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RETHINKING INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE BY LEONARD SWIDLER

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Abstract: Conflict is a social phenomenon that is deeply intertwined with people's lives and arises from various factors, including religious and ideological diversity. Inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogue is widely recognized as an effective approach to conflict resolution, aiming to achieve lasting peace. This paper seeks to critically reassess the inter-religious dialogue framework developed by Leonard Swidler. It presents two key findings that call for a reconsideration of Swidler's concepts. First, the concept of religion (4C) is highly exclusive, as it is based on world religious standards and does not acknowledge indigenous religions. Second, the concept of inter-religious dialogue (4H)—head, heart, hands, and holy—is overly formal and requires reevaluation to avoid confusion and unnecessary complexity. This paper builds on Swidler's foundational ideas, advocating for a more inclusive, contextual, and accessible approach to inter-religious dialogue—one that places humanity at its core.

Key words: Inter-religious, Inter-ideological, Dialogue, Rethinking, Swidler.

1. Introduction

Inter-religious dialogue is a religious initiative aimed at achieving lasting peace among religious communities. This practice has emerged in response to the continuous escalation of conflicts worldwide, many of which stem from misguided religious interpretations and practices within modern civilization, where the majority of people adhere to a faith. Coser distinguishes between realistic and non-realistic conflicts. Realistic conflicts are driven by specific objectives and serve as tools to achieve certain goals; once these goals are met, the root causes of the conflict may be resolved. In contrast, non-realistic conflicts do not center on a tangible issue but are fueled by hostility itself, making enmity the primary focus of the conflict (Coser 1956).

Meanwhile, as Campbell explained, Marx understands human society as a process of development that will stop conflict with conflict (Campbell and Hardiman 1994). Marx tends to pay attention to the issue of capitalist economics and views conflict as a fact in the struggle between classes. On the other hand, conflict can bind groups closer together. Conflict can save groups from exploding divisions and unite groups with other groups that are hostile to each other (Hussein and Al-Mamary 2019). Positive conflict can reduce societal tensions by establishing an integration process towards the integrity and balance of life for all members of society (Haynes et al. 2023).

Conflict narratives that develop in religious societies become the primary means of maintaining conflict, even in recovery or post-conflict societies (Riyanto 2023; Pattiserlihun et al. 2024). Conflict observers attempt to reduce conflict through general and bureaucratic glasses. Some writings overly romanticize significant ways and only reach stakeholders as a way to reduce conflict. One way to reduce conflict is through inter-religious dialogue, which is considered a missiological discourse in social identity in religious societies (Gaspersz 2023). Farid (2016) explains that inter-religious dialogue is considered one way to increase tolerance in the community that does it. Implementing inter-religious or inter-ideological dialogue is considered a transformation of conflict that occurs in conflict-prone areas (Rüland et al. 2019). These previous writings represent that interfaith dialogue is one of the means to carry out conflict resolution. In line with this, Leonard Swidler proposes an inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogue that goes beyond religious discussions to include the ideologies of conflicting communities.

Leonard Swidler is a Christian theologian who offers inter-religious dialogue with innovations considered a way to achieve harmonious relations among diverse societies. In developing the concept of inter-religious dialogue, Swidler realized that not only religion is the object of

dialogue, but ideology is as well. Swidler explained that different ideologies are triggers of conflicts that need to be considered. However, Swidler still stated that religion is the main trigger of conflict in the world. Swidler's concept of religion is primarily centered on formal religions that are widely recognized by the global community. However, Swidler also emphasized that dialogue could also be carried out with people who are not religious. Swidler focuses on dialogue, which is the reason for the establishment of the Inter-religious Dialogue Institute at Temple University (Swidler 2020). Swidler's ideas are undeniably insightful. However, in the practice of religion within dynamic societies, the context of religion continuously evolves across different places and times. Swidler's proposed dialogue is structured into four interconnected forms that should be undertaken together: head, heart, hands, and holy dialogue (Swidler 2013). Therefore, this article seeks to critically reassess Swidler's work and offer considerations for inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogue in today's world.

