Theology of disaster: a study on west bandung people’s responses to the potency of earthquake

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Abstract. This article deals with the beliefs living among societies in Indonesia. These beliefs are studied through the responses of West Bandung people to the potency of earthquake. Geographically, West Bandung area is located in the ring of fire where natural calamities potentially could occur. These responses shed light varied beliefs and theological perspectives of people. This study belongs to qualitative research. However, the researchers also use questionnaires. Through data collection and analysis, the researchers conclude that West Bandung people are religious (they see the earthquake by religious meaning and explanation where they regard natural disaster as God’s decree and will, God’s testing, therefore they have to be patient and repent to God). However, they also look it as natural phenomenon which can be observed by scientific approach. In term of Islamic theology, The people are close to tradisional theology, especially Asy’ariyah school of Islamic theology. However, this research shows the religious pattern of contemporary Indonesia where the grouping to certain theological school seems irrelevant. Due to the diversity of religious authorities and sources of knowledge, the pattern of religiosit of society is now no longer leading to a particular school of thought, but rather shows a hybrid pattern (hodgepodge).

1. Introduction
Indonesia is a country that has experienced many disasters, especially natural disasters. It was noted that several natural disasters in the form of earthquakes, tsunamis and volcanic eruptions occurred in Indonesia. At the place where this research was conducted, namely in West Bandung Regency, on July 26, 2019 Tangkuban Parahu volcano erupted. This is because Indonesia is geologically on a line called ring of fire or the circum-Pacific seismic belt. The area traversed by this line has the potential for earthquakes and volcanic eruptions to occur. Indonesia has even been recorded as having experienced a number of earthquakes which are considered the most dangerous events in the world, such as the earthquake and tsunami in Krakatoa in 1883 and in Aceh in 2004.

This research focuses on the perceptions and responses of Indonesian citizens towards the potential of natural disasters, especially from the theological perspective. However, it is in fact that people’s perceptions and responses to calamities that happen to them (read: natural disasters) cannot be separated from their theological or religious beliefs[1]. The occurrence of natural disasters that afflict humans has attracted the interest of scholars from various fields to study it. Natural scientists such as geologists and seismologists understand natural disasters as geophysical phenomena; social scientists, such as sociologists and anthropologists see it as something that can change the structure and social relations of society; so do religious experts who see it as a destiny, a trial, or a punishment from God. In the midst of society, we also find a lot of debate regarding the causes and meanings of natural disasters. Some see and interpret it scientifically, religiously, and mythically[2]. For Indonesian context, research on this subject was carried out by Mohammad Hasan Basri (2007) on the people of Wonokromo, Yogyakarta.
who were struck by the earthquake in 2016[3] and by [4] who studied the perspectives of Acehnese people against earthquakes and tsunamis in 2004[4]. These two studies show the interest of scholars to study natural disasters seen from a theological perspective.

In this paper, researchers discuss almost the same thing. But apart from the different research site, this study also differs from the two studies above because in this present paper the researchers analyze it from Islamic theological perspective. Researchers chose this location because geologically, West Bandung regency, especially North Bandung area, such as Lembang, Parongpong, and Cisarua, consisted of many hollows that were hilly and very prone to natural disasters[5].

This research portrays West Bandung residents’ perceptions of natural disasters. Whether they tend to understand it in the eyes of religion or in rational perspective of modern science. Specifically, this study portrays the theological features which they hold, whether they adhere to rational theology or traditional theology. Research related to this theological discipline is very important, because theology, as stated by Nurcholish Madjid, is a strategic field in an effort to renew understanding and coaching of Muslims. It is said to be strategic, because it is an important aspect that can function as a critical-empirical reflection of humans in seeing the social reality which they face[6].

