Addressing the Practice of Religious Tolerance by Panji Gumilang (In the studies of Wahbah Az-Zuhaili and Quraish Shihab)

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ABSTRACT

Studying the subject of religious tolerance is always fascinating. This research holds a significant place in the field of religion studies because to the fluctuations in relationships between religious groups throughout different regions of the world, including Indonesia. Numerous Islamic scholars, particularly those who study tafsir, attempt to define tolerance normatively by drawing on passages from the Quran. Wahbah al-Zuhayli is a modern scholar who takes tolerance very seriously. Al-Zuhayli's interpretation, while methodologically sound, generally adopts the methodology of ancient ulama literature. But the issue of tolerance that he highlights stems from the social reality that religious communities currently inhabit. Al-Zuhayli opens his discussion on tolerance by elucidating the notion of wasatiyyah al-Islam, or Islamic moderation. Al-Zuhayli then categorized the four primary themes of tolerance found in the Koran. First, the interactions amongst the Samawi faiths. Forming a moderate and tolerant mindset is made possible by the heavenly religion's shared core doctrines. The second is the freedom to select one's religion. This point demonstrates how Islamic law upholds the Ri'ayah al-Din concept. The third is the ban on inciting hate. Fourth, the advice to put justice first and the outlawing of acts of terror. Each and every person is entitled to protection for their soul's freedom. According to Al-Zuhayli's perspective, religious groups generally get along well and are tolerant of one another. This is also a scientific refutation of the violent ideologies that radical organizations frequently advance.

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1. INTRODUCTION

Religious tolerance has become one of the important issues in religious and social discussions in the modern world. In the context of Islam, the fundamental principles regarding human relationships, both within the Muslim community and with followers of other religions, have been explained in various classical and contemporary literature. The Quran, as the primary source of Islamic teachings, provides clear guidance on how that relationship should be established. However, in various parts of the world, including Indonesia, debates often arise about the extent to which religious tolerance should be practiced, especially when facing different religious practices and interpretations. In this regard, the concept of Wasathiyah al-Islam introduced by Wahbah al-Zuhayli becomes relevant in addressing the challenges of religious tolerance, especially amidst social turmoil caused by intolerant understandings. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes the importance of justice, moderation, and the application of universal principles that have been taught in Islam. Therefore, this research aims to delve deeper into the concept of tolerance according to Wahbah al-Zuhayli, with the hope of providing a foundation for understanding to promote peace and harmony in community life (Al-Zuhayli, 2005).

The Quran can generally be divided into two main areas. First, the Quran delves deeply into the relationship between creatures and God, as well as the aspects of the universe that relate to divinity. Secondly, the Qur'an also explores humanitarian issues, presenting various challenges faced by humans in everyday life. Humanity along with all its dimensions is an important topic in the Qur'an. The Quran teaches that in terms of humanity and social interaction, Islam offers universal principles. This religion always encourages the widespread dissemination of goodness and the protection of every individual's rights. The Qur'an emphasizes that Islamic law is established to achieve goodness (al-Bir), piety, truth (al-Haqq), and to provide continuous guidance. (al-Huda) (Mardalis, 2008). However, in reality, there are groups within the Muslim community that exhibit harsh and intolerant behavior. Some of them adopt an exclusive religious view, even towards fellow Muslims who have different practices. Such an attitude leads to the neglect of the principle of universality, which should be a hallmark of Islam (Nasution, 2022).

To address this phenomenon, Wahbah al-Zuhayli proposed the concept of Wasathiyah al-Islam, which emphasizes justice and moderation in Islam. According to him, there are fundamental principles in Islam that relate to the patterns of relationships among humans, both within the Muslim community and with followers of other beliefs. The understanding and application of these principles are expected to prevent radicalization in religion and promote peace and tolerance in society. History shows that the roots of religious tolerance can be found in Islamic tradition from classical to contemporary times. However, there are times when this spirit of tolerance fades due to intolerant understanding and fanaticism. A similar phenomenon also occurs in Indonesia, the country with the largest Muslim population in the world, where in recent years there have been acts of terror and violence in the name of religion that have resulted in loss of life and social disintegration.

