like the refusal of metaphysic philosophy, historical philosophy and every form of thought that totalizes like Hegelianism, Liberalism, Marxism, but postmodernism also sharpen our sensitivity of the difference and strengthen our tolerance over unmeasured reality. The principle then is no longer the homology of the experts but the parody of the Creator (Sugiharto, 1995). This shows a tolerance over differences. Moreover, since that conversation arises, any criticism toward universal knowledge, metaphysic tradition, foundationalism or modernism in general is identical to the "postmodern" criticism. Hence, the term postmodernism blurs and is regarded as just a term that covers almost every form of criticism over modernism, although those views are very different from one another.

Postmodernism is a way of thinking that at the same time becomes the movement that reacts to human failures in creating a better world. Postmodernism is the abbreviation of post-modernism that is based on the disappointment over promises given by the modern era that bases itself on rational knowledge. For the follower of postmodernism, modern knowledge has been fail and needs other alternatives. Postmodernism is in the philosophy, therefore it shows every form of critical reflection over modern paradigm and over metaphysic in general. The modernists like Foucault and Lyotard only refuse the regularity demanded by modernism era (Subangun, 1994). For them, postmodernism is a form of review over everything that has been done by modernism era. If we try to take conclusion from these opinions, then it shows that postmodernism is the immediate generation of modernism that is born as a criticism over the existence of steadiness and validities due to modernism authority. Postmodernism is born as the perspective that wants to break the status quo that modernism has enjoyed.

The Foundations of Postmodern Way of Thinking

As a critical thought of paradigm or modern thoughts, postmodernism has at least three basic thoughts that can explain the phenomena of the postmodernists thinking plot; deconstructionism, relativism and pluralism (Lyotard, 1984).

Deconstructionism

Deconstruction means uncover and re-question. A deconstructive postmodern thought means that he wants to question the construction built and is regarded as being steady in modern era, in sociology, psychology, history and even in natural science such as physics and biology. Deconstructionism is a belief that re-questions the steady and standard adagiums, that has been built by modernism thinking pattern that later on is searched and arranged into a more relevant theory to understand the reality in society, reality of variety and natural reality that will be developing nowadays. What has been valid in the modern era as theories in those fields mentioned before or even is said as grand theory, is now being question again about its validity (Lash, 1990). In social science for example, grand theory is considered able to explain any social symptoms wherever and whenever.

Seeing this phenomenon, the postmodernists claim that construction because although it is helping enough to understand community's social problems, that construction is considered to be too schematic and too simplify the problems. The domination of grand theories is regarded as closing the possibility for the emergence of other theories that might be able to help using the reality and solve it. Weber's grand theory about the relationship between Protestant ethics with the spirit of capitalism is one of the examples. Grand theory is considered by many scientists to be able to explain the relationship between religious ethic and capitalism spirit in other cultures. This concept is followed by Robert N. Bellah in explaining positive correlation between Buddhism ethic after Meiji restoration with the spirit of economy and modernism in Japan. The postmodernists are then questioning about the validity of that theory. The postmodernists ask why Buddhism Ethic in Japan does not result the same as in Vietnam, Srilangka, Thailand and Cambodia. This means that the grand theory will not always be able to explain every similar social problem. This happens because the real reality is far more complicated than what is being estimated.

The postmodernists want so we see the social phenomena, variety and physical reality as it is, without at first being caged by the basic standard and complete theory and assumption that has been created in the era of modernism (Touraine, 1995). The construction that has been built in this era of enlightenment and modern needs to be changed, repaired, and completed by the postmodernists thinker. This deconstruction brings criticism to the logical conclusion by using modernity methods to weaken its positive values as well as the modernity itself as a series of rational criticism over the ideas of middle age thought. For social scientists, postmodern with its deconstruction method makes us critical to what is considered right after all this time and also to be sensitive to things that are being ignored after all this time.

Relativism

The term postmodernism is variously interpreted that it can be regarded as a plot of thought that criticizes the paradigms and grand narrations built by modernism. The forms of those criticisms vary the plot of postmodernism way of thinking. The postmodernists are willing to break the positivistic belief of the scientists. The positivistic way of thinking has underlined the validity of nature and social laws that are universal built by ratio. This way of thinking emphasizes on objective, mathematic, absolute and universal things idealized by the scientists and the modern era thinkers.