2. Theoretical Review

2.1. The Meaning of Natural Disasters

In Oxford Advanced Learners Dictionary, the word “disaster” means “an unexpected event such as a very bad accidents, a flood or a fire that kills a lot of people or causes a lot of damage.” [7]. While in Kamus Besar Bahasa Indonesia, the word “disaster” (bencana) is interpreted as “something that causes (raises) trouble, loss, or suffering. Disasters also mean accidents and dangers.” (sesuatu yang menyebabkan (menimbulkan) kesusahan, kerugian, atau penderitaan. Bencana juga berarti kecelakaan dan bahaya). “Natural disaster” means the natural events, such as earthquakes, high winds, and floods[8].

Indonesia is a country that has been hit by many disasters. To mention some, natural disasters have occurred in Aceh on December 24, 2004, followed by a devastating tsunami; in Nias, North Sumatra on March 28, 2005; in Yogyakarta and Central Java on May 27, 2006; in Pangandaran, West Java on July 17, 2006; and in West Sumatra on September 30, 2009. In addition, in October 2010, three major disasters occurred, namely on October 4, 2010 a flash flood occurred in Wasior, on October 25, 2010 an earthquake followed by tsunami occurred in Mentawai, and on October 26, 2010 an eruption occurred in Mount Merapi[9].

2.2. Disaster-related Study

Many scholars have studied the phenomena of disasters in the context of religious studies. The essence of the study in general is that people’s perceptions of disasters cannot be separated from their religious understanding. Anthony Oliver-Smith, for example, states that human perception of a disaster cannot be separated from religion, as a cultural identity [10]. In line with Oliver-Smith, Susanna M. Hoffman argues that when a society experiences a disaster, there are a lot of visible symbols of belief[11].

Although there has been a scientific explanation of the causes of disasters (read: earthquakes, floods, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis), modern people apparently cannot leave explanations that comes from “belief,” both from religion and from myths. Bangladeshi people, for example, as Mohammad Q. Zaman said, perceive floods and typhoons that hit them from the perspective of religion, where they believe that there is a role of God in that calamities[12]. Similarly, when the earthquake in Alor occurred, many Christian Alor leaders explained that a disaster occurred because God sent it as retaliation for the sin that the Alor people did [13]. Another example for this is the belief of the traditional community of Nias, Sumatra, that disasters result from the sin of murder. They believe that this earth is on the shoulders of a dragon. When bloodshed due to murder occurred, the dragon was angry and moved. This is what then resulted in an earthquake. And when an earthquake occurs, the people of Nias simultaneously cry and say “Biha Tuha! Biha Tuha!” (Nias language, which means enough Grandma!). The words recited in
order the dragon to calm down\cite{14}. This religious perception and response is understandable because, as John Bowker said, religion is an important factor that can bring peace to someone when facing disaster\cite{15}.

2.3. Disasters in Islamic Perspective

For Muslims, the stories of natural disasters in human life can be found in the Qur’an. Natural disasters have been experienced by people in the past. For example the story of the people of Noah who was drowned by Allah with a very great flood. In the Qur’an, there are several words related to disasters, such as the word mushibah, bala’, slander, doom, fasad, iqab, tadmir, halak, su’, ba’sa, darra’, tahlukah, and sharr/ashrar \cite{16}. In general, Muslims believe that disaster is a form of punishment for those who disobey or a form of trials or tests for believers\cite{17}. Natural disasters in the form of punishment, for example are a big storm inflicted on the prophet Lut; lightning and earthquakes were inflicted on the people of the Prophet Shuaib and the Prophet Salih; drowned into the earth as experienced by the Qarun and sunk into the ocean as experienced by Pharaoh. The punishments were inflicted on them because they had committed sin, namely did not believe/ infidels, polytheists, and deceived the prophets\cite{18}.

The disaster caused by the earthquake was mentioned in the Qur’an several times. All of that can be interpreted as a sign of God’s majesty, the coming of the judgement day, and as a punishment for infidels in the past\cite{19}. According to Tolchah, disasters theologically can be interpreted in three categories, namely as mushibah (trials), intithan (warnings / exams), and adzab (torment) from Allah as the result of mankind in their interaction with Allah (hablun min Allah), with humans (hablun min al-nas), and with nature (hablun min al-alam). At least, this is the theological view of the Ash’ariyah theology which is a mainstream ideology for followers of Ahlussunnah Wal Jama’ah\cite{20}.

