

Religion and Humanity: Supporting the Global Tolerance Spirit

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Abstract: Religion is the order of God, all the teachings aim at giving peace, prosperity and happiness of the world and the hereafter. But because of partial understanding and the existence of the ex factors that influence it, then by some groups attracting religion to the conflict area and making it a tool of legitimacy to violence against other people and groups. Therefore it is time for religion adherents, especially religion leaders and the government to intensively sit together through dialogue, because by this way many things can be discussed, so that the Trilogy of Harmony can be realized with the best.

Keywords: religion; dialogue; tolerance

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I. INTRODUCTION

Religion and humanity are like two sides of the coin that cannot be separated from each other, because theoretically every person who is able to understand the teachings of his religion (whatever religion is) with a good and true and obedient to follow the teachings of religion he believes in, then certainly someone will care about the issue the humanitarian question, for all religions, humanitarian problems are the most important part of the teachings of each existing religion, for "nothing but a religion can lead men to great and holy aims. Humanity cannot be separated from religion and faith. If religion does not exist, humanity will not be realized".¹

Therefore the whole human being cannot escape from religion, because religion besides as human nature, also "religion tries to deliver human to whole life, free from suffering of born and inward, so that existence of God which is good, just, forgiving and so on really "present" on this earth".²

The above statement illustrates that religion not only offers a number of doctrines that must be believed in the hearts of every individual personally, but it is also capable of providing motivation to create social relationships that occur in society. The occurrence of good social interaction among individuals in the society, is actually much encouraged by the teachings of religion, therefore the presence of a religion always demands its adherents to always be able to do the best in the environment where he is.

Based on the above concept, it can be said that religion has an important role in ensuring the survival of society, because "religion in general explains the fact that the values that exist in almost all societies are not merely a collection of mixed values, but form a level (hierarchy). In this hierarchy, religion sets the highest values."³

II. METHODOLOGY

This paper can be categorized into the study of literature that is using data collection techniques by studying books, literatures, records that have a direct or indirect connection to the discussed problem (Nazir, 1988: 111), therefore the analysis method used is descriptive analysis.

2.1 The Virtue of the Central Mission of Religion Teachings

Whatever the name and form of religion is, it is certainly teaching about virtue. God never sent down to this earth a religion that is contrary to the principle of humanity. Religion is essentially revealed by God to this earth for the purpose of raising human dignity and humanity. In the case of oppression, war, murder, rape, adultery, robbery, trafficking in children, terrorists and other violence perpetrated by some religious

¹Murtadha Muthahhari, *Al-Insan wa Fitriyah ad-Din*, Pengantar Jalaluddin Rahmad, *Perspektif Al Qur'an Tentang Manusia dan Agama*, (Bandung: Mizan, 1984), p. 56

²Abd A'la, *Melampau Dialog Agama*, Penerbit Buku Kompas, Jakarta, 2002, p. 6

³Elizabeth K. Nottingham, *Agama dan Masyarakat, Suatu Pengantar Sosiologi Agama*, Rajawali Press. Jakarta, 1992, p. 38

communities, in the name of religion, it is certain that such acts are not only against the teachings but also have denied and tarnished the religion itself, because religion is present in the midst of society that aims to care for, maintain and maintain the sanctity of human beings. Thus it can be said that "the implementation of the prophetic function of religion depends on the intensity of its work to maintain and maintain the holy human dignity of all kinds of threats that arise from itself. Loss of religious prophetic function means religion loses its essential function in the midst of society".⁴

The quotation above gives the explanations that Islam as the celestial religion which God last sent down to earth emphasizes its mission to humanity, not to be discriminative even to a worker, even in the speech of the Prophet Muhammad when he was about to die firmly saying that those do who not pay attention to the fate of the workers and the poor and oppressed, they will be my enemy on the Day of Resurrection. The content of his speech, as quoted by Drs. Nurkholish Madjid is:

*O people! Remember Allah! Remember Allah, in your religion and your message. Remember Allah! Remember Allah!, with regard to the people you have mastered with your right hand! Give them food as you eat, and give them clothes as you wear them! And do not burden them with a burden that they can not bear. For they are indeed flesh, blood and creatures just as you are. Watch out, whoso acts unjust to them, then I am his enemy on the Day of Judgment, and Allah is the Judge.*⁵

From the above quotation, it is clear that Islam as a religion is very concerned about humanity; even on other occasions the Prophet said that the perfection of one's faith depends on how far the human being is able to feel what is felt by others:

*"From Anas, Rasul Saw, said; "Help your persecuted or persecuted brother. There was a protesting protestor, he replied; "O Messenger, help those who have been persecuted, then why should I help the persecutor? He said; "Thou hinder the deeds of his dhalim, you are trying to help him"*⁶ (Narrated by Bukhari)

Along with that, Allah forbid unequivocally that killing/oppression of human beings is condemned. This is explained by Allah in the Qur'an Surah Al-Maidah verse: 32, that whoever kills a man for no justified reason, as if he has killed all humanity. And on the contrary, who keeps a man's life, it is as if he has preserved all human life.⁷

The above verse and *hadith* are a proposition that Islam is not a terrorist religion as many have expected by other people. Islam is a religion that always spread love, peace, social sensitivity and tolerance. One of the events exemplified by the Prophet Muhammad, which deserves to be proof that Islam is a religion full of peace, compassion and tolerance is his acceptance of the 60 people of Christian delegation from Najran and they were Catholic and even among them there was a bishop. They accepted the Prophet with open arms, even because of the house of his companion did not adequately accommodate them, the Prophet placed them in Nabawi Mosque. As long as they were in Medina, the Prophet kept dialogue with them, and even gave them the help they needed.⁸

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Based on the above concept, it can be said that religion has an important role in ensuring the survival of society, because "religion in general explains the fact that the values that exist in almost all societies not merely a collection of mixed values, but form a level (hierarchy). In this religion hierarchy sets the highest values."⁹ In line with that, according to Erich From "no one does not need religion and does not need the rules as his guide and the regulator of love and his interests"¹⁰

⁴Abd A'la, p.5

⁵Nurkholish Madjid, *Islam Agama Kemanusiaan, Membangun Tradisi : dan Visi Baru Islam Indonesia*, Yayasan Wakaf Para Madina, Jakarta, p. 85

⁶Alhafidh dkk, *Terjemah Hadis Riadhus Shalihin*, Mahkota, Surabaya, 1986, p. 210

⁷Qs. Al-Maidah: 32

⁸Djohan Effendy, dkk, *Dialog: Kritik & Identitas Agama*, Dian/Interfidei, Yogyakarta, 1993, p. 58

⁹Elizabeth K. Nottingham, *Agama dan Masyarakat, Suatu Pengantar Sosiologi Agama*, Rajawali Press. Jakarta, 1992, p. 38

¹⁰Murthada Muthahhari, *Perspektif Al-Qur'an Tentang Manusia dan Agama*, Mizan, 1992, p. 85

2.2 Religion and Tolerance

As has been pointed out earlier that Islam is the last heavenly religion revealed by God, as the last religion, besides being a mediator (اسطخر), is also a witness for the past. Islam carries the preconditions of doctrine with the concept of peace, in accordance with the demands of human nature, hence Islam commands its people "so that its people always hold fast to the teachings of continuity, by faith in all the Prophets and Apostles of God, without exception and without distinction between them mentioned in the holy book and which are not mentioned", ¹¹ this is what Allah describes in Surat al-Baqarah verse 136:

*Say (O ye mu'min): "We believe in Allah and what is revealed to us, and what is revealed to Abraham, Isma'il, Ishaq, Ya'kub and his offspring, and what is given Moses and Isa and what is given to the Prophets of his Lord. We make no distinction between any of them and we are only submissive to Him."*¹²