According to the evidences collected by Thomas Kuhn, the non-historical factor is the non-mathematical factor. Positivistic also deserves considered when human see the building of knowledge paradigm completely. This finding strengthens the theme that science is actually a norm-related, always related to cultural social values, cultural values, practical politic consideration and so forth (Amin, 1995). Cultural values will vary according to the historical, geographical, and demographical background. It is clearly unable to formulate things related to social science community mathematically positivist.

The way of thinking implies the wide value structures. Therefore, cultural values become relative. It means, cultural values may not be uniformed. Cultural varieties are so normal because its existence is based on different factors. The relativity of a way of thinking occurs for cultural values are relative. It means, it cannot be mathematically uniformed between one cultures to another. Habits and values in one place is not the same as in the other place. Hence, a social theory taken from the study in a particular area may not be considered the same as others; it needs modification and suitability in its application.

Pluralism

Relativism has been the soul of postmodernism theory to show that reality is not be based on one perspective only. Reality consists of various substances (plural) and every substance may become a perspective. Hence, plural relativism drags us from monoperspective dogmatic or forces us not to certain on one single truth. Like knowledge, history is also marked by periodic cracks (discontinuity), and it is seen in the relationship between traditional, modern and postmodern period (Coward, 1989). Relativism closely relates to the definition of pluralism. That it is difficult to maintain the "single paradigm" in any discussion. All of them vary and needs a complex understanding and should be approached with a multidimensional approach. It can be seen that for a certain simple problem, since everybody master their own field, they will use different approach. Not to mention when this problem relates to ideological importance problem. In just one problem, there will be more than ways to solve it, although the problem is the same. The pluralism way of thinking occurs in various fields, such as seen in cultural, religion, race, economy, social, education, knowledge, nation's intellect and political aspiration plurality. The combination of these substances will show the plurality of understanding and various concepts related to it. For example, a certain social problem may have various approaches to solve.

The Variety of Postmodernism Plot

The term postmodernism actually, gives a theoretical understanding that modern period has passed as well as modernism considers traditional period has long gone. However, it is not as simple as that, because postmodernism seriously takes traditional irrational values back into problem and considers modernism rationality as only a repressive mystification for status quo efficiency. Yet, postmodernism is not saying that rationality is just a chitchat that teaches us no longer think rationally (Ali Fauzi, 1994). Modernism rationality as a rejected repressive mystification can be seen in its metaphysic assumption, that reality is none other than ratio. It means, nothing outside ratio is right. If that so, then rationality is the same as totalitarian ideology in thinking. This modernism way of thinking is the one rejected and considered no longer in demand by postmodernism. The understanding that reality is a kind of "game relation" between substances that still needs relation although each of them has already had its own logic and language then changes modernism metaphysic reality. For paradigm theory, reality is the result of a convention. Since reality is a result of s convention, not a

single thing in this world escapes from the relation of discussion. Even science stands upon these relations and makes it impossible for it to reach an essential or single truth. In other words, a scientific theory is not constructed merely by empirical rational method, but also by language game. It is clearer here that postmodernism is not a theory that is original but born in certain historical background and influenced by relevant theories. As with its claim that no single theory that will be totally pure and original. Postmodernism gives no new prescription, even denies human to find any of them. For the postmodernists, human will never recognize an objective and right reality. What human knows is a version of reality. Like a reading text, reality known by human is a text formed by a writer. In this point, postmodernism jumps into relativism. By regarding reality as a postmodernism text gives a big role on language. They think that we relate to reality through language media. In fact, language is not a neutral tool. There has been many values and power censoring it inside. Language selects the named and unnamed reality. Language has determined the good and bad reality (Roberts, 1984).

Postmodernism consists of several streams. There are two postmodern streams; skeptical postmodern (that underlines contradiction in each theory) and affirmative postmodern (that questions the truth of the grand theory to go to a smaller one). The essence of postmodernism is appreciating the difference and letting all theories open without conclusion. The more important thing is not about truth but its sensitivity toward other people's opinion, and look for its synthesis together. On the other side, postmodernism can also be divided in postmodernism as periodicity and postmodernism as epistemology. Scott Lash from the University of Lancaster sees postmodernism as a periodicity in his article in *Theory, Culture and Society* journal. If the modern world marked by "differentiation", postmodern world marked by "de-differentiation" (Cox, 1984). Differentiation can be seen from the clear border of nations, religions, races, tribes and groups. Different from differentiation, de-differentiation is a period where the borders are blurred. Every form of dichotomy becomes very problematic in this era, for everything has mixed one another.

