

The Concept of Religious Tolerance in the History of Islamic Civilization

Zaid Tsabit Al Kalatini

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
zaid.kalatini@gmail.com

Mohammad Taufiq Rahman

UIN Sunan Gunung Djati Bandung, Indonesia
fkrakoe@uinsgd.ac.id

Mochamad Ziaul Haq

Parahyangan Catholic University, Bandung, Indonesia
mziaulhaq@unpar.ac.id

Fauzan Hilmi Aziz

Al-Azhar University, Cairo, Egypt
fhilmi25@gmail.com

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Abstract:

This study aims to discuss the concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization. This study uses a qualitative approach by applying analytical descriptive methods. The results and discussion in this study show that the dynamics of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization cannot be separated from the understanding of Muslims of the concept of tolerance and inter-religious relations sourced from the Qur'an and the instructions of the Prophet Muhammad, as reflected in the Charter of Medina, the Pact of Umar, the birth of Comparative Religion, the concept of Ahl Al-Dhimma, to the Caliphate system that regulates tolerance and religious freedom. The study concludes that the concept of religious tolerance in Islamic teachings has been realized in the historical reality of Islamic civilization.

Keywords: historical reality; Islamic civilization; Islamic world; religious tolerance; social harmony.

INTRODUCTION

Religious tolerance is one of the issues most frequently discussed (Rustandi et al., 2022). Religious tolerance refers to an attitude of mutual respect and acceptance of differences in religious beliefs between individuals or groups (Luthfi, 2023). Islam itself openly teaches about tolerance or harmony (Aulia, 2023). However, since the 20th century, the Islamic world has faced new challenges in the field of religious tolerance (Fatharani et al., 2023), for example, accusations that Islam is an intolerant religion and does not provide religious freedom (Bakar, 2015). Therefore, this research considers it important to discuss the concept of religious tolerance in Islam, complemented by historical facts of religious harmony in the history of Islamic civilization.

The results of previous research related to religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization have been carried out by a number of researchers. Among other things, research conducted by Fatharani, et al. (Fatharani

et al., 2023) entitled "The History of Religious Tolerance in Islamic Civilization in the Era of Globalization," *Religion: Journal of Religion, Social and Culture*. This article explores the development of religious tolerance in the Islamic world, with a focus on how religious tolerance adapts and changes in the context of globalization. This research concludes that the history of religious tolerance in Islamic civilization is a dynamic and continuously developing story. In the era of globalization, the need for mutual respect and coexistence between representatives of different religions is increasingly recognized, reflecting the basic principles of Islam (Fatharani et al., 2023). Also Luthfi's research (Luthfi, 2023) entitled "Tolerance in Baitul Maqdis during the Period of Islamic Civilization," *Metrum Journal*. This journal aims to investigate the values of tolerance applied in Baitul Maqdis during the period of Islamic civilization. The research results show that Baitul Maqdis, during the Islamic civilization period, reflected the principles of religious tolerance that underlie Islamic teachings. This legacy of tolerance is not only an integral part of Islamic history but also inspires the world community to build an environment that respects and understands diversity (Luthfi, 2023).

Previous research and current research have similarities. However, there has been no confirmation of the nature of the concept of religious tolerance in Islam. As a result, there is still debate in the Muslim community in facing religious diversity in an increasingly unified world (Fatharani et al., 2023), such as the emergence of the problem of bias in the meaning of tolerance (Shalahuddin et al., 2023) or the view that the word tolerance is used in the agenda of "war". opinion" to attack Islam (Retnaningsih, 2022). This research is present to complement the research deficiencies that the author has mentioned, namely focusing on the concept of religious tolerance in Islam, complemented by historical facts of religious harmony in the history of Islamic civilization. According to Woodruff, a concept is a meaningful and perfect idea or thought, which is one understanding of an object (Sopiansyah et al., 2022). Meanwhile, tolerance is an attitude of respecting other people's views that are different from one's own views with concessions and gentleness (Yenuri et al., 2021, p. 146). Religious tolerance refers to an attitude of mutual respect and acceptance of differences in religious beliefs between individuals or groups (Luthfi, 2023). Thus, the concept of religious tolerance is a meaningful idea of mutual respect for differences in religious beliefs. This research attempts to answer what the concept of religious tolerance actually is in Islamic teachings.