Referring to the above verse, there are at least two things that need to be important notes that must be known, namely; **First:** the verse suggests that Islam as the last religion of the process of growth and the development of religions in the line of continuity firmly testifies or acknowledges the existence of other religions, the recognition of the rights and the existence of other religions is a very clear tolerant attitude demonstrated by Islam. **Second;** it gives a sign that social, cultural and religious plurality, as inevitable in this life, is a *sunnatullah* that cannot be denied. Hence Islam never and will not tolerate the occurrence of coercion to adopt one religion. This is explained by Allah in Alqur'an Surah al-Baqarah verse 256:

*There is no compulsion to (enter) the religion (Islam), in fact it is clearly the right path rather than a misguided path. Therefore, whoever disbelieves to Allah and believes in Allah, he has actually held on to a very strong rope that will not break. Allah is all-knowing, all-knowing.*¹³

Furthermore the message that can be captured in the above verse is that Islam gives the greatest freedom to man to determine the direction of life he will live. A person is not allowed to impose his will on another person according to his wishes. The attitude of freedom and openness (inclusive) shown by Islam, makes this religion a religion that deeply appreciates the beliefs of others, hence Islam does not justify even banning its followers to propagate other religions. Here is the basic tolerance of Islam. This is illustrated by Allah in Surah al-'An verse 108:

*And do not censure those whom they invoke besides Allaah, for they will curse Allah beyond measure without knowledge. Thus We make every people good for their work. Then unto their Lord they returned, and He told them what they used to do.*¹⁴

And there are still many verses in Alqur'an, which in principle explain the attitude of openness and tolerance of Islam to the existence of other religions. The openness and tolerance shown by Islamic teachings will have a positive impact on the behavior of their people in relation to others. Therefore, Islam never forbids the *ummah* to do good to anyone as long as the other person is still respecting each other. Allah does not forbid you to do good and to be fair to those who did not fight you because of religion and did not drive you out of your country. Lo! Allah loves those who do right.¹⁵

In line with the above explanations, Islam has the awareness that besides humans have the same degree, Islam also has a brotherhood consciousness, not only against the people who are familiar with it, as well as with humanity as a whole, as has been stated by Prof DR. HM Ridwan Lubis in a meeting of religions at Hajj Base Centre in Medan, that in Islamic teachings the awareness of equality of degree and high brotherhood is not only to the religion (*ukhwah Islamiyah*) and relatives (*ukhwah basyariyah*) and wider than that siblings nation (*ukhwah wathaniyah*). The awareness of brotherhood is based on the belief that man is the ultimate work of Allah SWT.¹⁶

Since man as the top work described in the Surah al-Tin as "*taqwin*", then man must always be encouraged to pledge to himself to always do good (*al-shalah*) and the best (*al-Ashlah*) in his life. And therefore, a Muslim must always avoid himself from deeds that lead to social disintegration or disharmony, because the Islamic *shari'ah* mission is to realize the continuity (*al-tawasun*) in the life of mankind.

In line with the above, in Indonesia for example as a state based on Pancasila, where in the GBHN mentioned that religion is the source of ethics and morals, this is because religion is essentially humility and concern for the fate of mankind, therefore a religious always being humble and obedient to the laws of God,

¹¹ DR. Nurcholish Madjid, *Islam Doktrin dan Peradaban Sebuah Telaah Kritis Tentang Keimanan, Kemanusiaan dan Kemerdekaan*, Yayasan Wakaf Para Madina, 1993, p. xx

¹²Qs. Al-Baqarah:136

¹³Qs. Al-Baqarah: 256

¹⁴I b i d., 205

¹⁵I b i d., h. 924

¹⁶Prof. DR. H. M. Ridwan Lubis, *Corak Pemikiran Keagamaan yang Mendukung Terwujudnya Kerukunan Hidup Sosial Umat Beragama*, p. 6

which in common life will manifest in the form of concern for the fate of all mankind. According Nurkholish Madjid, as quoted by Komaruddin Hidayat and Muhammad Wahyuni Nafis, this is the main task of humanity for every religion, because according to him there are two main duties of religion that is;

