The Concept of Tolerance in Western Civilization in the Perspective of the Quran and Hadith: A Comparative Analysis

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ARTICLE INFO	ABSTRACT
	This study aims to explain the concept of tolerance practiced by Western societies in the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith . This research used techniques of content analysis and library research to analyze the data and interpret its meaning since the researcher relies heavily on documents as the main sources of information. From this research it is concluded that the formation of the pattern of tolerance doctrine between Islam and the West is very different. The doctrine of tolerance in Islam is not shaped by history, but is an integral part of the Islamic heritage. Unlike the West, whose doctrine of tolerance is shaped by history due to abuse of power. That is why equating the Islamic doctrine of tolerance with the doctrine of tolerance in the West is incorrect.

1. Introduction

Tolerance in Islam is quite an important discussion to study. This is important because many Muslims understand tolerance with an inaccurate understanding. For example, the word tolerance is used as a basis for pluralism which states "all religions are right", or used as an excuse to allow Muslims to participate in non-Muslim ritual events, or what is even more frightening, the word tolerance is used by some Muslims to support the existence of heretical sects. and Christianization programs, both consciously and unconsciously. This misunderstanding of tolerance has an impact on the perspective of the Muslim community, especially students and lecturers on Islamic campuses, in implementing it. All of this seems to give birth to true tolerance which will lead to harmony between religious communities, even though it is faith that will be the victim.

2. Method

This research used techniques of content analysis and library research to analyze the data and interpret its meaning since the researcher relies heavily on documents as the main sources of information. The complex thought processes of the scholars under review may only be found in the

form of published material. It is indeed bibliographical research as it gathers and handles information mostly from published materials. The arguments presented in the study are so constructed that they examine the ideas and their premises based on a comprehensive analysis of data which have been reduced to separate concepts according to the research theme and objectives to mold it into a coherent narrative[1].

Library Research is a systematic technique for analyzing message content and processing it to capture the implicit message content contained therein[2]. This research is presented descriptively, comparatively and analytically-critically. Data regarding the meaning and practice of tolerance in western civilization is explained and viewed from the perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith. The descriptive method is a method of examining the status of a group of people, an object, a set of conditions, a system of thought, or a class of events in the present. The purpose of descriptive research is to make a description, a systematic, factual, and accurate description of the facts, characteristics, and relationships between the phenomena being investigated[3].

3. Results and Discussion

As Muslims, we must restore the essence of tolerance through an Islamic perspective. Because, the term tolerance - as mentioned in the book Tren Pluralisme Agama by Anis Malik Toha -, basically does not exist in Islamic terms, but is a modern term that was born from the Western civilization as a response to history which includes its political, social and cultural conditions characterized by various abuses and oppression[4]. Therefore, it is difficult to find the exact equivalent word in Arabic that shows the meaning of tolerance in English. However, some Islamic circles began to discuss this topic using the term "*tasamuh*", which later became the standard term for this topic. In the English-Arabic dictionary, the word "*tasamuh*" is interpreted as "tolerance". In fact, if we refer to the English dictionary, we will find that the original meaning of "tolerance" is "to endure without protest."[5] [6].

While the word "*tasamuh*" in al-Qomus al-Muhith, is a derivation of the word "samh" which means "*jud wa karam wa tasahul*" (attitude of generosity, donor, and easyness). In the book *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lughah* written by Ibn Faris, the word *samahah* is interpreted as *suhulah* [7]. This understanding is also strengthened by the words of Ibn Hajar al-Asqalani in *Fath al-Bari* who interprets the word *al-samhah* with the word *al-sahlah* (easy), in interpreting a narration that reads, *Ahabbu al-dien ilallahi al-hanafiyyah al-samhah*[8]. This difference in meaning certainly affects the understanding of the use of these words in both languages (Arabic-English).

Thus, in examining the concept of tolerance in Islam, the author refers to the original meaning of the word *samahah* in Arabic (which means to make it easy, give mercy and breadth), and not to refer to the meaning of the word tolerance in English which means to endure feelings without protest. However, the meaning of facilitating and giving breadth here is not absolute as freely understood, but still uses the benchmarks of the Qur'an and Sunnah.

If we look at the formation of the concept of tolerance between Islamic civilization and the Western civilization, we will find that the motives for the formation of the concept of tolerance between the two are very different. The concept of tolerance in Islam is formed by the teachings of Islam itself either in the form of the word of Allah (Al-Quran) or the words and behavior of the Prophet SAW (al-Hadith). The Western civilization, on the other hand, is shaped by history or reaction to social and political conditions.