Recently, the issue of religious tolerance has garnered public attention, especially following the actions of the caretaker of the Az-Zaitun Islamic boarding school, Panji Gumilang, who invited Jewish activist Monique Rijkers to the Islamic New Year event on 1 Muharram at the boarding school. Monique appeared wearing a shirt with the Star of David symbol and delivered a speech, which then went viral on social media. Previously, a video of the Id prayer at Ma'had Al Zaytun also circulated on social media, showing a non-Muslim sitting in the front row and praying during the Id prayer led by Abdussalam Rasyidi Panji Gumilang (Prakoso, 2021).

This action has raised questions among netizens and the public about what is meant by tolerance. This issue has drawn the attention of researchers to explain Wahbah al-Zuhayli's views on tolerance, with the hope that this research can make a significant contribution to the fundamental understanding of the concept of Islamic moderation in the form of religious tolerance. This research is based on fundamental principles that refer to al-Zuhayli's thematic grouping of the verses of the Qur'an regarding religious tolerance, which includes four main aspects: the unity of Islam with the heavenly religions, the foundation of freedom of religion, the prohibition of spreading hatred and committing terror, and the encouragement to uphold justice (Al-Zuhayli, 2005).

2. METHODS

This research applies a qualitative method with a focus on literature study. This approach is used to collect data through in-depth and comprehensive observation of the themes that are the focus of the research. As explained by Mardalis, the purpose of literature studies is to collect data and information

by utilizing various materials available in the library. In this research, a thematic method or Maudhu'i interpretation is applied, which involves three main steps. First, the collection of verses related to the topic of tolerance was carried out. Second, the process of reading, researching, and gathering Wahhab Az-Zuhaili's interpretations on tolerance. Thirdly, a description and analysis of the interpretation is conducted to obtain accurate and valid research results. In the process of data analysis, several key procedures will be applied, including summarizing verses that specifically discuss or mention tolerance, as well as identifying various interpretations presented by Wahhab Az-Zuhaili regarding the concept of tolerance. In addition, the differences, similarities, or patterns that emerge in the interpretation of Wahhab Az-Zuhaili will also be analyzed. This research is expected to provide a deeper understanding of the concept of tolerance, contribute significantly to understanding these aspects, and serve as a solid foundation for further comprehension of the concept of tolerance in the context of the Qur'an.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Findings

The results of this study indicate that the concept of tolerance in Wahbah al-Zuhayli's perspective, as expressed in his interpretation, is an integral part of Islamic teachings that emphasize balance, moderation, and justice in social life. This research employs a qualitative method with a focus on literature review, which allows for in-depth data collection from various relevant literature and interpretations. By using the thematic method or Maudhu'i interpretation, this research successfully explores the concept of religious tolerance found in the Qur'an, as well as how Wahbah al-Zuhayli interprets this concept in the context of modern social and religious life.

The first step in this research is to inventory the verses of the Qur'an that relate to tolerance. Research has found that the Quran explicitly mentions the importance of moderation (wasatiyyah), which is described as a balanced approach to religion, avoiding extremism, and upholding social justice. Verses related to interfaith relationships emphasize the importance of living in harmony and respecting each other's beliefs, even when there are differences in doctrine and theological views. In this context, religious tolerance is not only understood as a form of freedom of religion, but also as a social responsibility to maintain peace and avoid conflict.

The second stage involves exploring and analyzing Wahbah al-Zuhayli's interpretation regarding the theme of tolerance. Al-Zuhayli, in his commentary, places tolerance as one of the main pillars of Islam. He emphasizes that moderation in religion, or what is known as wasatiyyah al-Islam, is the approach recommended by the Qur'an. This concept encompasses not only tolerance in religious practices but also in social and political attitudes. Al-Zuhayli interprets several verses that regulate relationships with other religions, particularly the Abrahamic faiths, which he views as having many doctrinal similarities and fundamental values. This similarity, according to him, is the foundation for building a peaceful and harmonious relationship among the followers of the Abrahamic religions.

Furthermore, this research analyzes four main themes that emerge from Wahbah al-Zuhayli's interpretation of tolerance. The first topic is the relationship between the Abrahamic religions. Al-Zuhayli explains that the Abrahamic religions, such as Islam, Christianity, and Judaism, share the same roots in the belief in one God and similar moral teachings. For that reason, al-Zuhayli advocates that the relationship between the followers of these religions should be built on the foundation of mutual respect and cooperation, rather than conflict or hostility. He also emphasized that a moderate attitude in religion can serve as a means to maintain harmonious relationships among the followers of the Abrahamic faiths.