In Islamic societies, disasters are often understood as God’s language to rebuke or even scold humans. This viewpoint according to Munawir, consequently puts the victim as the injured party twice. First, as a victim, he has lost both material and immaterial. Second, he is also a suspected as a person who is punished by God. In short, they were “trapped” in two theological traps: scapegoating the victims of the disaster and blaming God who was considered an unforgiving and merciless to beat His servants\cite{21}.

According to Munawir, disasters can be divided into two types: first, natural disasters resulted from human intervention and second, naturally natural disasters. Natural disasters due to human intervention are disasters caused by human intervention, both directly and indirectly, such as floods, smog, and environmental pollution. Related to this disaster, humans can avoid it or at least minimize it. Whereas, naturally natural disasters are disasters caused by natural events, such as earthquakes, tsunamis, and volcanic eruptions. Pertaining to this disaster, humans have no ability to stop it \cite{22}. For the first type of disaster, it can be called a torture or adzab, while for the second type of disaster, it is more suitable to be called a trial or test of people’s faith and patience. For those who are patient, he will be elevated and will get a noble position alongside Allah.

2.4. Theology of Disaster in Islam

The term “theology” comes from Greek which means the story of the gods\cite{23}. The term “theology” can also be understood according to its root, where the term “theology” consists of the word “theos” which means God and “logos” which means cience, study, or discourse. Thus, the term “theology” means the knowledge of God or divinity\cite{24}.

Initially, the term “theology” emerged among Christians as their conscious effort to obtain God’s verbal revelation\cite{25}. Then, this term developed into a separate scientific discipline. Even though it is a scientific discipline, theology (in Christianity) has various meanings, but basically it can be understood as a rational description of the Christian account of faith\cite{26}.

Among Muslims, the term theology is interpreted as religious teachings relating to the existence of God. In relation to environmental preservation, for example, practically speaking, theology can be interpreted as a normative (religious) guideline for humans to behave and address to nature and their environment\cite{27}. Although the term “theology” originates from the Christian tradition\cite{28}, in Islamic
thought discourse, it is not exactly interpreted as intended in scholastic Christian studies. In Islam, “theology” is often combined with “Ilm Kalâm.” The use of this term is at least based on the assumption that both of them discuss about God and things related to Him[29].

Regarding to disasters that afflict humans, various kinds of interpretations arise as forms of human perception and response to them. There are those who interpret that disaster is a warning from God in order people to be aware and remember about the greatness and power of God. Some interpret the disaster as God’s will or even torture for the sinners. There are also those who interpret from the eyes of mythology, that disasters occur as a result of the “magic power” who is angry. Apart from these perceptions, there are also those who interpret it from a more rational perspective, that disaster is not a calamity, but an environmental damage that can be scientifically proven. It is this theological interpretation of disasters which then become a term called “theology of disaster”[30].

In the history of Islamic thought, in general, there are two theological schools of thought, namely rational theology and traditional theology. Rational theology is theological thinking which gives a strong power to the reason, limited power and will of God, human freedom in willing and doing, not bound to the literal meaning of the text (revelation), taking the metaphorical meaning in giving interpretations of the verses of the Qur’an, and is dynamic in attitude and thinking. This stances are found in the Mu’tazilah and Maturidiyah Samarkand schools of thought[31]. Regarding to human actions, although Mu’tazilah refused to be called Qadariyah, this theological thought was closer to the Qadariyah school, where they believed that human actions were manifested by human power and not by God[32].