2. Religion Definitions – 4C by Leonard Swidler

Religion is considered a human expression relating to the environment and creating a more orderly nuance in an ethical framework. The spread of religion is carried out in unique ways, including through war, colonization and oppression that was normalized in the 19th century. Swidler explains that universalist claims regarding axial and post-axial religions sometimes cause peaceful conflicts but are also full of hostility among religious diversity. Unfortunately, these religions are much more dominant in the dynamics of world problems (Swidler, 2010). Even when the conflict does not occur in the name of religion, religious intervention must resolve it. Before explaining why religion is the most universal object as a material for conflict and violence, the definition of religion used as a guideline needs to be formulated to show the extent of the role of religion in society: "Religion is an Explanation of the ultimate meaning of life, and how to live accordingly, based on some notion and experience of the transcendent. Each religion has four "C's": Creed (the "explanation of life"); Code (of behavior, ethics); Cult (actions relating the believer to the transcendent); Community structure (monarchical, republican, individualistic, etc.)" (Swidler 2014, 7).

Swidler formulated a widely recognized definition of religion, outlining four essential criteria for a religious community, known as the 4C framework: creed, code, cult, and community structure.

First, creed is a fundamental requirement for a group to be recognized as a religion. Swidler describes creed as the cognitive foundation of a religious community. While religious communities around the world are recognized within their respective contexts, the formalized

criteria for recognition are often shaped by the structures of world religions, particularly reflecting Christian traditions.

Armstrong highlights that the Latin word *credo* originates from *cordero*, meaning “to give your heart.” She explains that by committing one’s heart to a belief, understanding follows—living according to certain principles ultimately shapes one’s perspective (Armstrong, 2018, p. 186). In this regard, Armstrong supports Swidler’s view that a religious community must possess a defined creed to be recognized as such.

Second, Swidler explained that code is essential in a religious community. Code refers to behavior or ethics, which includes all the rules and actions that sometimes refer to creed. Swidler explains that a religious community must have rules that contain the way of life of humans. The rules in question always follow the recognition of beliefs and God.

Third, cult refers to the actions of religious adherents, which are called ritual activities. Swidler explains that the ritual activities carried out aim to worship and adore an aspect of what is termed Transcendent. These characteristics show that the rituals carried out include prayer and worship, which are different from the worship or flattery carried out on humans with power, such as the president. In religious terms, rituals refer to things related to the transcendent God.

Fourth, Swidler explains that community structure refers to the relationships between religious adherents. The relationships that are established will basically form a formal structure. The religions that have been recognized today are built based on a very formal community structure. Swidler explains that community structure has various types, both similar to state structure because it has cooperation with the state but also different from the state. Swidler shows that community structure is built by religious adherents who are regulated by community leaders, such as presbyterians, republicans, etc.

The definition of religion varies greatly depending on the context in which and when religious practices are carried out. The following eight religious thinkers have principles about the definition of religion that are similar to the definition conveyed by Swidler but are developed based on their respective contexts. Table 1 explains that the definition of religion outlined by religious thinkers begins with the previous definition of religion known to society in their context.

Philosophers’ Names	The Previous Religion Definition	The Revision Religion Definition
Emile Durkheim	Religion is understood as practices and rituals in the Church	Religion is a system of beliefs and ritual practices to the transcendent in social behaviors

Sigmund Freud	Religion is based on Western Christianity	Religion is a social practice carried out to Father God
Clifford Geertz	Religion was initially very formal and structured	Religion is a system in society that is reflected in cultural practices
Stewart Elliott Guthrie	Religion is very anthropocentric and very focused on the Western context	Religion is Anthropomorphic, which sees the world as a whole even when natural phenomena occur are the result of a special relationship between humans and other non-human beings
Friedrich Nietzsche	Religion is exercising imaginary power	Religion is born from reality and reality in social dynamics
Kevin Schilbrack	Religion is when beliefs, practices, and Institutions involve God (substantive)	Religion can be anything, including sports, politics, business, music, etc. (functionalist)
Karen Armstrong	Religion focuses only on human society	Religion needs to see the world as a whole
Jeppe Sinding Jensen	Social separates religious practice and technological development from the substantive side also focuses only on the communal	Religion has similarities with technology, namely that it is continuously developing, but its development is constantly debated. Religion consists of material and non-material human behavior, both communal and individual

Table 1. Religion Definitions Development

First, Emile Durkheim, a French theologian, defines religion as a highly organized unified system of beliefs and practices (Durkheim 1912). Durkheim acknowledged that religion is spread in society as a community that recognizes the role of society in shaping dynamics and giving birth to moral regulations. Durkheim saw religious practices depicted in religious rituals in the church. Thus, for Durkheim, religious communities recognized as embracing religion have rituals to the transcendent in social behavior. Durkheim also distinguishes sacred and profane, which separate the definition of religion from daily activities. Durkheim believes that

whatever the concept of religion, as religious thinkers, we cannot lie to the fact that religion is not a form of illusion from its adherents, but religion is an actual social fact that occurs through practice and belief.