The second theme is the principle of freedom of religion. In his interpretation, al-Zuhayli states that Islam grants every individual the freedom to choose their beliefs, as long as it does not disrupt social order or the security of society. Al-Zuhayli bases his views on the verses of the Qur'an that emphasize that "there is no compulsion in religion." (QS. Al-Baqarah: 256). He explained that freedom

of religion is one of the fundamental principles in Islamic law (fiqh), and every individual has the right to believe in the religion of their choice without fear of oppression or discrimination (Al-Qur'an, 2021).

The third theme is the prohibition of spreading hatred. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes that Islam prohibits all forms of hatred and provocation that can disrupt the harmony among religious communities. In his interpretation, he quotes verses that condemn behaviors that lead to disputes and divisions. According to al-Zuhayli, spreading hatred towards others, whether due to religious differences or other reasons, is not in line with Islamic teachings that prioritize peace and compassion. In a modern context, this prohibition is highly relevant to prevent social conflict and violence that often arise from religious-based provocations.

The fourth theme is the prohibition of terrorism and violence. Al-Zuhayli firmly states that Islam rejects all forms of terrorism and acts of violence committed in the name of religion. He believes that such actions are contrary to the principles of justice taught by Islam. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes that every human being has the right to live in peace and security, without threats from others. Therefore, terrorism and all forms of violence are not only prohibited by Islamic teachings, but are also considered a violation of the most fundamental human rights.

This research also found that Wahbah al-Zuhayli's interpretation has a critical approach to the doctrines of violence that are often misused by extremist groups. Al-Zuhayli, in his interpretation, repeatedly emphasizes that violence and extremism have no place in Islam, which is fundamentally a religion that prioritizes peace and tolerance. This interpretation aligns with the views of other contemporary scholars, such as Quraish Shihab, who also emphasize the importance of tolerance in religious life in Indonesia (Nasution, 2022).

Through this analysis, the research successfully identified that Wahbah al-Zuhayli's views on religious tolerance focus on the principles of moderation, freedom, and justice. This interpretation provides a strong foundation for Muslims to live a religious life in harmony with followers of other religions, without sacrificing the fundamental values of Islam. This research makes an important contribution to expanding the understanding of the concept of tolerance in Islam, as well as its relevance in contemporary social and religious contexts, both in Indonesia and internationally.

In conclusion, this research emphasizes that religious tolerance is an important part of Islamic teachings, as interpreted by Wahbah al-Zuhayli. Through the concept of wasatiyyah, freedom of religion, the prohibition of spreading hatred, and the rejection of terrorism, al-Zuhayli's interpretation provides clear guidance on how Muslims should lead an inclusive and peaceful social life while firmly adhering to the fundamental teachings of their faith (Shihab, 2007).

Discussions

The discussion of the results of this research focuses on how Wahbah al-Zuhayli, through his interpretation, constructs the concept of religious tolerance in Islam based on the principle of wasatiyyah or moderation. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes that Islam, as a religion revealed for all of humanity, teaches balance and justice, including in interfaith relations. This wasatiyyah approach rejects all forms of extremism and radicalism that can threaten social harmony.

a. Moderation and Balance in Religion

The concept of wasatiyyah explained by al-Zuhayli in his commentary refers to the understanding that Islam encourages its followers not to be excessive in their religious practices, both in terms of worship and in social attitudes. This moderation is reflected in interfaith relationships that prioritize attitudes of tolerance and mutual respect. The moderation advocated by al-Zuhayli carries the message that Muslims should live in harmony with followers of other religions, even in situations of differing beliefs. This understanding is relevant for countering various threats of extremism that often arise under the guise of religion (Al-Zuhayli, 2005).

Al-Zuhayli not only discusses wasatiyyah in the context of worship practices, but also relates it to social life, where tolerance must be the foundation of interfaith interactions. This moderate attitude is

not just a theoretical teaching, but a principle that must be applied in everyday life, especially in a pluralistic society like Indonesia.