On the contrary, traditional theology is theological thinking that places the ability of reason in low position, the absolute power and will of God, human limit in will and action, bound to the literal meaning of the text (revelation), and static in attitude and thinking. This understanding is found in the Asy’ariyah and Maturidiyah Bukhara schools[33]. Regarding to human actions and the power of God, this theological understanding is closer to the Jabariyah sect which is fatalist. According to this understanding, all human actions are created by Allah. Therefore, with regard to his actions, humans are always in a state of forcedness, lacking the power, ability, and will to choose and do their deeds[34]. Although, it is not exactly the same between Asy’ariyah and Jabariyah. In contrast to Jabariyah, for Ash’ariyah, human beings have strength and ability, even though they are ikhtiyari, which is only limited to human abilities. This recognition of the existence of human abilities, in Ash’ariyyah theology is seen in the theory of kasb (effort)[35].

More about God’s justice, Ash’ariyyah understood his justice from the point of view of God’s absolute power and will. They interpret God’s justice as “putting something in its place.” What is meant by “placing something in its place” is that someone has absolute power over whatever he has and uses it according to his will and knowledge[36]. Allah’s justice according to Ash’ariyah is God’s freedom to do anything to His creatures. Maturidiyah Bukhara also has the same attitude as the Asy’ariyah people. They also understand God’s justice in the context of God’s absolute power and will.

While, Mu’tazilah understands God’s justice (‘adl) from the point of human interest[37]. For them, justice is closely related to rights. Therefore, they interpret justice as “giving someone their rights”[38]. If it is said that Allah is the Most Just God, it means that all His actions are good and He cannot do bad things or ignore His obligations to humans[39]. Maturidiyah Samarkand has the same attitude as the Mu’tazilah[40]. They interpret the meaning of God’s justice as the opposite of God’s wrongdoing towards humans. God will not oppress His servants nor will He deny His promises to humans[41]. Maturidiyah Samarkand also gives a limit to God’s absolute power and will, they argue that God’s actions are only about good things. Thus, God has an obligation to do good for humans[42].

Unlike the Mu’tazilah, Ash’ariyah argues that God’s deeds are not limited to the good, but also include the bad ones. Therefore, He can do anything arbitrarily to humans without having to remember their interests and benefits[43]. In fact, according to them, it is not fair if God’s actions are limited to those good and not included in the bad. Because, what is called fair (‘adl), according to them, is if the owner can use or have absolute will on whatever he has in accordance with his will and knowledge[44].

In the context of this research, the theological debates related to disasters also circulate around problems such as the absolute will and justice of God (in the context of giving misery to humans), about
the power of reason and human ability (to understand disasters rationally), and their attitude in facing (or anticipating) disasters. By referring to the above division (rational and traditional theology), the question is whether the people (residents of West Bandung regency) are more inclined to rational theology or more to traditional theology.

3. Research Methods
This research belongs to qualitative research\textsuperscript{[45]}. The data were obtained through structured question (questionnaire), in-depth interviews, participant observation, and oral accounts. The fieldwork was carried out in three sub-districts in West Bandung District, i.e. Lembang, Parongpong, and Cisarua. The respondents of this research are 30 villagers in those three Sub-Districts (10 villagers from each Sub-District). They are from various backgrounds, such as leaders, teachers, peasants, and students.

Respondents for questionnaire data collection were chosen through mix-method, e.i. mixing between purposive multi-stage stratified sampling and random sampling method. First, the three sub-districts were chosen due to its prone of disaster. Second, from each sub-district, one desa (village) is chosen purposively due to the prone of disaster. Third, from each village chosen, 5 Rukun Tetangga (RT)/the neighborhood unit, were chosen randomly. Forth, 2 respondents were chosen from each Rukun Tetangga (RT) (1 female and 1 male). While, respondents for in-depth interviews were chosen 6 villagers purposively (2 villagers from each village) due to their significant and unique information for this research.