The main problem of this research is that there is a concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization. Theoretically, this research is useful as an insight into the concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization. Practically, this research is useful as a reference for implementing the practice of religious tolerance for Muslims in particular and the world community in general.

METHOD

This research uses a qualitative approach by applying analytical descriptive methods. Descriptive analysis is needed to provide a systematic, objective and critical explanation and description of the concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization (Mustari & Rahman, 2012). This type of research data is qualitative data. Primary data sources include literature surrounding the concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization. Secondary data sources are taken from various references related to the subject matter, such as articles, books and other documents. Data collection techniques are carried out through documentation. Data analysis techniques are carried out through stages, namely inventory, classification and data interpretation (Silverman, 2015; Sugiyono, 2013).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The Concept of Religious Tolerance in Islamic Teachings

The term "tolerance" is usually called *tasamuh* in Arabic (Yenuri et al., 2021), although basically, the meaning of the two words is not really the same (Abror, 2020; Ridho & Thibburruhany, 2019). If you refer to the English dictionary, you will find that the original meaning of tolerance is "to endure without protest", to hold back feelings without protesting (Bakar, 2015). This is different from the term *tasamuh*, whose meaning contains actions of guidance and acceptance within certain limits (Abror, 2020). The word *tasamuh* itself is not mentioned in the Qur'an. But if *tasamuh* is interpreted as "the ability to respect other people with different thoughts and morals," then you will find various verses that are in line with this meaning (2020, جاب الله). Therefore, the absence of mention of the word *tasamuh* or tolerance in the Al-Qur'an or the works of classical Ulama does not mean that religious tolerance does not receive sufficient attention in Islam, but rather that religious tolerance is more of an applicable, practical and administrative problem than a theological one. "There is no compulsion in (adhering to) religion (Islam). Indeed, the right path has become clear from the wrong path.." (Al-Baqarah (2) : 256)

Based on this verse (and other verses), Islam sees religion as a matter of choice that should not be forced because if religion is not sincere, it will not have any meaning in life. Then the surah Al-Kafirun was added, which is a firm and explicit expression of Islam's views on religious freedom (Thoha, 2021). So, religious tolerance in Islam is not about merging beliefs with different religious groups (Abror, 2020). On the other hand, the concept of tolerance in the sense of "bearing feelings without protest", which is then interpreted as 'relativism' and 'equality' exactly, will lose its ground; where Thoha (Thoha, 2021) criticizes this kind of meaning by asking: what should be tolerated If everything is the same, there are no essential and fundamental differences? In this regard, Legenhausen (1997) said: "True religious tolerance will only be realized when people learn to respect religious beliefs that they consider wrong. The key to tolerance is not to dismiss or relativize disagreement, but rather a willingness to accept disagreement."

According to Thoha (Thoha, 2021), this understanding is emphasized in Islam. There is an essential and fundamental difference between truth and error, good and bad, Islam and kufr. This tolerance has become a basic concept of Islamic teachings and the most important part of its religious structure. It is no coincidence that tolerance itself is referred to as an inherent trait in the Islamic religion, as stated in a hadith: "The religion most loved by Allah is Hanifiyyah (straight religion: Islam) which is spacious" (H.R. Al-Bukhari : 29). It should be noted that recognizing the reality of differences and the right to be different does not mean that the Islamic law of da'wah must be abandoned. The nature of the differences themselves actually allows each faction to see itself as an entity that has advantages, values and truth and to exercise its rights - including the right to convince (to convince) and be sure (to be convinced) and express his identity freely as an effort to realize his strengths, values and truth. However, this must be done in the corridor of general freedom and away from methods of violence and coercion (Thoha, 2021). Therefore, the Al-Qur'an orders to preach with wisdom, good advice, and upholding the ethics of dialogue; then if it turns out that the audience does not accept it, the Al-Qur'an tells them to let them be: "Call (people) to the path of your Lord with wisdom and good teaching and debate them in a better way. Indeed, your Lord knows best who is lost from His path and He knows best who is guided." (An-Nahl (16): 125).

