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Islam and other Religions Perspective of the Qur'an and Hadith

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Abstract

This article examines the relationship between Islam and followers of other religions from the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith, emphasizing the normative principles that govern interreligious interactions. The purpose of this study is to analyze the theological and ethical foundations of Islam in responding to religious diversity, as well as to explore the boundaries of tolerance, coexistence, and dialogical attitudes as taught in the primary sources of Islam. This research employs a qualitative method through library research with a normative-theological and textual analysis approach. The data are derived from Qur'anic verses, prophetic traditions (Hadith), and relevant literature in Qur'anic exegesis and Islamic studies. The analysis is conducted by interpreting the texts contextually in order to understand the universal messages of Islam regarding relations with other religious communities. The findings indicate that Islam affirms religious plurality as part of divine will (sunnatullah), promotes justice, respect, and social cooperation, and prohibits coercion in matters of faith. At the same time, Islam establishes clear theological boundaries to ensure that tolerance does not lead to doctrinal relativism. The study concludes that the perspectives of the Qur'an and Hadith provide a strong foundation for fostering harmonious, just, and dignified social life within pluralistic societies, and recommends further contextual and empirical studies on the implementation of these values in contemporary socio-religious contexts.

Keywords: Islam and Religious Plurality; Interfaith Relations; Qur'an and Hadith; Religious

Abstrak

Artikel ini membahas relasi antara Islam dan umat lain dalam perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadis dengan menekankan prinsip-prinsip normatif yang mengatur interaksi antarumat beragama. Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk mengkaji dasar teologis dan etis Islam dalam menyikapi keberagaman agama, sekaligus menelaah batas-batas toleransi, koeksistensi, dan sikap dialogis yang diajarkan dalam sumber ajaran Islam. Penelitian ini menggunakan metode kualitatif melalui studi kepustakaan dengan pendekatan normatif-teologis dan analisis tekstual. Data bersumber dari ayat-ayat Al-Qur'an, hadis-hadis Nabi, serta literatur tafsir dan kajian keislaman yang relevan. Analisis dilakukan dengan menafsirkan teks secara kontekstual untuk memahami pesan universal Islam terkait hubungan dengan umat lain. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahwa Islam menegaskan pengakuan terhadap pluralitas agama sebagai sunnatullah, mendorong sikap keadilan, penghormatan, dan kerja sama dalam ranah sosial, serta melarang pemaksaan keyakinan. Pada saat yang sama, Islam menetapkan batas teologis yang jelas agar toleransi tidak bermuara pada relativisme akidah. Kesimpulan dari kajian ini menegaskan bahwa perspektif Al-Qur'an dan Hadis memberikan landasan kuat bagi terwujudnya kehidupan sosial yang harmonis, adil, dan bermartabat di tengah masyarakat majemuk. Penelitian ini merekomendasikan pengembangan kajian kontekstual dan empiris mengenai implementasi nilai-nilai tersebut dalam kehidupan sosial-keagamaan masyarakat kontemporer.

Kata kunci: Islam dan Pluralitas Agama; Hubungan Antarumat Beragama; Al-Qur'an dan Hadis; Toleransi Beragama.



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Introduction

Humanity will not be able to be united in terms of belief and divinity, which Allah has clearly stated in His word, which in Indonesian explains that "And if Allah had willed, He would have made you one people (only), but Allah misleads whom He wills and guides whom He wills. And verily you will be asked about what you have done." QS. Al-Nahal: 93.

Al-Suyuti interprets the verse above, that if Allah SWT had willed, He would have made humanity into followers of one religion only (no mixture of other believers) but Allah leads astray whom He wills and guides whom He wills (Al-Suyuti, n.d.).

In dealing with differences in belief, Islam divides the infidels into two groups: the People of the Book and the idolaters. Ibn 'Ashur explains the meaning of this verse, stating that the followers of other religions who are closest in their gentleness towards Muslims, despite being opposed to Islam, are Christians, and among these three groups, there are different levels of hatred towards Muslims, such as the Zoroastrians, the Sabians, and the idolaters (Ibn 'Asyur, 1984).

The term "People of the Book" comes from the Arabic word "ahlu" (people of the book) and "al-kitab" (people of the book). The word "ahl" is composed of the letters alif, ha, and lam, which literally mean "friendly," "pleasant," or "fond." The word "ahlul" can also be used to refer to a relationship based on ideological or religious ties (Raghib, 1412).

The Qur'anic verses that are positive and sympathetic to the People of the Book refer to those who believe and adhere to the teachings of their holy book before the coming of the Qur'an. However, the Qur'anic verses also indicate that there have been major changes to the teachings of the People of the Book. However, the Qur'an still acknowledges that among them there are groups who remain steadfast in their religious teachings, even though they are a minority. The term Ahlul is also used in the Qur'an to refer to a community that has accountable authority in the religious field. Furthermore, the word al-Kitab means to collect something with something else. The term book is then interpreted as writing,



because this writing itself indicates a series of several letters including the words of Allah revealed to His Messengers in the form of holy books, both those that have been revealed to Prophets before the Prophet Muhammad SAW, as well as revelations revealed to the Prophet Muhammad himself. Thus, the understanding of Ahlul Kitab here refers to a community or group of religious adherents who have holy books revealed by Allah to His Prophets and Messengers (Raghib, 1412).