4. Result and Discussion

4.1. West Bandung Regency
Geographically, West Bandung Regency which covers an area of 1,305.77 KM\(^2\) is located between 60º 41 ′ to 70º 19 ′ South latitude and 107º 22 ′ to 108º 05 ′ East Longitude. The average height of the land is 110 M and a maximum of 2.2429 M above sea level. The slope of the region varies between 0 - 8%, 8-15% to above 45%. West Bandung Regency, especially the North Bandung area such as Lembang, Parongpong, and Cisarua sub-districts, viewed from its geographical physical condition is considered to be less profitable, because it consists of many hollows that are hilly and very prone to natural disasters\textsuperscript{[46]}. In this area there is a volcanic mountain Tangkuban Parahu which is declared still active and also crossed by a fault line called “Lembang Fault,” which has the potential to trigger an earthquake with a maximum magnitude of 6.8 SR\textsuperscript{[47]}.

Demographically, residents of West Bandung Regency numbered 1,408,550 people, with the proportion based on sex consisting of 705,679 men and 702,881 women. In terms of diversity, the majority of West Bandung Regency residents embrace Islam, which is 1,521,500 people. The rest, 6,250 people converted to Christianity, 12,237 people converted to Catholicism, and 510 people embraced Confucianism\textsuperscript{[48]}. According to data from the Ministry of Religious Affairs of West Java, in this district there were 114 religious organizations and 4 splinter streams\textsuperscript{[49]}. The number of houses of worship in West Bandung district is quite a lot. According to the Ministry of Religious Affairs database, there were 754 mosques, 673 mosques, 36 Christian churches, 1 Catholic Church, and 2 Pura\textsuperscript{[50]}.

4.2. Residents’ Theological Perceptions of Natural Disasters
This study wants to see the theological perceptions of West Bandung residents in seeing and responding to the potency for disasters. More specifically, this study wanted to find out whether the theology of the citizens was rational, such as the Mu’tazilah theological school, Maturidiyyah Samarkand, and Qadariyah or traditional such as the theology of the Asy’ariyyah, Maturidiyyah Bukhara, and Jabariyah patterns.

In this study the researchers asked 23 structured questions to respondents who became the study sample. Questions number 1 to 5 measure the religiosity and theological understanding of citizens. Questions 6 to 10 measure the rationality and scientific understanding of citizens. Questions number 11 to 14 measure the existence of belief in myths (supernatural beings who control a place). While questions
number 15 to 23 more specifically measure citizens’ understanding of God’s power and justice vis-a-vis human freedom of will. The following are structured questions and respondents’ answers to them.

**Table 1. Research Questions and Respondents’ Answers**

| NO | QUESTIONS                                                                                       | AGREE | DISAGREE |
|----|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|----------|
| 1  | Earthquake and volcanic disasters are destinies (ordinances) of Allah SWT. and humans cannot reject it | 30    | 0        |
| 2  | Earthquake and volcanic disaster is the tool of Allah SWT to rebuke His servants (human) to return (repent) to Him | 30    | 0        |
| 3  | Earthquake and volcanic disaster is a test from Allah SWT to increase the degree of devotion of His servants (human) | 30    | 0        |
| 4  | Earthquake and volcanic disaster is the punishment or torment of Allah SWT for His servants (man) who has sinned | 26    | 13       |
| 5  | Victims of earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are the cause of the disaster                    | 17    | 13       |
| 6  | Earthquake and volcanic disaster is an ordinary natural event, therefore it must be understood scientifically and rationally | 22    | 8        |
| 7  | Earthquake and volcanic disasters can be observed and anticipated scientifically               | 24    | 6        |
| 8  | Earthquake and volcanic disaster has nothing to do with sin and immorality committed by humans | 12    | 18       |
| 9  | Earthquake and volcano eruptions are not doom or torture from Allah SWT                        | 13    | 17       |
| 10 | Victims of earthquakes and volcano eruptions are not the cause of the disaster                 | 13    | 17       |
| 11 | “supernatural beings inhabiting (nu ngageugeuh)” the place is angry                            | 4     | 26       |
| 12 | Earthquake and volcanic disasters occur because humans do not follow the will of “supernatural beings inhabiting (nu ngageugeuh)” that place | 4     | 26       |
| 13 | Earthquake and volcanic eruptions will not occur if humans respect “supernatural beings inhabiting (nu ngageugeuh)” that place | 7     | 23       |
| 14 | God is free and powerful over my actions (life), including to inflict catastrophic earthquakes and volcanic eruptions | 29    | 1        |
| 15 | I am not free and not powerful over my actions (life). God has determined my life since ancient times | 29    | 1        |
| 16 | I surrender and will be patient if the earthquake occurs and volcano erupts                    | 27    | 3        |
| 17 | I will try to anticipate and avoid disasters (earthquakes or volcanic eruptions), before it happens (eg. making earthquake-proof buildings or moving to safer places) | 28    | 2        |
| 18 | Humans are given the freedom to think and seek wisdom through reason, by making the best use of reason | 30    | 0        |
| 19 | God’s provisions in ancient times (when still in the womb) can be changed by humans when living in the world | 14    | 16       |
| 20 | Humans are given freedom by God to                                                              | 13    | 17       |
determine his own destiny or in the sense that one’s destiny can be changed and determined by the person himself