Historical Facts of Religious Tolerance in Islamic Civilization

The theoretical foundations underlying Islam's attitude towards difference and diversity have been truly tested in socio-historical reality throughout the history of Islamic civilization. For this reason, it is necessary to present evidence from the history of Islam that shows how the Islamic concept of inter-religious harmony is able to answer various inter-religious problems (Thoha, 2021). Because it is impossible to fully explain the history in detail in this brief article, the author suffices by citing several representative phenomena related to this discussion.

1. Charter of Medina (*Shahifatul Medina*)

The history of religious tolerance in Islam began during the time of the Prophet Muhammad *sallallaahu 'alaihi wa sallam* (Fatharani et al., 2023). When Rasulullah came to Yathrib (Medina), he founded and pioneered the first Islamic state as well as the first "constitutional civil government". He created a constitutional basis for the people of this city, which became known as the Medina Charter or the Medina Constitution. This charter provides an extraordinary example of justice and tolerance for a pluralistic pattern of social relations (Thoha, 2021). According to Deddy Ismatullah (Tim Redaksi, 2013), many Western scientists appreciate the leadership of Rasulullah in managing state life, such as Robert N. Bellah (Bellah, 1970) who called him "too modern for his time".

The Medina Charter is one of the early documents that became a historical milestone in the protection of human rights, especially the rights of different religions and ethnicities within one community. This document not only confirms the principle of justice but also strengthens the foundations of social harmony in a pluralistic society. In this document, the right of Jews to practice their faith is firmly guaranteed while encouraging their unity with the wider community (Fatharani et al., 2023). As described by Zainal Abidin in his book *Medina Charter: The World's First Written Constitution* (2014), the translation of the text of the Medina Charter shows how this protection is clearly regulated. Article 16, for example, confirms that Jews who are loyal to the state have the right to protection without discrimination or exclusion from social life. Meanwhile, article 25 confirms their status as part of "one nation-state" (ummah) with Muslims, with full freedom to embrace their respective religions. This freedom is even extended to their allies and followers unless they commit acts that are detrimental to society (Fatharani et al., 2023).

This charter, according to Fatharani (2023), was a revolutionary step forward for its time, showing that diversity can not only be accepted but also respected and celebrated. In the context of the modern world, the

values contained in the Medina Charter remain relevant as inspiration for creating an inclusive and peaceful society (Fatharani et al., 2023). In the context of the modern world, the Medina Charter offers highly relevant lessons about how multicultural societies can be managed fairly and harmoniously. The principles contained in this Charter are in line with John Rawls's theory of justice, especially in the concept of "initial state" (original position), where all individuals have the same rights regardless of their identity (Allen, 2013). In *A Theory of Justice*, Rawls emphasized the importance of creating a society based on the principles of distributive justice, which was implicitly reflected in the inclusive policies of the Prophet in Medina (Rawls, 2017).

Apart from that, the Medina Charter can also be contextualized with the idea of religious pluralism put forward by figures such as Diana Eck. Eck emphasizes that pluralism is not just the existence of diversity but also active involvement in building mutually respectful relationships between various groups (Eck, 2007). Within this framework, the Medina Charter is not only a document guaranteeing minority rights but also a blueprint for building an inclusive society through interfaith dialogue and cooperation. Furthermore, the Medina Charter is relevant to the development of modern legal and political thought, especially in relation to social contract theory. The concepts introduced by philosophers such as Thomas Hobbes, John Locke, and Jean-Jacques Rousseau regarding social contracts are similar to the principles applied in the Medina Charter (Arifudin et al., 2024). In this document, the communities in Medina agreed to live together under fair and mutually protective rules, with the Prophet as leader entrusted with ensuring compliance with the agreement (Malam, 2021).