- a. Religion has a duty to liberate mankind from misleading beliefs and-because it will bind and deprive freedom in actualizing its potential nature.
- b. Religion has a duty to liberate mankind from social oppression and suffering. The main task of religious humanity is clearly illustrated in every struggle of the Prophets since Adam, Abraham, Moses, Isa to Muhammad saw.¹⁷

To realize the above, it is deemed necessary for a healthy dialogue among religious people, with this dialogue is expected to provide a high awareness for the followers of religions that the diversity and diversity is inevitable in the life of mankind. Attitudes of mutual respect among the various adherents of religion can be realized, if the adherents of various religions can dialogue well between each other. Perhaps because of the lack of dialogue among religious people, the distressing events and acts of violence often occur in the world such as oppression, murder, expulsion and various other crimes.

In Indonesia for example, the occurrence of the burning of the church in Meulaboh, Aceh, June 1967, in Ujung Pandang in October 1967, the destruction of Christian schools in Palmerah, Slipi, West Jakarta, June 1967, and other events occurring on the ground This water, like the Maluku Tragedy, dated January 19, 1999, which killed 800 Muslims in Tobelo Sub-district, Halmahera, North Maluku, Case of Doulos, December 16, 1999 where the village was destroyed by mobs, as the mission of one of the religions,¹⁸ as well as in other countries such as the Rohingyas massacre in Myanmar, Palestine and others.

All of this is due in part to the partial understanding of religion, as well as the lack of public awareness to accept the differences that exist. Therefore it is time for inter-religious dialogue to be encouraged again, so that humanitarian tragedies will not be repeated again.

III. DISCUSSION

As noted earlier, that in pluralistic societies, frictions between one community and another have great opportunities, especially if the adherents of each religion understand their religious teachings literally and partially and bits and pieces of scripture which serve as the source of their respective religious teachings. This will lead to the dragging of religious people into a narrow and exclusive area of religion understanding, so there is no courage to interpret interpretive sources of teachings or re-actualize their religious teachings according to the circumstances. It cannot be denied that in each religion there are elements that are exclusivism, and this is something natural and valid only in a belief, but if this ideology is not accompanied by inclusiveness, it may be wrong one wedge in a dialogue.

If such a situation is not anticipated early and seriously, it is possible that religious pluralism will lead to a conflict. And a great catastrophe will happen to a nation (especially the nation of Indonesia famous for a plural nation), if the conflict happened in the name of religion.

With sufficient understanding, high faith levels and awareness of the religion teachings of each adherent religion, has not been able to ensure the realization of harmony or harmony of life among the plural society. It is still needed a tool that can support understanding, high faith, appreciation of religious teachings, to realize a harmonious atmosphere, dynamic, peaceful and harmonious in the midst of a multifaceted society. The means here is referred to by A. Mukti Ali is to hold a dialogue. Through dialogue, it is expected to provide solutions to various problems or can dilute the diversity of problems that are frozen encountered, both between religious communities, inter-religious, and inter-religious with the government.

Therefore, it can be said that "if the atmosphere of dialogue is successfully established, there will be a synergy between the religion adherents with each other in the face of common challenges in the future. Conversely, if dialogue fails to build, the life of religions is always in a stigmatic state."¹⁹ In the connection to this, H. A. Mukti Ali argues that one of the conditions to be considered in the dialogue is the concept of agreeing on the difference. From the developed dialogue discourse, and still the difference of material that must be in the dialogue between the religion adherents, then according to the author, the dialogue material must be adjusted with the qualification of the participants dialogue. This means that due to the variety of human stratification both from the point of view of social, cultural, historical and intellectual background. In other words, dialogue is not based on a standard model; it depends on the capacity of the participants of the dialogue. Along with this, Alwi Shihab argues: Because the believers are consciously or unconsciously shaped by social, cultural and intellectual, historical, and psychological contexts, the emphasis and form of dialogue also differ

¹⁷ Komaruddin Hidayat dan Muhammad Wahyuni Nafis, *Agama Masa Depan Perspektif Filsafat Perennial*, Jakarta: Paramadina, 1995, p. 95.