Postmodernism as epistemology is also marked by variety of arguments. Related to this, according to Lyotard postmodernism is a search for instability. While modern knowledge searches for stability through methodology, with the truth as the final point, then postmodernism is marked by the collapse of truth, rationality and objectivity. The basic principles are not right or wrong, but what Lyotard called paralogy or letting everything open, to be sensitive over differences. Stability and truth becomes problematic in postmodern knowledge, because language and human brain are not free from distortion. Language recognizes difference (good or bad, correct or incorrect), but on the other hand social reality always appears in its mixed form. Besides, social reality appears without framework and language tries to frame it or map it before entering the human brain. This makes the relationship between "word" and "world" problematic. Pauline Marie Rosenau in her book "Post Modernism and The Social Science" divides postmodernism into skeptical postmodernism and affirmative postmodernism. Skeptical postmodernism with the deconstruction method has done a

critical analysis. They are showing contradiction in any theory but do not give alternative theory, so there appears an assumption that they tend to be nothing. On the other hand, affirmative postmodernism thinks that any theory truth is not trustable, especially grand theories. The bigger the theory, covering space and time, the weaker the truth will be for the theory gets more abstract and unrepresentative. According to them, smaller theories are more trustable, partial and representative. However, affirmative postmodernism does not mean creating a new truer theory, because that means it has gone out of its essence that no more single theory is true. What they mean is it is safer for us to use smaller theories for it approaches what it represents, for example analyzing human that cannot be generalized because human consists of various cultures, sexes, races and so forth.

Postmodernism and Religiosity

In his book "The Idea of the Holly", Rudolph Otto states that there is a tendency on western community to reduce the concepts of God into rational concepts (Keith, 1984). The western community can represent the communities' cultures that have done the process of modernization, with the emphasis on rational and technology development side. The phenomena of analyzing these western communities variety is expected to result an explanation about the phenomena of variety in postmodern era. As explained before, postmodernism follows modernism culture. Hence, western communities' cultures that have shown modernism culture as stated by Otto, it is more possible to understand it as the culture coming from postmodern culture. Modernisms arises completeness and standard but postmodern culture is more tolerant to the difference based on its pluralistic and relativity. In accordance with the basic structure of postmodern way of thinking, the religious study nowadays also colored by that characteristics. The era before postmodern is the era to put the foundation theories, adagiums and grand narration that will have to be maintained. The relative critical culture is not yet triggered. But in the era of deconstructive postmodern, the beliefs belong to public have been questioned back about its rational reasons and why it is like that, the postmodernists thinkers have no longer believed the complete and standard construction of knowledge built by postmodernism thinkers.

The modern sociologists view religiosity symptom as a very individual experience. Religiosity experience is not related to and must be broken down from the reality of life in social reality. Relating religiosity life with political problems is considered taboo while others think that this phenomenon has not really been fulfilling. The paradigm of religious sociology way of thinking of the kind has no longer regarded as being able to explain the reality of religious experience that continues to develop. Postmodern era wants to see a social phenomenon, variety of phenomenon and physical reality for what it is, without having to follow the complete standard (Amin, 1995). Postmodern era wants to see the variety of phenomenon as something related to problems faced by human without being attached to the modernism status quo way of thinking. The model of thinking freedom coming out of these grand narrations arise the relativity of truth. According to Mohammed Arkoun, a re-thinking about the product of thinking pattern produced by theologian and middle age

scholastics Islamic laws experts is in requirements for the ritualistic dogmatic belief causes a vacuum thought and causes the theologians apply only things they have known, believed and made absolute. They become less critical, afraid to question the historical construction of Syariah laws and ignore the characteristics of ideological power backing it up (Rachman, 1994). Arkon appreciates rational authority very much and according to him, ratio will give a big influence on the development of human civilization. He refuses the assumption that the product of dogmatic way of thinking is always an actual one. Arkoun states that that kind of understanding is always in use because of the need for political importance, such as in contrasting the politics of Islamic nations to the westerns. Nationalism is emphasized by using religion (Islam) for its political struggle. In that kind of condition, religion changes its function into an ideology. In one side, the sacred and absolute thing about religion is used to fold the profane, material and worldly things. On the other side, however, religion becomes very defensive, apologetic and anti criticism.