However, what makes the Medina Charter more special is that this document does not only focus on political and legal aspects but also integrates moral and spiritual values (Anello, 2021). This approach is in line with the thoughts of Imam Al-Ghazali, who stated that justice and social welfare can only be achieved if law and morality go hand in hand (Al-Ghazali, 2008). In the context of the Medina Charter, justice is not only applied in the form of formal rules but also through the principles of compassion, respect and solidarity inherent in Islamic teachings.

The contextualization of the Medina Charter in the modern world is also relevant to efforts to face global challenges such as religious discrimination, ethnic conflict and social polarization. The values contained in this Charter can be an inspiration for the development of inclusive policies in various countries (Bagir & Arianingtyas, 2019). For example, the concept of "one nation-state" in Article 25 can be applied in the context of multiethnic countries to strengthen social cohesion without sacrificing the cultural and religious identity of each community (Ahmad, 2014). In addition, the principle of religious freedom contained in the Medina Charter can become the basis for interreligious dialogue in the modern world. In line with Hans Küng's views in *Global Ethics*, interreligious dialogue is the key to creating global peace (Küng & Bowden, 2000). The Medina Charter shows that such dialogue is not only possible but can also be the foundation for a stable and harmonious society (Ahmad, 2014).

From a human rights perspective, the Medina Charter can also be considered a precursor to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). Although the UDHR explicitly mentions secular principles, the core of the declaration — such as the protection of the rights of individuals and minority groups — already reflected in the Medina Charter (Piranda et al., 2023). This shows that Islam, from its inception, has paid great attention to issues of social justice and the protection of basic human rights. However, it is important to remember that the application of the principles of the Medina Charter in the modern world requires contextual interpretation. As stated by Fazlur Rahman, understanding of Islamic teachings must always be dynamic, taking into account the realities of the times (Rahman, 2017). In this case, the universal values contained in the Medina Charter can be used as a guide to overcome contemporary challenges without losing their spiritual and moral essence.

Thus, the Medina Charter is not only a historical legacy but also a rich source of inspiration for modern society. He teaches that tolerance and inclusion are not signs of weakness but rather strengths that allow society to develop in diversity (Ahmad, 2014). In the midst of an increasingly polarized world, the principles contained in the Medina Charter can become the basis for efforts to create peace, justice and harmony at the local and global levels.

2. *The Treaty of Umar (Al-'Uhdah Al-'Umariyyah)*

After the time of the Prophet, the early caliphate era, such as the Rashidin Caliphate, also showed signs of religious tolerance (Fatharani et al., 2023). The policy implemented by the Khulafa' Ar-Rasyidin is to follow what was carried out by the previous Prophet. Among the most prominent is the Umar Agreement, which contains a guarantee of the safety of the residents of Iliya' (Al-Quds) following the opening of this city by Islamic forces (Thoha, 2021). Moshe Gil (Gil, 1997) in *A History of Palestine (634-1099)* translated the content of the agreement from *Tarikh Ath-Thabari*: "Bismillahirrahmanirrahim. This is the promise of protection given by the servant of God, Umar Amirul Mu'minin, to the people of Aelia (Jerusalem): that is, the guarantee of safety for their souls and property, churches and crosses and all their religious needs. Their church buildings will not be occupied,

demolished or reduced in size. They will not be forced to leave their religion, harassed, hurt or expelled from their homes (Gil, 1997)."

According to A. Shalabi (1988, شلبي), the science of Comparative Religion was not discussed until the arrival of Islam. This is due to Islam's recognition of the existence of other religions, both theoretically through sacred texts and in the practice of Muslim tolerance, which is not found in previous religions. Shalabi also believes that Comparative Religion is an Islamic science like other Islamic sciences such as Fiqh, Tafsir, Hadith, and so on (Munanto, 2015). This claim is corroborated by Adam Mez (Mez, 1937) through the Renaissance of Islam: "The presence of Christians among Muslims was the cause of the emergence of the principles of tolerance adopted by reformers and modernists. The need for coexistence gave rise to a kind of tolerance unknown in medieval Europe. A manifestation of this tolerance is the emergence of the science of Comparative Religion (the study of religions) and the enormous interest in this science (Mez, 1937)."