¹⁸ Adian Husaini, *Solusi Damai Islam Kristen di Indonesia*, Pustaka Da'i, t.t., p. 41

¹⁹ Rohadi Abdul Fatah, *Sosiologi Agama*, Jakarta: Titian Kencana Mandiri, 2004, p. 120

from one nation to another. But the success is determined by the spirit of mutual respect, and not intent on beating each other.²⁰

The explanation above provides that the form of dialogue will greatly depend on the cultural conditions and intellectual level of the participants of the dialogue. Therefore the material of dialogue can be done with various alternatives, among others:

1) Dialogue of life

The dialogue of life is one of the simplest forms of dialogue. Here the people of different religions meet each other in everyday life. They blend in community activities normally.²¹ In this form of dialogue, the people of all denominations gather together to engage in social activities, such as gotong royong making roads, clearing ditches, and so on.

2) Dialogue of Social work

The dialogue of social work is a follow-up of the first dialogue. In this dialogue, the cooperation among the religious communities is based on the motivation of religious consciousness. That is, each of the religious community is aware that his religious teachings tell him to always give the best to others.

In this context, pluralism is actually not only more than recognition of the fact that we are plural, but also actively involved in the pluralism. Meanwhile, the doctrinal basis is the necessity to find common ground (in the language of the Alqur'an, called *Kalimatun Sawa*, and avoid the things that will hinder dialogue and cooperation.²² Thus it can be said that the dialogue in this second stage, each society of different beliefs does not confuse the type of tribe, and religion, but they cooperate because they believe that their respective religious teachings require them to help each other.

3) Dialogue of Theological

At the level of dialogue of theological, the dialogue participants must be people who already have a high religious insight and strong faith, because such dialogue has been awakened in a person's awareness that behind his belief and faith is good and right that, there are still many beliefs and faiths of the religion tradition other than the religion that they possess.

In line with that, H. A. Mukti Ali said that the dialogue and the encounter among the religious groups is not only a pragmatic contemporary issue, but also a matter of obedience and obedience to God, and as a matter of obedience to God, as well as communicating our beliefs to others.²³

Apart from the materialized forms of dialogue, but it is sure that HA Mukti Ali believes that the internal religion dialogue, the inter religion dialogue, or inter-ummah are diverse with the government, is the right solution in order to solve the problems faced by religious people, because with dialogue, clogged communication, a misunderstanding that occurs between each other can be straightened out like his expression.

... religious people are aware that they live in a world of doubles. The world is getting narrower and more diverse. Our problem today is how we can live together not only in peace, but also in an atmosphere of mutual trust and faithfulness to one another. This means that we must do our utmost to get others to believe in us, as we can understand and appreciate them. We must strive to create situations in which we can respect the values that others respect, by not leaving behind our own values. That is why religious people then hold dialogue.²⁴

Viewing closely the above quotation, it can be seen that for the realization of peace and harmony, inter-religious dialogue is absolutely necessary. Dialogue will bring positive results if the dialogue partners can understand and appreciate the differences, in addition to the similarities that exist between the various religions. On the contrary, dialogue will lead to negative things, if the participants of the dialogue only highlight the differences in the teachings of each religion. When this happens, then what arises from the dialogue is not mutual understanding, respect, but each other expose, vilify, and neither the religious wisdom that appears, but the narrowness of the people.

Therefore, dialogue within the framework of the process of self-awareness and the development of responsibility in each religious community, becomes a significant in pluralist society. Because from here will be found the right formulation to do things that can be accepted together. To foster the awareness of the dialogue as mentioned above, it is not an easy thing to realize, it requires a tool or tool capable of providing a high human awareness, without sacrificing or harassing the values of truth already believed.