|   |   |   |   |
|---|---|---|---|
| 22 | God does not intervene in actions done by humans. That is, human actions are based on the will and human power itself | 18 | 85 |
| 23 | Everyone must continue to make changes to himself to achieve better progress and not just surrender | 30 | 100 |

Viewed from the tabulation of the questions and answers above, it appears that the residents of West Bandung regency are very religious, in the sense that they place religion in a very important position by involving it in understanding every aspect of life, including seeing the phenomena of natural disasters. Moreover, all of them (100%) believe that disasters are the destiny (ordinances) of Allah, to rebuke, test their level of faith, and as a way of God (Allah) to increase the degree of servants (humans). The majority of them (87%) also believe that disasters are adzab or torment from God. 57% also believe that disaster victims are the cause of the disaster. Although it seems that among them (as many as 13%) there are those who disagree if the disaster is said to be adzab (torture).

From this study it was also found that a person’s religiously does not prevent him/her from thinking critically and rationally. This can be seen from the respondent’s answer where most (73%) residents perceive that earthquakes and volcanic eruptions are ordinary natural events, because they must be understood scientifically and rationally. 80% also said that natural disasters can be observed and anticipated scientifically. Although most of them disagree if it is said that the earthquake and volcanic disaster has nothing to do with sin and immorality committed by humans. As many as 60% of respondents consider there is a connection between sin and evil done by humans with the occurrence of disasters. As many as 57% even believe that the disaster is adzab or torture from God (Allah SWT).

Related to identifying whether there are mythical beliefs among citizens who are the object of research, respondents’ answers indicate that the majority (as many as 77-87%) citizens do not believe in the existence and influence of supernatural beings (nu ngageugeuh). Thus, it turns out that there are (as many as 13-25%) respondents who believe in the existence and influence of supernatural beings (nu ngageugeuh) for them. For those who believe in myths, they believe that humans must follow the will (14%), respect (23%), and give offerings/sesajen (13%) to the supernatural beings (nu ngageugeuh).

While related to the power of reason, God’s justice, and the role of humans in determining their actions, this study shows that almost all (or 97%) citizens believe that God’s will and power is greater than human strength and freedom, even though human roles or efforts remain (47 %). Citizens tend to surrender or accept God’s destiny or will and will be patient (90%). However, generally (93%) they believe in the need to keep trying to anticipate and avoid disasters, before it happens.