Second, Sigmund Freud defines religion from his perspective as a critical thinker studying religion. He stated that the definition of world religion in modern times is very much based on the understanding of Western Christianity, which states that religion is very childish. He stated that religion is illusory and wishful thinking (Freud 1961). Freud believed that religion is a social practice carried out by humans to God, called Father God. The relationship between humans and God affects psychology and the relationships built, such as the relationship between father and child. Therefore, in the definition of religion put forward by Freud, the individual aspect greatly influences the life of a religious society.

Third, Clifford Geertz defines religion as a system of symbols in society. These symbols are reflected in cultural practices and rituals called phenomenology. The phenomenon of human experience in society is formed by and forms a system of symbols called religion (Geertz 1973). Geertz is an anthropologist who sees many things about humans. Human life and dynamics always live in groups. In the relationships between individuals who form groups, religion is created. Geertz defines religion functionally. Religion is formed from community relations that form perceptions and cognition. Geertz calls this process cognitive government. To define religion, Geertz combines dimensions of the philosophy of language on meaning and symbols and sociological and anthropological theories on social experience. Furthermore, Geertz adds psychological aspects.

Fourth, Stewart Elliott Guthrie, in his work entitled *Religion: What Is It?* States that religion “we anthropomorphize the world (and thus establish religions) – my own explanation – a cognitive, evolutionary, and game-theoretical one – is that in the face of chronic uncertainty about the nature of the world, guessing that some thing or event is humanlike or has a human cause constitutes a good bet” (Guthrie 1996, 417). For Guthrie, the definition of religion that has developed is very anthropomorphic, which is born from the tendency of the human brain to assume the presence of other creatures is the same as the existence of humans to create natural phenomena. Initially, humans saw other creatures such as animals, plants, and even abiotic creatures such as wind, soil, and sun, which are other parts humans do not recognize. However, Guthrie explains that religion offers the concept of a special relationship that occurs between humans and other non-human beings. This phenomenon refers to religions that still adhere to the understanding of animism, totemism, and others.

Fifth, Friedrich Nietzsche believes religion is a means of exercising power. According to Nietzsche, “Under Christianity, neither morality nor religion has any point of contact with actuality. It offers purely imaginary causes (“God”, “soul”, “ego”, “spirit”, “free will” – or even “unfree”) and

purely imaginary effects (“sin”, “salvation”, “grace”, “punishment”, “forgiveness of sins”) (Nietzsche 2003, 137). Nietzsche declared himself an atheist who strongly criticized the definition of religion that made Western religious practices the basis for the definition of religion. Nietzsche believed that religion is not always about something imaginary because real religion is a religion that is born from reality and reality witnessed in social dynamics.

Sixth, Kevin Schilbrack (2013) in his work entitled *What is not religion* explains that – “substantive definitions of religion let us sort religion from nonreligion, and one religion from another, in a more straightforward fashion: only when one’s beliefs, practices, and institutions involve God or some other spiritual being is one participating in a religion” (p. 295). However, on the other hand, Schilbrack also suggests that religion can be defined from a functionalist perspective. He states that “in functionalist approaches, social practice, no matter how secular—including sports, politics, business, music, and so on—can be considered religious” (p. 295). Functionally, religion is not only assessed when there are forms of ritual. However, secular things can also be assessed as religion.

Seventh, Karen Armstrong (2018), in her work entitled *What is Religion?* It explains that religion concerns not only the world as a whole but also human society. Karen explains that “religion begins in an experience of suffering. All the great religions put the fact of suffering absolutely at the forefront of their concern” (p. 189). Armstrong defines religion based on his experience of polytheistic religions, especially Buddhism. He then compares Buddhism with a monotheistic religious basis, namely the Christianistic European understanding. Armstrong and Schilbrack’s opinions are based on the understanding of many religious thinkers who identify as world theologians and sociologists.