The Treaty of Umar is not only a legal document but also a symbol of how Islam provides significant space for the existence of other religions. A. Shalabi (1988) argues that one of the main factors that gave birth to Islamic tolerance towards other religions was Islam's recognition of the existence of these religions, both theoretically through sacred texts such as the Qur'an and through the social practices of Muslims (Munanto, 2015). For example, Islam recognizes previous holy books such as the Torah and the Bible, and mentions the importance of respecting the people of the book. Shalabi also linked this policy of tolerance to the birth of the science of Comparative Religion, which developed in Islamic civilization long before it was known in the Western world. In the book *The Renaissance of Islam*, Adam Mez (1937) emphasized that the existence of Christians in Islamic society encouraged the emergence of principles of tolerance which underlie the emergence of interest in the study of religions (Mez, 1937). Mez notes that it is this attitude of coexistence that allows Muslims to not only understand other religions but also to make them objects of systematic study. This was not found in medieval Europe, where interreligious conflict was more dominant than dialogue or academic study (Mez, 1937). According to Mez, the tolerance embraced by Muslims at that time even gave birth to intellectual discourse that was not yet known in other parts of the world. In the modern world, religious tolerance can be a model for building interfaith dialogue in a society that is increasingly diverse due to globalization (Mez, 1937).

In the context of the modern world, the principles contained in the Umar Agreement can be seen as the initial foundation for the concept of pluralism and human rights (Ridwan et al., 2021). Pluralism, as defined by Diana Eck, is an active attitude to accept and celebrate diversity as a strength, not a threat (Eck, 2007). Umar's agreement shows that Islam, as the majority religion at that time, was able to create a safe and inclusive space for minority religions without sacrificing the identity of their respective beliefs. These principles become increasingly relevant when contextualized within modern challenges such as Islamophobia and inter-religious tensions. In many countries, the Muslim community is often the target of prejudice or discrimination because it is considered unable to coexist peacefully with other groups (Natar, 2024). However, Islamic history through documents such as the Treaty of Umar and the Medina Charter proves that Islam has integrated the principle of respect for diversity from the start (Ridwan et al., 2021).

This context can be linked to the theory of recognition proposed by Charles Taylor (1994). Taylor emphasized that individual and group identities can only develop in a social environment that provides recognition and respect for their existence (Taylor, 1994). In this case, the Treaty of Umar is proof that Islam has long provided recognition for the identity and religious freedom of minority groups, even in the early days of its spread. Historically, the Treaty of Umar emphasized three main principles: protection of life and property, freedom of religion, and security of places of worship (Ashraf & Nazir, 2023). These three principles are relevant to the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which states in Article 18 that everyone has the right to freedom of thought, belief and religion, including the freedom to change religion or belief (Piranda et al., 2023).

In its implementation, the Umar Agreement provides important lessons for modern governments in managing a multicultural society. For example, the policies for protecting places of worship contained in this agreement could become a model for global efforts to protect religious sites from the threat of vandalism or extremism. In addition, Umar's commitment not to force the residents of Aelia to renounce their religion reflects the principle of non-discrimination which is a main pillar of modern international law. The Treaty of Umar also shows how Islam is able to facilitate interfaith dialogue in practice. This can be an inspiration for organizations such as Interfaith Alliance or Religions for Peace, which works to promote peace and harmony amidst religious differences.

Furthermore, the tolerance approach adopted by Umar is in line with the views of John Rawls in *The Law of Peoples*, which emphasizes the importance of respect for other cultures and traditions in building a peaceful world order (Rawls, 1993). Rawls emphasized that a just society is a society that is able to create space for

various groups to live side by side without feeling threatened. The law of peoples The law of peoples (Rawls, 1996).). As one of the earliest legal documents that upholds the principles of tolerance and justice, the Treaty of Umar is clear evidence that Islam has long integrated the values of pluralism in its political and social practices (Rawls & Van Parijs, 2003). The principles contained in this agreement are not only relevant to the past, but also serve as an important model for the modern world in facing global challenges such as inter-religious conflict and intolerance.