Research Methods

The type of research used in this study is a literature review, namely by collecting information from various relevant literature to answer the research problem. The stages carried out are preparing equipment, preparing a working bibliography, organizing time, and reading and recording research materials (Mestika, 2008). The data sources used in this study consist of primary and secondary sources. Primary sources are official data related to discussions about Muslims and other communities: communities other than Muslims, comparisons between Muslims and other communities or those called the People of the Book, and the recognition of the Quran and Hadith related to the People of the Book. Meanwhile, secondary data are all quotes from literature that have relevance to the research topic. The data analysis used is content analysis. Content analysis is used to understand the texts of relevant documents in an effort to uncover important data from the theme being studied.

Discussion Results

According to As Sa'di, (As Sa'di, 2002). The Tafsir Teaching Team ('adadu asatizah at-tafsir) is under the guidance of Abdullah at-Turki, only in Tafsir Al-Muyassar it is explained that the People of the Book are not only those who receive the book from Allah, but are all people and all times where they have the same beliefs as them or people who have converted to their religion. Something that is still being debated by ulama to this day is the issue of slaughtering the people of the Book. According to Shaikh As-Sa'di, the slaughter of the Jews and Christians is



halal for Muslims, but this is not the case for non-believers other than Jews and Christians. The apostles all agreed on the haram of sacrifices offered to other than Allah, because this is an act of shirk. Meanwhile, the Jewish and Christian religions still forbid sacrifices offered to other than Allah. However, if the sacrifice of the People of the Book is dedicated to someone other than Allah, then the law of eating that sacrifice remains haram. Beyond the sacrifice of the People of the Book, marriage to them is a matter still debated by scholars. Most scholars say that it is permissible for a believing man to marry a woman from the People of the Book, on the grounds that she is a good woman, free and maintains her honor, not a prostitute (Abu Ubaidah Usamah bin M. Jamal, 2013).

Meanwhile, scholars of the Hanafi school of thought stipulate that marriage between Muslim men and women of the People of the Book must be permitted in a safe place, not in a state of war, for fear that their children will follow their mother's religion. Although Muslim men are permitted to marry women of the People of the Book, this law does not apply vice versa, namely, men of the People of the Book may not marry Muslim women. Because the law is haram and invalid.

According to Sayyid Quthb, the People of the Book are Jews and Christians. However, not all expressions of the People of the Book directly refer to both Jews and Christians, as the term "People of the Book" only means Jews and Christians. This is very clear when explaining verses about the People of the Book, which state that the meaning of the People of the Book is Jews and Christians. However, in his explanation, Sayyid Quthb does not limit the meaning of the People of the Book to Jews and Christians who are descendants of the Children of Israel, but rather to a broader meaning, that all those who believe in the books revealed by Allah, both the Torah and the Gospel, even if they are not of Jewish descent, are still called People of the Book.

However, in explaining the meaning of Ahlu Kitab, Sayyid Quthb explained with a historical approach where the meaning of Ahlu Kitab meant Jews and Christians who were in Medina, or who interacted with the Prophet Muhammad. However, Sayyid Quthb in explaining the meaning of Ahlu Kitab did not limit the



meaning of Ahlu Kitab only from the descendants of Bani Isranil. Therefore, it can be concluded that in explaining the meaning of Ahlu Kitab, Sayyid Quthb did not disagree with the salaf scholars, and the previous commentators (Sayyid Qutub, 14120. However, in interpreting the verses of Ahlu Kitab in particular, and in interpreting the verses in the Qur'an, Sayyid Quthb used a flowing narrative style, easy to read and easy to understand by both educated and uneducated people, and could influence someone's emotions according to what he wanted.

However, if we pay attention to the method of presentation and style of interpretation of the Qur'an, Sayyid Quthb will find that the method used is different from the method used by other experts in interpretation, such as Ibn Kathir, Imam At-Tabari, Abu Bakar Al-Jazairi, and others. Because in interpreting the verses in the Qur'an, Quthb very rarely includes hadiths and atsar-atsar from the companions and scholars. This deficiency in presentation is what makes the subject of criticism by scholars, including Sheikh Abdul Muhsin Abbad, he explained that in Quthb's writings you will not find the writing, "So and so said, So and so said, the Messenger of Allah said so and so". and so on. This is because the writing of Sayyid Quthb's interpretation is not built on atsar, it is still built on opinions with thoughts, which is why he often expresses opinions that are not valid.

Theological Position of the People of the Book

The theological position of the People of the Book (Jews and Christians) in Islam occupies a unique and complex space. Here's a brief description: Recognition as Recipients of Revelation. The Qur'an refers to them as People of the Book because they received the previous scriptures: the Torah, the Psalms, and the Gospel. They are recognized as having received true revelations and messages from Allah through the prophets (Moses, David, Jesus). Therefore, they are considered closer to Islam than the polytheists (Mushrikeen). As Sa'di, n.d.).