For example, in its history, Western civilization has experienced a bitter period, which they call the dark age. It began when the Western Roman Empire collapsed in 476 A.H. and began the emergence of the Christian Church as the dominant institution in Western Christian society until the advent of the Renaissance around the 14th century. Reneissance means rebirth, because Westerners feel that when they live under the grip of Church power, they seem to experience death.

It was in this Dark Age that there was a lot of perversion and oppression of its people in the name of religion. The most notorious oppression of the time was, what the institution of the Church

did under the name of the Inquisition. The Inquisition was the punishment of the heretics. Karen Armstrong, a famous former nun and author, described the institution of the Inquisition in history as follows: "Most of us would agree that one of the most evil Christian institutions was the Inquisition, which was an instrument of terror in the Catholic Church until the late 17th century. This method of inquisition was also used by the Protestant Church to exert oppression and control over Catholics in their countries"[9].

As for the form of crime, Robert Held in his book Inquisition, explained that there were more than 50 types and models of very brutal torture tools used by church institutions at that time, such as burning alive, eye gouges, body splitting saws, tongue cutting, head crushing tools, vaginal drills, and various other very brutal torture tools and models. Ironically, about 85 percent of victims of torture and murder are women. Between 1459 and 1800, it is estimated that between two and four million women were burned alive in both Catholic and Protestant Europe[9].

In Judaism, there have also been abuses that have led to persecution in the name of religion. In the Old Statement, it is stated that their attitude towards other groups is not limited to hatred, denial and denial. But they were also commanded to burn down the Gentiles, because – according to them – the Jews were the Choosen People. The annihilation of all other groups, they argued, was God's command.

It was from this incident of perversion and oppression in the name of religion that the thought of the importance of tolerance in the Western civilization began to arise. It was John Locke who was quite famous in spawning his idea of tolerance, namely by describing three thoughts about the importance of tolerance. First, the appropriate punishment for individuals who come out of a particular sect is not corporal punishment but rather sufficient excommunication. Second, no one should monopolize the truth, so one sect should not disbelieve another. Third, the government cannot side with one sect, because religious matters are private matters. These three doctrines later formed the doctrine of tolerance in the world of Western civilization[10].

As for Islam, tolerance (*samahah*) is a hallmark of Islamic teachings. Tolerance in Islam covers various aspects, both in terms of aqidah, worship, and mu'amalah. In terms of aqidah, Islam has a rule from a verse of the Qur'an namely *laa ikraaha fi al-dien* (there is no force in religion). But this rule does not deny the element of da'wah in Islam. Da'wah in Islam is inviting, not coercive. From this rule, when non-Muslims (especially *dhimmi*) are among Muslims or in an Islamic country, they should not be forced to convert to Islam and even guaranteed security for paying *jizyah* as collateral.

In matters of worship, Islam is also tolerant. That is, the implementation of worship in Islam is not burdensome. We can see when someone wants to perform ablution and there is no water, then Islam facilitates the way of ablution by means of tayamum. In prayer, when a person is unable to stand, it is permissible to sit. Likewise, fasting, when someone is sick, it can be in qadha. This nature of making it easy and not burdensome is what characterizes Islam is a tolerant religion in terms of worship.

As for mu'amalah, Islam commands to do good in society, be it to Muslims or non-Muslims. For example, when a Muslim has a non-Muslim neighbor who is in need of help, he should be helped. When it is rewarded, it must be accepted. Likewise, when a non-Muslim neighbor is sick, he must be visited. That is the existence of a Muslim who must be maintained in order to build inter-religious harmony.

The problem is, when mu'amalah with non-Muslims falls into the realm of creed and worship, many people misunderstand. They think that tolerance in the matter of participation in non-Muslim events is permissible in order to create inter-religious harmony. Even though this kind of tolerance in the Shari'a there are propositions that prohibit, be it from the Qur'an, Hadith, or ijma ulama.

When mu'amalah with non-Muslims falls into the realm of creed and worship, then this can be categorized in terms of helping in sins that are clearly forbidden. Allah Almighty has forbidden

such acts as mentioned in one of the verses (which means), Please help you in doing good and piety, and do not help in sin and enmity (Surah Al-Maidah: 2). In understanding this verse, Imam Ibn Kathir explains in his tafseer that Allah commands believers to help in good and forsake evil. Allah also forbids Muslims to help each other in immorality, sin, and anything haram. Non-Muslim rituals are vanity practices forbidden by Allah Almighty that make the perpetrators sin. Therefore, the participation of a Muslim in a non-Muslim ritual falls under the category of helping in immorality, sin, and something forbidden[11].