Eighth, Jeppe Sinding Jensen, in his work, responded to Anthony Pinn’s work, which stated that religion is a technology. Jensen stated that “Obviously, religion is not one but many things—that is, “religion” consists of many things, and so do technologies; both terms encompass complex material and immaterial constructions of human behavior” (Jensen 2021, 177). Although Jensen stated that religion is a technology, it is a form of metaphor that illustrates that religion also experiences developments experienced by technology along with the development of human civilization and cognition. Religion and technology are two similar things. In his study of religion, Jensen stated that religion is described in two forms, genetic and functional, which can be implemented in two different containers, social and individual (Jensen 2014, 31). Religion appears and becomes important not only in a community or a communal setting but also in individuals, and it is developed through cognitive and emotional development, motivation, and action.

The definition of religion explained by the eight thinkers described above shows that the diversity of ideas and definitions of religion have been very diverse since religion was introduced in civilization and has continuously developed based on the context of society. The definition of religion that has developed is always flexible. However, within the limitation that religion always starts from the Western context, it is expanded to be accessible to the general public. Swidler, in his book *Dialogue for Inter-religious Understanding*, unconsciously directs the definition of religion as a religion with standards and criteria that are not much different from those of previous religious thinkers such as Durkheim and Freud. The requirements for the definition of religion offered by Swidler in his work are a description of a substantive definition of religion based on the definition of religion described by Schilbarck, which is the same as the definition of religion believed by religious communities in the world. The four criteria for religion that Swidler describes – creed, code, cult, and community structure, show that inter-religious dialogue can only be carried out by recognized religions if they fulfil the four criteria: “There is clearly a fundamental communal aspect to such a dialogue. For example, if a person is not either a Lutheran or a Jew, s/he could not engage in a specifically Lutheran-Jewish dialogue. Likewise, persons not belonging to any religious, or ideological, community could not, of course, engage in interreligious, interideological dialogue. They might, of course, engage in meaningful religious, ideological dialogue, but it simply would not be interreligious, interideological, between religions, or ideologies” (Swidler 2014, 23).

The criteria of religion intended by Swidler will limit religions that do not meet the criteria in question. Indigenous religions, for example, do not have formal recognition of their beliefs or God who may be transcendent but also may not be transcendent. They also do not have a formal community structure like other major religions. Swidler indirectly classifies ancestral religions as ideological communities that may not fall into the category of inter-religious dialogue, but inter-ideological dialogue. However, the struggle of modern ancestral religions is to be recognized as a religion, not only recognized as an ideological community (Ma’arif 2017). The definition of religion outlined by religious thinkers such as Schilbrack, Armstrong, Durkheim, Freud, Gheertz, Guthrie, Nietzsche, Jensen is the criteria and definition of western religion that developed in the development of the world which is different from some religious dynamics in Asia, the Middle East, and several other regions.

Swidler’s criteria for religion stem from the context of the world’s major religions, which indirectly suggest that religions with smaller populations, such as indigenous religions, are considered non-religions or “foreign religions” (Tafjord 2013). As a result, religious groups like indigenous traditions are often excluded from recognized religious

standards, preventing them from participating in interfaith dialogue. Wouldn't such a phenomenon lead to deeper conflict and debate?

Therefore, it is necessary to rethink Swidler's definition of religion. Religion should be perceived directly rather than confined to formal definitions. It does not need rigid categorization; rather, it should be recognized when a group of people or individuals hold beliefs and strive for acknowledgment as a religious community, practicing what they themselves call religion. This perspective ensures that interfaith dialogue—traditionally limited to adherents of recognized religions—becomes more inclusive, allowing participation without being restricted by predefined standards such as the 4C criteria proposed by Swidler.

3. Inter-religious, Inter-ideological Dialogue – 4H by Leonard Swidler

Swidler describes that dialogue began to rise in the Age of Enlightenment and Modernity. Its rise was marked by equality in terms of fighting for freedom and rationality. The dialogue was based on conscience, which became part of the public consciousness. Inter-religious dialogue emerged in 1893 when the celebration of the 400th anniversary of Columbus's discovery was held in Chicago. All lines of knowledge, such as science, literature, art and education, were invited.

Meanwhile, religion was considered unimportant because it always resulted in conflict (Moyaert 2013). This awareness is what made religious leaders form meetings in the field of world religions to realize unity between religious communities. Inter-religious dialogue is carried out to reduce violence, but in a pluralistic society, the agreement to achieve inter-religious dialogue encounters various challenges (Nwachukwu 2024).