According to the stream of postmodern thought, language area, culture, way of thinking and religion are determined by the values and each cultures custom and habit (Amin, 1995). Therefore, according to Amin, contemporary religion discourse study closely relates to the problems of subjectivities. The factor of norm-related is very important. Subjective religious experience is very much influenced by the theologians. Hence, objectivity is quite difficult to apply. That makes religiosity experience can be sure to be influenced by various background such as social, economy and culture. Postmodern thought is very critical toward this influence and makes the thought that tends to be rational demands renewal and review over the hegemony of this theology grand narrations. Indeed, an absolute relativism may cause vagueness on the stages of divine normative or religious teaching. Yet, according to Seyyed Hossein Nasr, absolute is never absolute when the value of absoluteness is still caged by human history (Amin, 1995). Therefore, it should be understood if there are two sides of understanding, the first is from the normative values that come from divine revelation and the second one is from the side of historical relativity attached in the human itself.

In order to understand the variety of beliefs and thought with its own logical reasons, we need to be understanding, open, taking and giving in critical and argumentative dialogs. Religion and culture dialog, as the media of religions existence, should be regarded as a civilized dialog and not as a civilization bump, which still praises the standard thinking hegemonies (Amin, 1995). Thus, it needs an inclusive dialog, a process that takes and gives between cultures so that the changes will happen normally. The existence of dialog between assumptions might avoid the exclusive and selfish behavior. Although every religion and beliefs has a mission needed to deliver, the most important thing in facing the very pluralistic global world is the quality of religion delivery in a wiser way based on the level of human thought. Truth claims, therefore, will be very transparent in the eyes of community's thinkers, makes the inappropriate fanatics avoided, and arises an understanding. Strategy and more dialogic, friendly and inclusive side will be more touching on spiritual aspects than

only standing out the non-founded symbolic sides of variety. Behaving locally according to each religion and think widely and globally based on the size of universal humanity seem to be more suitable for nowadays pluralistic variety of conditions. Harvey Cox proposes an interesting offer for the return of religion and philosophic thinker (Cox, 1984). When in nineteenth century, the theologian having close relationship with idealist philosophy, in the twentieth century, they were having close relationship with the existentialists. Then, in the late modern theology era, they attached theology and philosophy as partner. For the theologians, world's religion and tradition are regarded as the partner of key dialog. Philosophy also arrives at the same decision for the philosophers get to realize that they are living in a close road and become the project of modernity that they already play. Therefore, the process of modernization will bring by itself a form of global thinking that makes it possible for religion and philosophy to go together. Religion will serve the truth to each side inclusively, while philosophy will serve a therapy so that the journey will not come to the exclusivity that only admits its own truth. Philosophy as the method of thinking will give a wider way of thinking so that thinking globally will then give a more prosperous life opportunity for those religions.

Postmodernism and Religion Development

Religion in the context of postmodernism can be seen from the context of historical tendency and epistemology. From the historical context, postmodern describes a crisis faced in the process of modernism since it has forgotten the dimension of God as an important dimension in human life. In order to get out of this crisis, human try to get back to the spiritual essence exist in all authentic religions. It causes the rise of religions in various articulations, such as religion's fundamentalism, fundamentalist revivalist, modernism with all its improvisations, and form esoteric variety like neo-Sufism. Postmodernism acceptance on religion does not happen just like that but, with a critical analysis (even claim it rigorously) over religions doctrines that have become grand narrations (Arifin, 1994). In the west, the tendency to go back to the spiritual world marked by the development of the movement of religion fundamentalism and spiritualism. The emergence of this phenomenon is quite interesting to watch because the pattern is very much different from formal religions and even against each other.