In addition, the participation of non-Muslim rituals on the grounds of tolerance also cannot be justified shari'i because a person is classified as having mixed up the right and the vanity. Allah said (which means), And do not confuse the right with the vanity, and do not hide the right, while you know (Surah Al-Baqarah: 42). Imam al-Thabari quoted Imam Mujahid (a disciple of Ibn Abbas) as to the meaning of the verse: And do not confuse the right with the vanity is to confuse Judaism and Christianity with Islam[12].

As for inter-religious tolerance in worldly mu'amalah Islam encourages its people to be tolerant, helpful, live harmoniously, and dynamically among mankind regardless of their religion, language, and race. In this case Allah says (which means), Allah does not forbid you to do good and do justice to those who do not fight you because of religion nor to expel you from your country. Indeed, God loves those who do justice. Indeed, Allah only forbids you to make as your friends those who fight you for religion and expel you from your country, and help others to expel you. And whoever makes them friends are the unjust (Surah Al-Mumtahanah: 8-9).

There are many things we can learn from the above verse in understanding the correct inter-religious tolerance in Islam. In understanding the above verse, Imam Ibn Kathir explained that "Allah does not forbid you to do good and do justice to those who do not fight you because of religion nor to expel you from your country" that is, He does not forbid you to do good to unbelievers who do not fight you because of religious problems, such as doing good in matters of women and weak people[11].

In addition, Imam al-Shukani (1250 AH) in Fath al-Qadir states that the meaning of this verse is that Allah does not forbid doing good to *kafir dhimmi*, i.e. infidels who enter into covenants with Muslims in avoiding war and do not help other infidels in fighting Muslims. This verse also shows that Allah does not forbid being fair in dealing with them[13].

As for the reason for the descent of this verse as narrated by Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal in his book al-Musnad of Abdullah bin Zubayr, He said: "Qatilah came to his daughter Asma' bint Abu Bakr. But Asma' was reluctant to accept the gift and the woman (her mother) came to her house. Therefore, Aisha asked the Prophet (PBUH) about the problem. So Allah sent down Surah al-Mumtahanah verses 8-9. Therefore, the Prophet ordered Asma' to accept the gift and the coming of her mother to her house.".

It is postulated that doing good to non-Muslims is obligatory, as long as non-Muslims do not fight and expel Muslims from their country, and do not help others to expel Muslims from their country. Even the Prophet (peace be upon him) threatened his people who committed tyranny against non-Muslims who had entered into agreements with Muslims with the threat of not going to heaven. The Prophet (peace be upon him) said (which means), Whoever kills a non-Muslim who is in agreement with Muslims, will not smell the fragrance of heaven. Indeed, the fragrance of heaven can be smelled from a distance of forty years of travel (on earth) (H.R Bukhari)[8].

Therefore, the Prophet (peace be upon him) reconciled with the Jews in Medina with a very good mu'amalah In matters of trade, He once pawned his armor to a Jew named Abu Shahm. The Prophet also established an agreement between the Muhajireen and the Ansars and the Jews. The treaty included peace with the Jews, their oath of allegiance, and recognition of the existence of religion (not the truth of religions other than Islam) and their possessions. He also asked them for assurances to keep their agreements. However, the attitude of tolerance, harmony, help and

cooperation between Muslims and non-Muslims here is only in matters of worldly mu'amalah that are not related to matters of creed and worship.

4. Conclusion

From the explanation above, it can be concluded that the formation of the pattern of doctrine of tolerance between Islamic civilization and the Western civilization is very different. The doctrine of tolerance in Islam is not shaped by history, but is an integral part of Islamic heritage. This is different from the Western civilization, whose doctrine of tolerance was shaped by history due to abuse of power. That is why equating the Islamic doctrine of tolerance with the doctrine of tolerance in the Western civilization is not appropriate. However, strangely, currently the process of overlapping doctrines of tolerance is starting to surface, resulting in confusion in understanding the true meaning of tolerance according to Islam. From this it is not appropriate for Muslims to use the word tolerance to support the existence of heretical sects, let alone to support the Christianization movement, because this kind of tolerance is Western civilization-style tolerance which is not justified in Islam.

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