Sergey Melnik (2020) identifies four types of inter-religious dialogue to address concerns about violence and societal conflict between religions today. First, polemical dialogue is carried out to agree on who is right in existing problems. Second is cognitive dialogue, which discusses each religious group's theology and ideology. Third, peacemaking dialogue is conducted to achieve peace during the conflict and post-conflict. Fourth, partnership dialogue is conducted to achieve sustainable peace to discuss what needs to be done by the conflicting parties to create a peaceful, safe and comfortable world.

Leonard Swidler explained that the urgency of inter-religious dialogue was increasingly needed in 1989 when the Berlin Wall fell. Therefore, dialogue is present to establish the principle that learning about life is not only obtained by studying one's religion but can be achieved by exploring the teachings of other religions (Swidler 2013). Therefore, when formulating religion, Swidler determined four types of inter-religious dialogue 4H —head, heart, hand, holy with additional 3H —harmony, holistic, human- needed in this 21st century.

The four forms of interreligious dialogue formulated by Swidler—dialogue by the head, heart, hand, and the holy—must be reconsidered for implementation. First, dialogue by the head refers to conducting dialogue by understanding each other. Human opinions in the world are never the same. They are always different based on their position and context. Religious and ideological humans have understandings that are always different to debate: “In the Dialogue of the head, we reach out to those who think differently from us in order to understand how they see the world and why they act as they do. The world is too complicated for anyone to grasp alone; increasingly, we can understand reality only with the help of the other, in dialogue. This is important, because how we understand the world determines how we act in the world” (Swidler 2014, 38).

Second, dialogue by the heart refers to how different humans can express their feelings to others. This dialogue states that humans will feel remarkable when they express their feelings and emotions stored in their souls: “In the Dialogue of the Heart, we open ourselves to receive the beauty of the other. Because we humans are body and spirit—or, rather, body-spirit—we give bodily-spiritual expression in all the arts to our multifarious responses to life: joy, sorrow, gratitude, anger, and, most of all, love. We try to express our inner feelings, which grasp reality in far deeper and higher ways than we are able to put into rational concepts and words; hence, we create poetry, music, dance, painting, architecture—the expressions of the heart. (Here, too, is where the depth, spiritual, mystical dimension of the human spirit is given full rein.) All the world delights in beauty, and so it is here that we find the easiest encounter with the Other, the simplest door to dialogue” (Swidler 2014, 38).

Third, dialogue by the hand refers to how humans act to produce a better world—a peaceful world, which is desired by all humankind. A peaceful place can only be achieved by forming a place of life that can be accepted by all differences. Swidler states that this world is already wounded; therefore, it needs healing. Moreover, healing can only be done by working together: “In the Dialogue of the Hands, we join with others to work to make the world a better place in which we all must live together. Since we can no longer live separately in this one world, we must work jointly to make it not just a house but a home for all of us to live in. In other words, we join hands with the other to heal the world” (Swidler 2014, 38)

Fourth, in the case of the holy dialogue, Swidler defines the scope of sacred dialogue as the integration of the previous three dialogues—the head, heart, and hands—to achieve harmony within the whole human being: “We humans cannot live a divided life. If we are to survive, let alone flourish, we must get it all together. We must not only dance the dialogues of the Head, Hands, and Heart but also bring our various parts together in Harmony (a fourth “H”) to live a Holistic (a fifth “H”), life, which is what

religions mean that we should be Holy (a sixth “H”). Hence, we are authentically Human (a seventh “H”) only when our manifold elements are in dialogue within each other and when we are in dialogue with the others around us. We must dance together the Cosmic Dance of Dialogue of the Head, Hands, and Heart, Holistically, in Harmony within the Holy Human.” (Swidler 2014, 38)

Humans have been able to accept each other by practising dialogue from the head, heart, and hand, and Swidler hopes that religious and ideological groups will create harmony within the holy human.

Swidler’s explanation needs to be considered and rethought with the five critical points below:

First, the understanding and principles of inter-religious dialogue by Swidler show that dialogue is carried out rigidly and formally. Swidler does not detail the steps for conducting dialogue. However, the four principles of dialogue - 4H - head, heart, hands, and holy, are very much filled with invitations to conduct inter-religious dialogue in formal spaces that are deliberately formed to reach agreement in diversity, represented by religious figures who already understand religion more deeply to be able to dialogue. The interfaith dialogue is more appropriately called a project and product that uses the name of religion. What happens if there is a conflict between a religious group and a group that is not or has not been religious and/or with a group that is not recognized as a religion? Are these four principles still relevant? Especially for religious groups that do not recognize holiness. Those statements mean that all parties cannot easily reach 4H.