Deviation and Distortion

The Quran also emphasizes that the People of the Book have distorted some of the contents of the book (tahrif), both in text and interpretation. Their concepts of divinity (such as the Trinity in Christianity or the exclusive beliefs of Judaism) are considered to deviate from pure monotheism. Therefore, even though they were among the recipients of revelation, they are not automatically saved without believing in the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) and the final message (Al-Khazin, 1215).

Status of Faith

Islamic Tawhid: Only those who believe in Allah and the last Messenger (Muhammad ﷺ) are considered true believers. People of the Book who adhere to the old creed without accepting the message of Muhammad ﷺ are considered infidels in theological sense, but their status is different from that of the Arab polytheists who worship idols and the only religion acceptable to Allah is Islam ((Al-Khazin, 1215).

Hope and the Path to Guidance

There is a verse that provides a chance of salvation for the People of the Book who truly believe in Allah, the Last Day, and do good deeds (QS. Al-Baqarah: 62, QS. Al-Mā'idah: 69), although commentators differ in their interpretation as to whether this applies before the sending of the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ or after (Al-Baidhawi, 1418).

Recognition of Previous Revelation

Islam acknowledges that Allah has sent down revelations to the prophets who are considered to have been on the right path. However, Islam also emphasizes that these revelations: Have been changed/perverted by some of their followers (tahrif), and that the Gospel & Torah are no longer as authentic as the original revelations.



Still Having Closeness (Compared to Mushrikin)

The People of the Book are seen as closer to Islam than the polytheists (idolaters), because: They still acknowledge the oneness of God (although in Islam it is considered to have deviated), They still have some moral and religious values from previous revelations. Because of their "half-correct" theological position, Islam provides some social legal leniency, such as: They are allowed to eat the slaughtered meat of the People of the Book (QS. Al-Ma'idah: 5), Muslim men are allowed to marry women from the People of the Book, although not vice versa (QS. Al-Ma'idah: 5). However, this is fiqhiiyyah, it does not mean that they are considered to have full faith (Al-Suyuti, n.d.).

Status of Faith

According to Islam, the People of the Book are not automatically considered believers, because: They reject the prophethood of Muhammad SAW, They change the teachings of monotheism into trinity or other forms, Therefore, they remain in disbelief according to Islamic creed, even though they are different from pure polytheists.

Typology of People of the Book

People of the Book change the books that Allah revealed to them according to their desires. As for religions other than Islam, according to Sayyid Qutb he was a clear infidel. Because they do not believe and carry out what is in their book, that was true before the Prophet Muhammad was sent. However, after the Messenger of Allah was sent, this faith would not be accepted, except by believing in the Prophet Muhammad and the Koran. From the explanation above it can be seen that the People of the Book according to Sayyid Qutb are Kafirs and polytheists. It turns out that the disbelief of the People of the Book has also been stated by scholars and Ahlu of tafsir such as Shaykh Utsaimin, Ibnu Katsir, At-Thabari, Al-Bagawi, and As-Sa'di. Disbelief among the People of the Book and Religions Other Than Islam According to Sayyid Qutb, religions outside of Islam are infidels, their faith, including the People of the Book, is not accepted. Sayyid Quthb classified the



People of the Book as infidels on the grounds that they did not adhere to the true religion. The Jews claimed to be a privileged group from Allah, claiming that they were the children of Allah,³⁸ and that Moses was sent to them to bring the Torah as a law for their lives. However, in their religious life, they were far from the morals of religious people. They contradicted the commands of the prophets sent to them, and even killed some because they did not align with their desires. Sayyid Quthb's opinion regarding the infidelity of the People of the Book, which stemmed from their belief that Allah is one of three beings, is in line with that of other commentators such as Ibn Kathir and Muhammad bin Ali As-Syaukani. They worship their monks. The word "Worship their monks" means that they make lawful what is lawful and forbid what their monks say is forbidden, even though what the monks say is contrary to their books (Torah and Gospel). Obedience to the *rahirahib* (priests) carried out by the People of the Book makes them commit *shirk* and disbelief. This kind of obedience is called *al-muttahizina lahum arbaban min dunillah*. As for the beliefs held by Jews and Christians, they emerged only because they obeyed their desires. They are fighting against the religion of Allah. The People of the Book (Jews and Christians) will not stop opposing the Muslims until the Muslims follow their religion (*milah*). As long as Muslims are still consistent with the teachings of the Islamic religion, they will continue to fight against it until the Day of Judgment (Sayyid Qutub, 1412).

Conclusion

Islam teaches us to live side by side, to help one another, and to be tolerant, as long as it remains within the bounds of Islamic law. Islam is environmentally friendly, socially hospitable, and adaptable to a diverse society with diverse backgrounds and social strata. Therefore, any accusations that Islam is intolerant are diametrically opposed to the concepts outlined in the Quran itself. Humanistic relationships can be fostered within a framework of harmony while maintaining each person's faith and beliefs. The above explanation, though brief, provides a



small glimpse into how Islam can exist and be flexible in the face of social and humanitarian crises and noble moral crises.



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