The results of in-depth interviews also showed relatively similar results. A resident in Cihideung Village, Parongpong, DL said that disasters are destiny (God’s decree). They do not believe in beliefs of myth. In the area where he lives there is no such tradition. This can be understood because in that area, Islamic religious studies are conducted regularly. Furthermore, DL also argues that disasters can be the result of sin (as adzab) committed by humans. However, disasters can also be trials, tests, to increase degrees of man’s belief. If a disaster occurs, DL says he will surrender. However, DL said that humans still have to try. Human’s effort determines one’s destiny. This opinion was also agreed by ES, a resident in Cihideung Village, Parongpong, whose house had collapsed due to the earthquake.

Likewise, the information is similar to the researchers’ data got from interviews with two respondents in Suntenjaya Village, Lembang, an area that was also affected by the earthquake. Because religious activities (Islam) in the area are good, then there are no strange beliefs (myths). For both of them, all forms of disasters that befall them, all are returned to God. A citizen with the initials WT for example, believes that disasters are destiny. Disasters can be adzab, tests, or trials. Depends on the person who experiences it. Therefore, the cause of a disaster might be a person who commits a sin. However, for them, earthquakes are believed to be predictable so earthquakes can be anticipated.

Likewise with HN, a resident of Tugumukti Village, Cisarua Sub-District. HN was a victim of the 2008 earthquake in which her house collapsed. Just like DL’s answer, for HN disaster is God’s decree. It cannot be rejected, but it can be predicted. However, she will remain in her current place, she will not
move. If a disaster occurs, she will surrender. This attitude does not mean that she does not believe in human ability to determine her actions but it is likely due to economic limitations.

In addition to HN, disasters can be called examinations, it can also be adzab. A person’s sin can be the cause of a disaster. Although, religious activities (Islam) are routinely held in his area, HN believes in the existence of the myth of supernatural powers. She said that in the Tugumukti area there is a river (wahangan) called “legok aip.” There are trees and ancestral tombs. This place is considered sacred. Therefore, HN said, there are people who usually bring offerings (sesajen). She herself did not participate because the people who came were actually from outside the area or not from the local people. But in general, residents in the area do not believe in myths, especially related to the occurrence of disasters. Disaster is God’s will. Another resident of Tugumukti with the initials IS also explained the same thing as HN.

Those are some points related to the theological views of West Bandung residents on natural disasters. Moreover, if we look at some measurement instruments that researchers make and the division between rational theology and traditional theology above, it can be said that West Bandung citizens tend to be traditional[5]. This is marked by a belief in God’s absolute power and will. However, they also have a rational thinking style, especially when they see the phenomena of natural disasters such as earthquakes. According to them, earthquakes are ordinary natural phenomena and can be understood rationally and scientifically. Humans also according to them can anticipate it (humans are free to determine their actions).

5. Conclusion
Based on the data analysis above, the researchers conclude that the residents of West Bandung regency were very religious, in the sense of making religion a basis for understanding and addressing the phenomena of natural disasters, although they also did not ignore rational-scientific explanations. In the context of theological thought, it can be said that the citizens of West Bandung on the one hand are more inclined to traditional theology, especially the Ash’ariyah, where they believe that natural disasters are provisions from God that cannot be rejected, God has power over them, and they surrender to accept it; but on the other hand, they also show their rational attitude and scientific understanding of the issue of natural disasters, and their belief in the role of human effort in determining their destiny; the understanding which is found in the rational theology of Mu’tazilah, Maturidiyah Samarkhand, and Qadariyah. This finding shows the religious phenomenon of society in contemporary time. The grouping to certain theological school (in Islam) seems irrelevant. With the diversity of religious authorities and sources of knowledge, the pattern of religiosity (theology) of society is now no longer leading to a particular school of thought, but rather shows a hybrid pattern (hodgepodge).

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[51] This is in line with A Kosasih and M I Firmansyah’s finding, that highland people tend to preserve the authenticity of belief. See: A Kosasih and M I Firmansyah 2018 *IOP Conf. Ser.: Earth Environ. Sci.* 145 012130, “UPI Students’ Perceptions of Jihad Based on Their Regions of Origin,” p. 2. doi:10.1088/1755-1315/145/1/012130.