This fundamentalism movement causes psychological and sociological problems. Religion fundamentalism only offers temporary absurd safety promise and spiritual ease. Religion fundamentalism also causes new form of authoritarianism using religion legitimation. Religions, in one side are often categorized as holism, because of the universal belief that there is a similar aspect of truth in religions that is the heart of all religions and meet all religions with each other. On the other side, religion is also plural, because of the specific reality in each religion that perhaps in contrast to each other. The holism (universal) view of religion is also often being contrasted with pluralism, such as classical debate between form and essence. While these are two religions faces that complete the exoteric and esoteric (Purwadi, 1994). The arguments between religions reach its peak with the new contradiction between modernisms that brings universalism

with it and postmodernism that brings pluralism with it. They supposed to complete each other because if religion only appears on one side, that is modernism with its technical rationality and universalism and postmodernism with its relativism, pluralism and deconstruction, religion will then lose its true meaning, shallow and stands only as empty symbol. For a postmodernist, religion is nothing more than psychological, anthropological, sociological and historical reality. Postmodernism or post structuralism actually is positivism in a new outfit, because it considers the discussion about "the last significance" and "absolute basic" from any reality as something useless (Rachman, 1994). God and all religion metaphysic reality are considered illusion. It makes the extreme postmodernism and post structuralism becomes a secular form, continuing the atheistic traditions from psychoanalysis, Marxism, and existentialism in the modern era. In postmodernism understanding, religion is no longer relevant, it is considered dead and needs to be buried. Postmodernism does not give any space for religion because it does not believe the existence of "spirit" beyond a matter (Hidayat, 1994). Postmodernism only views separated events not having any relation one another.

Since postmodernism emphasizes concreteness, it criticizes mythologies. Religion and its theology have been considered a meta narration. Religion is trapped in an orthodox and sets aside its practice. Religion only becomes a beautiful theoretical construction but infertile. It then becomes a collection of teaching unattached to the reality. Religion only lives around the altar or worshipping places. On the other side, universal claim forces religion to be centralistic. Unconsciously, the teaching developed and understood as a pure teaching, is free from its relative space and time. Many worshippers also feel the overlap between religion and its theology (Bahruddin, 1994). Therefore, many movements emerge to break it down although it is not refusing faith radically, such as theology release, feminism theology and many others. The postmodernists' criticisms slap religion right on its spot. According to postmodernism, in order that religion can live longer, a breakthrough over old religion is needed; the religion needs to be earthier so that it becomes familiar with the reality of its followers. The absolute vertical dimension needs the horizontal dimension to make it complete so that it can provide answers to human problems.

What needs to be paid attention for is the context space and then focused on the theological context. The effort to make religion earthier becomes an emancipative effort that is the effort appreciating any form of life with its complexities (Binawan, 1994). The boredom over rational and technology domination in human life causes a new consciousness on human to see back into the transcendental or spiritual world that has been set aside for quite a long time. Human try back to fill the emptiness of the heart and at the same time re-define the meaning and the purpose of their life in the religion's perspective. Human tend to return to religion articulated in many forms. The religious life blends together with the individuals and reflects on their daily behavior. Religion's tolerance is no longer a problem, because each individual understands each other and has ethical consciousness to appreciate each other. The institutions that used to produce official religious rules slowly diminish and are substituted by

individuals with their own authorities. Religion in postmodernism is not an abstract system that is unrelated to ideological importance, philosophy reflection and normative norms. However, religion is a complex system that contains the collection of imaginations in its era (Ali Fauzi, 1994). Religion in postmodernism perspective is one of the aspects that fulfills human spiritual of ethic, and this is a universal spirit goes for every human, whatever the religion, traditional background or culture is. There is no claim of truth in religion. Differences between religions usually occur because of different languages of each language. Hence, no religion has the privilege to say that their religion is the correct one. Simply we may conclude that postmodernism is a "grand" belief that covers many kinds of perspectives that criticize and demand re-analysis of the steadiness of theories and modern perspectives.

There are at least three characteristics of postmodern; deconstructive (deconstructionism), relative (relativism), and plural (pluralism). postmodern thoughts are usually aimed at holding a breakthrough on the steady perspectives in the modern era. These perspectives are closely related to norms backed by many factors and makes the judgment becomes relative and unable to be distributed fairly, in many perspectives because its fields and way of thinking are also varied. Modern community with their technology and rational arrogance no longer feel that they need God in his life. With the autonomy that they possess, they feel like they are able to finish problems in his life. Unconsciously postmodernism supports relativism and pluralism. Consequently, there is no absolute truth; all of them can be true, including the truth in religion. There is one paradox found in the modern era however. On one side, postmodernism supports the existence of intellectual discourse between many fields democratically, dialogically, emphatically, and tolerantly. On the other side however, there is a radical and fundamental phenomenon in the field of religion.

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