Second, the dialogue by the emphasizes conducting dialogue with mutual understanding. The principle of understanding cannot be a bridge to reduce conflict and maintain ongoing dialogue. Mutual acceptance is a more appropriate word to use to achieve the goal of peace. We cannot force someone or a group of people only to be able to understand but also to accept differences in religious principles. Accepting differences is another level of understanding each other.

Third, dialogue by the heart is based on a very abstract principle. It is important to remember that not everyone can easily express their feelings. Mentally, it can be difficult to share emotions with unfamiliar people, especially those who are different from us. Expressing feelings is not straightforward because humans are often psychologically skeptical of others. Furthermore, expressed trauma may not always be immediately accepted by the dialogue partner. What if the trauma actually hurts the dialogue partner? While the principle of dialogue by the heart can be maintained, it is more appropriate for communities or groups that have not experienced conflict. If someone or a community has experienced conflict, trauma healing must take place first before this stage.

Fourth, dialogue of the hands is one of the principles of dialogue that we strongly agree with. Dialogue is not only through communication but

also through action. However, Swidler limits dialogue by the hands to the realm of cooperation to create a habitable place to live. The real action of this principle is not detailed. Dialogue by the hands should be attempted by everyone through peace practices that are voiced continuously, realizing that differences need to be discussed to achieve acceptance.

Fifth, dialogue by the holy is a somewhat confusing concept. This principle of dialogue differs from the principles of head, heart, and hand. Swidler's explanation of this fourth principle introduces several new terms while emphasizing the role of inter-religious dialogue based on agreements between religious and ideological groups. Unfortunately, this concept still retains the positive aspect of dialogue, which is very Christian in nature, namely holiness. The issue is that not all people share the same standards and criteria for holiness. In fact, the standards of holiness in the world's major religions have indirectly led to significant conflicts between them. To fulfill the idea of the holy man, Swidler must reconsider the appropriate term to use. If necessary, this point could be emphasized by removing the concept of holiness and returning to a religious foundation that focuses on the principle of humanity.

The five considerations above are not criticisms but rather considerations to re-examine the urgency of inter-religious dialogue in the lives of religious and ideological people today. Dialogue does not need to be arranged in complicated language because, basically, inter-religious dialogue is difficult to implement (Alibašić 2020). Dialogue is carried out only to emphasize the sense of humanity as people of faith to achieve peace for all. The concept of religious groups must also be positioned to achieve unity in the context of religion and ideology in plurality (Chidongo 2023) because the implementation of inter-religious dialogue in religious and cultural groups is constantly faced with contextual challenges, along with the development of civilization (Capucão 2021). The goal of humans who fight for the human rights of other humans will not require a formal space to conduct a dialogue. Even simple practices that bridge differences indirectly create dialogue. Simply by engaging in everyday conversations, collaborating, and respecting differences, both individuals and communities participate in inter-religious and inter-ideological dialogue.

4. Conclusion

Swidler's approach to inter-religious dialogue is a valuable initiative for achieving lasting peace. However, before implementing practical steps, the concept of inter-religious dialogue must be critically reassessed. It is essential to establish a definition of religion that not only supports the world's major religious communities but also acknowledges and upholds the rights of smaller religious groups striving for recognition as ideological and religious communities. Therefore, it is crucial to

reconsider Swidler's proposed definition of religion—4C—which has gained widespread attention. Humanitarian concerns should not be limited to globally recognized religious groups; they must extend to all marginalized communities. Humanity must stand with the oppressed and advocate for their rights, including indigenous peoples, who deserve to be recognized as religious communities.

Swidler develops the concept of 4H as forms or foundations of dialogue, though it remains somewhat abstract. However, his ideas raise several questions: Does interfaith dialogue only occur when it is organized by a formal body? Does it require a designated space? Must it involve representatives of different religious groups? In reality, grassroots communities have many simple and organic ways to engage in interfaith dialogue. If we examine the everyday interactions within these communities, we can find a broader range of approaches and concepts for interfaith dialogue that emerge naturally in society. Today, interfaith dialogue does not need to be overly complex; simplicity is often sufficient. What matters is fostering a sense of shared humanity and awareness of our interconnectedness within the universe—one that encourages peace, mutual acceptance, and support. This article should continue to evolve to explore the diverse ways interfaith dialogue manifests within grassroots communities.

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