By understanding this legacy, modern society can learn that diversity is not a threat, but a strength that must be respected and celebrated (Freeman, 2006). The inspiration from the Treaty of Umar can be a driving force for the creation of more inclusive inter-religious dialogue, protective policies for minorities, and a truly pluralist society. The history of Islam through the Treaty of Umar is a reminder that harmony is not something utopian, but something that can be achieved through commitment to the principles of justice and humanity.

3. *Ahlu Dhimmah*

Non-Muslim minorities who live under Islamic rule, in Fiqh terms, are called Ahlu Dhimmah (Thoha, 2021). The word *dhimmah* etymologically means "dependent" or "protection," so Ahlu Dhimmah means "protected population". This shows the importance of the dhimmis in the Islamic view, who are basically a people who must be protected in the name of God and His Messenger with great responsibility (Alkiek, 2017). In general, Ahlu Dhimmah get the same rights and treatment as the Muslim population (Thoha, 2021), they only need to obey general rules and pay jizyah in exchange for security guarantees, military protection and religious freedom - as detailed by Ibnu Qayyim in his book *Ahkam Ahl Dhimmah*- (Alkiek, 2017). Durant & Durant (Durant & Durant, 1950) express this fact of tolerance in-depth The Story of Civilization: "The non-Muslim population (Ahlu Dhimmah) from among Christians, Zoroastrians, Jews and Sabeans during the Umayyad Caliphate enjoyed a level of tolerance that we do not find in Christian countries today. They are free to carry out their religious rituals and maintain their places of worship.. they enjoy living under a government (Islam) where they are subject to leaders, judges and laws (Islamic state) (Durant & Durant, 1950)."

In the context of the modern world, the Ahlu Dhimmah concept can be contextualized as an initial model of protecting minority rights in a country (Wahab et al., 2024). Even though the terminology and mechanisms are different, the core idea of the state's obligation to protect the rights of citizens of different religions remains relevant. This is reflected in modern principles as regulated in the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), which states that every individual has the right to freedom of religion and protection from discrimination (Piranda et al., 2023). These values, although formulated in a secular context, have similarities with the spirit of the Medina Charter and the concept of Ahlu Dhimmah in Islam.

John Rawls' theory of distributive justice can also be used to analyze the Ahlu Dhimmah concept. Rawls argues that justice must pay attention to the proportional distribution of rights and obligations, ensuring that the most vulnerable groups in society receive adequate protection (Edor, 2020). In the Ahlu Dhimmah context, the obligation to pay jizyah in exchange for security protection shows a balance of responsibility between the state and non-Muslim citizens (Aini, 2021). In addition, the principles of non-discrimination implemented in classical Islamic law, such as freedom of religion and protection of places of worship, reflect efforts to create inclusive social justice.

In the midst of the challenges of globalization and increasing tensions between religions, lessons from the Ahlu Dhimmah concept can be an inspiration for creating a more inclusive framework in managing diversity (Syarif et al., 2022). One example of its application can be seen in the approach of multicultural countries such as Canada, which actively promotes protection policies for minorities through human rights laws (Singer, 2020). Even though it does not use religious terms such as "Ahlu Dhimmah", the essence of this policy remains the same, namely ensuring that every individual, regardless of religious or ethnic background, has the same rights in social life (Ichwan et al., 2020).

However, it is important to note that implementing the values of pluralism requires continuous efforts to educate society to respect differences (Rustandi et al., 2022).). In the Islamic context, this means reintroducing the universal principles taught in the Qur'an and the Sunnah of the Prophet, as well as exploring the Islamic intellectual tradition which emphasizes the importance of interfaith dialogue and cooperation (Hermawan & Rahman, 2024). Karen Armstrong, in her book *The History of God*, highlights that one of Islam's main strengths is its ability to adapt to cultural diversity without losing its core identity (Armstrong, 2011). This shows that the concept of Ahlu Dhimmah, even though it originates from the past, is still relevant in responding to the challenges of diversity in the modern world. By emphasizing the principles of justice, tolerance and social responsibility, this

concept is an example for modern society in building an inclusive and harmonious way of life. In the midst of increasing religious and political polarization, lessons from the history of Ahlu Dhimmah can be a basis for creating a more peaceful and just world.