"And thus We have made you (Muslims) a just and chosen community so that you may be witnesses over (the deeds of) mankind and so that the Messenger (Muhammad) may be a witness over (your deeds). And We did not establish the Qibla that you used to face except that We might make evident who follows the Messenger and who turns back on his heels. And indeed, the (change of qibla) feels very heavy, except for those who have been guided by Allah; and Allah will not waste your faith. Indeed, Allah is Most Gracious and Most Merciful to humanity". (QS. Al-Baqarah: 143)

This sentence emphasizes that Muslims should be an example of moderation and balance. In his view, Quraish Shihab also emphasizes moderation, but with a focus on the principles of justice and balance in his interpretation. Shihab stated that Islam teaches the importance of understanding the social and cultural context when interacting with followers of other religions. I see moderation as part of the principle of living harmoniously amidst diversity, emphasizing that Islam teaches tolerance through a deep understanding of social and cultural contexts.

b. Freedom of Religion as a Human Right

One significant contribution of al-Zuhayli in his interpretation regarding tolerance is his emphasis on the principle of religious freedom. The verse from the Quran that emphasizes "there is no compulsion in religion" is: (QS. Al-Baqarah: 256):

"There is no compulsion in religion; surely the right path has become distinct from the wrong path. Therefore, whoever disbelieves in Taghut and believes in Allah has certainly grasped a very strong handhold that will never break. Indeed, Allah is All-Hearing and All-Knowing".

Becomes the main foundation for al-Zuhayli to emphasize that Islam recognizes the freedom of every individual to choose their beliefs. This concept also includes the protection of the rights of religious minorities to worship and practice their beliefs without pressure or discrimination.

This discussion also highlights the relevance of the principle of freedom of religion in a modern context, where human rights issues often become a topic of debate in various countries. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes that freedom of religion is part of Islamic teachings that align with the universal values of human rights. This emphasis is important in the effort to build an inclusive and just society, where everyone has the freedom to express their beliefs without fear of repression or violence.

Shihab also supports freedom of religion and relates it to the fundamental principles of Islam. He emphasizes that the right to vote and practice religion is an integral part of Islamic teachings. Shihab emphasizes the necessity of religious freedom to build an inclusive and just society, as well as to avoid discrimination against religious minorities.

c. Prohibition of Spreading Hatred and Conflict

Al-Zuhayli also emphasizes the importance of maintaining social harmony by prohibiting any form of provocation that could incite hatred among religious communities. In this discussion, it is evident how the Quran views hatred as a threat to social peace. Al-Zuhayli interprets the verses that oppose slander and hate speech, emphasizing that the duty of every Muslim is to promote peace, not to spread hatred.

"O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with a report, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful".

He emphasizes that Islam recognizes the right of every individual to choose their beliefs and protects the rights of religious minorities. This approach is in line with the universal values of human rights. In this context, al-Zuhayli provides a critical interpretation of groups that use religion as a justification to spread hatred or commit acts of violence. This Tafsir al-Zuhayli is very relevant in the context of contemporary socio-political issues, where religion is often misused to divide society. By prohibiting the spread of hatred, al-Zuhayli conveys the message that Islam is a religion that brings mercy to all the worlds (*rahmatan lil 'alamin*) (Mardalis, 2008).

Shihab also highlights the prohibition of hatred and provocation in Islamic teachings. He emphasized that Islam teaches the importance of peace and unity, and condemns all forms of slander that can divide society. Shihab sees this prohibition as part of an effort to create a harmonious and respectful society.

d. Rejection of Terrorism and Violence

In the discussion on terrorism, al-Zuhayli firmly rejects all forms of violence and terrorist acts committed in the name of religion. He emphasized that Islam has never justified violence as a means to resolve conflicts or to advocate for religious interests. Al-Zuhayli bases his views on the teachings of the Qur'an, which emphasize the importance of justice and the protection of human rights, including the right to live in peace and security.

Al-Zuhayli's rejection of terrorism provides an important perspective in addressing the increasingly rampant issues of extremism in the modern world. This interpretation serves as a foundation for Muslims to reject all forms of violence carried out in the name of religion and instead promotes dialogue and interfaith cooperation as a solution to the conflicts that arise. (QS. Al-Isra: 33). This verse emphasizes that violence and murder are not justified except in very specific and justified conditions.