Starting from this fact, it is time for every religion adherent of to stop questioning the differences of the theological concept, because the distinction can never be solved, because theological problem is very subjective and highly individualistic, therefore it is time of each adherent religion to seek common ground in the effort to

²⁰Alwi Shihab, *Islam Inklusif*, Menju Sikap Terbuka Dalam Beragama, Cet. Ke II, Mizan, 1988, p. 58

²¹Nurcholish Madjid, at. All., *Fiqh Lintas Agama*, Jakarta: Yayasan Paramadina, 2004, p. 209

²²*I b i d.*, h. 215

²³H. A. Mukti Ali, p. 8

²⁴H. A. Mukti Ali, *Beberapa Persoalan*, p. 364

create dialogue to build good cooperation on behalf of humanity, creating harmony among religious people for the realization of unity and unity of the *ummah*, to jointly build the nation in the future.

To realize the above objectives, then inevitably the participation of every religious people is absolutely necessary. Because the harmony of life among religious people must be realized, for the sake of achieving national stability, which is the condition for the continuity and the success of national ideas. The efforts to foster the harmony among the religious people are not only the responsibility of the government, but the harmony between religions can be realized properly, if all adherents of each people together feel responsible for creating a conducive and harmonious atmosphere in between fellow believers. We should realize that the responsibility for the promotion of religious life cannot be solely borne on the shoulders of the government. Religious people themselves first and foremost must assume the responsibility. The government is more of a role as a support force, and provides an opportunity for the implementation of religious worship and charity can run peacefully and peace.²⁵

Referring to the above quotation, it can be said that the creation or not a dialogue in a community society, in addition to being dependent on the society itself, is also determined to the extent to which adherents of each religion understand well the teachings of religion it embraces, because if we want to be honest and can see the nature of the teachings of their respective religions, in fact inter-religious dialogue has been first exemplified by the prophets. Therefore there is no compelling reason for the followers of religions to impose their will and belief on others. In Islam the attitude of openness and respect for the beliefs of others is highly respected, therefore Islam encourages its followers to always adhere to the teachings of the community, meaning faith to the apostle, not only addressed to an apostle, but is obliged to believe and trust all the apostles of God, without discriminating between them.

IV. CONCLUSION

Indonesian nation is a nation that has been destined as a plural society. With this pluralism, religion people are always required to develop and increase understanding and awareness of plurality as a phenomenon of the law of nature, that the reality in the world cannot be avoided from the diversity.

To cultivate the condition well, all religious followers must always return to the source and the nature of their respective religious teachings, because all the teachings of the existing religion bring and guide the people to be good, virtuous, wise, generous, forgiving, humble and sensitive to social life and full of tolerance. The fostering of the religious life harmony in Indonesia as proclaimed by the government includes three harmonies, which is called "Trilogy of Harmony", namely the Harmony of Internal Religious, Interreligious Harmony and Interreligious Harmony with the Government.

Based on this state, it is time for every religion to stop questioning the differences that exist in each religion, because this problem will never be solved, because it is a very subjective and individualistic thing of each religion, therefore it is time for each of the religious adherents to seek common ground, in an effort to realize the harmony of religious life for the realization of national development. The harmony of the religious life which is demanded is a dynamic harmony, not the harmony of silence or stagnation (harmony is not limited to unobtrusive and absence of concern on the other), but the harmony in question is the harmony that can spur the cooperation in responding to challenges and issues an age that goes hand in hand with the growth of a developing society. Therefore, religion as a transformative power cannot avoid the changes that will occur in society. As a transformative force, religion must be able to cultivate the awareness of togetherness and partnership of the Indonesian citizens, but also to create sensitivity to the suffering of others, especially as a result of the crisis that has not been resolved yet, for it is the embryo of the religious power as an agent of change.

To improve the unity and the unity of the plural nation, various efforts have been made by the government, among others are through fostering harmony of religious life and dialogue. If such an agenda becomes a serious concern and the concern is from the government, and is fully supported by religious elites, religious leaders, then Indonesia's cool, peaceful, friendly, peaceful and friendly future is still wide open.

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