"And do not kill the soul that Allah has forbidden (to kill), except by right (reason). And whoever is killed unjustly, then indeed We have given power to his heirs, but let not the heirs exceed limits in killing. Indeed, he is a person who has received help".

Shihab also rejects violence and terrorism, emphasizing that such actions are contrary to the teachings of Islam, which prioritize peace and justice. He emphasizes that Islam teaches conflict resolution through dialogue and understanding, not through violence. Shihab emphasizes the need for a peaceful approach in resolving disputes.

e. Critique of the Doctrine of Violence

Al-Zuhayli, in his commentary, critically addresses various doctrines of violence that are misused by certain groups to legitimize radical actions. This interpretation serves as a critique of the ideologies of violence that are often propagated by extremist groups. Al-Zuhayli clearly states that Islam is a religion of peace and rejects all forms of unjust violence.

This critique provides a strong foundation for rejecting teachings that condone violence, both at the individual and social levels. This interpretation also helps in deconstructing the misconceptions that are often used to justify acts of violence under the guise of religion. This critical perspective reinforces al-Zuhayli's position as one of the scholars who promotes moderation and peace in Islamic

teachings (Nasution, 2022). "Pada" translates to "On" in English. (QS. Al-Baqarah: 190). This verse teaches that violence must be limited and should not go beyond boundaries.

"And fight in the way of Allah those who fight you, but do not transgress the limits, for indeed, Allah does not like those who transgress the limits".

Shihab also criticized the use of religion as a tool to legitimize violence. He emphasizes that Islamic teachings must be understood contextually and comprehensively, rejecting extremist interpretations that contradict the fundamental principles of Islam. Shihab strives to clarify that Islam teaches peace and tolerance, not violence.

f. The Relevance of al-Zuhayli's Concept of Tolerance in Indonesia

This discussion also examines the relevance of the concept of tolerance as presented by al-Zuhayli in the context of Indonesia, which is a country with a very high level of religious diversity. Al-Zuhayli's emphasis on moderation, freedom of religion, and the prohibition of hatred and violence is highly relevant for building a pluralistic and peaceful Indonesian society. Interfaith tolerance in Indonesia is often tested by various socio-political events, so the concepts presented by al-Zuhayli can serve as a foundation to strengthen social harmony amidst diversity. one of the previous relevant research implementation of Pancasila Village in Lamongan has succeeded through mutual tolerance and not the imposition of religious beliefs (Sutopo, et al, 2024).

In conclusion, this discussion emphasizes that the concept of tolerance in Wahbah al-Zuhayli's perspective is not only relevant for Muslims but also makes an important contribution to building peace and social justice in a pluralistic society. With a moderate and inclusive wasatiyyah approach, al-Zuhayli offers a perspective that aligns with universal human rights values while maintaining the integrity of Islamic teachings. This research provides deeper insights into how the concept of tolerance can be understood and applied in social life, especially in a diverse society like Indonesia (Shihab, 2007).

Shihab also sees the relevance of the concept of tolerance in the context of Indonesia. He emphasizes that the principles of moderation and inclusivity taught by Islam can serve as a foundation for building a more harmonious and just society. Shihab believes that a deep understanding of Islamic teachings can help address the social and political challenges faced by Indonesian society.

4. CONCLUSION

Wahbah al-Zuhayli, through the concept of wasatiyyah (moderation), emphasizes the importance of tolerance, freedom of religion, as well as the rejection of violence and the spread of hatred in Islam. This concept is relevant in fostering harmony in a pluralistic society like Indonesia, where differences in religion and culture are an important part of daily life. Al-Zuhayli emphasizes that Islam teaches peace, respects differences, and rejects extremism that can disrupt social order. With the application of this principle of moderation, it is hoped that a more peaceful, just, and tolerant society in terms of religion and social life will be realized.

Overall, both Wahbah al-Zuhayli and Quraish Shihab make significant contributions to understanding and applying the concept of religious tolerance in Islam. With an emphasis on moderation, freedom of religion, a ban on hatred and violence, and a rejection of extremism, these two scholars offer relevant guidance for building a peaceful and harmonious society. These concepts are very important in the context of Indonesia, which has a high diversity of religions and cultures. This research shows that the teachings of moderation and tolerance conveyed by al-Zuhayli and Shihab can serve as a foundation for addressing conflicts and promoting peace in pluralistic societies.

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