4. *Religious Tolerance and Freedom*

In the Middle Ages, when Islamic rule moved to Ottoman Türkiye (Khilafah'Otsmaniyyah), history records a system that regulated the relations of Muslims with non-Muslims. In this system, the rights of non-Muslims living in an Islamic society are protected and treated as they were during the time of the Prophet and Khulafaur Rasyidin after him as said in the *Preaching of Islam* (Arnold, 1913):

Even though the Greeks outnumbered the Turks in all European countries, the religious tolerance they found (from the Turks) and the protection of life and property they enjoyed made them prefer living under Ottoman rule rather than under the rule of authority. Any Christian... The Calvinists in Hungary and the Unitarians in Transylvania would rather submit to the Ottoman Turks than fall into the hands of the fanatical Habsburg Monarchy. The Protestants in Silesia looked at the Ottoman Turks with hope and were eager to experience religious freedom by submitting to Islamic rule. Then large numbers of Jewish immigrants fleeing persecution in Spain took refuge in Türkiye in the late 15th century (Arnold, 1913).

In the context of the modern world, the principle of religious tolerance applied in Islamic history has deep relevance, especially with the development of the theory of multiculturalism (Shalahuddin et al., 2023). Multiculturalism, as a paradigm, emphasizes the importance of recognizing the diversity of cultures, religions and identities in society (Mubit, 2016). Thinkers such as Charles Taylor and Will Kymlicka have underscored the importance of recognizing minority groups to maintain social cohesion in a pluralistic society. In his book *Multicultural Citizenship* (1995), Kymlicka proposed that diversity should not only be passively accommodated but also celebrated and protected through inclusive public policies (Kymlicka, 1995).

This principle is in line with Islamic teachings regarding the protection of minorities. History records how Muslims during the Ottoman Turkish era succeeded in creating a harmonious living space for Christian, Jewish and other religious communities (Cohen, 2020). The millet system implemented by the Ottomans, for example, allowed each religious community to manage its own internal affairs, including family law, education, and religious rituals (Abdurahman et al., 2023). This approach can be considered an early form of institutional recognition of multiculturalism, long before this concept became part of modern discourse.

However, it is important to note that religious tolerance in Islam is not only pragmatic but also normative. The concept of *ahlu dhimmah* in Islamic jurisprudence emphasizes the rights of non-Muslims living under Islamic rule, including the protection of their lives, property and religious freedom (Rasak & Shehu, 2024). Even in cases where non-Muslims choose not to submit to Islamic law, they are still allowed to practice their religious laws (Hastuti, 2023). This shows that Islam has an internal mechanism to accommodate diversity without having to sacrifice the principles of justice.

In the era of globalization, where the mobility of people and information across borders is increasing, religious tolerance has become one of the most pressing issues. Massive population movements have created increasingly multicultural societies where people from different religious, cultural and ethnic backgrounds live side by side. However, globalization also brings new challenges, such as increasing Islamophobia in Western countries and sectarian conflict in the Islamic world itself. In facing this challenge, the principle of tolerance taught in Islam can be an inspiration for the global community. For example, the Ottoman policy of protecting religious minorities could serve as a model for modern states struggling to manage diversity. Likewise, the principle of *la ikraha fid-din* (no coercion in religion) can be the basis for international efforts to promote religious freedom as a universal human right (Luthfi, 2023).

This thinking is also relevant to John Rawls's theory of justice, especially in the context of pluralism. In *Political Liberalism* (1995), Rawls argued that a just society is a society that provides space for various world views to coexist as long as these views do not violate basic principles of justice (Rawls, 1995). This perspective is in line with Islamic teachings, which emphasize the importance of justice and equality in the treatment of all members of society, regardless of their religion or beliefs.

Although the principle of religious tolerance has been taught in Islam for centuries, its implementation in the modern world often faces challenges. In several Muslim-majority countries, there is still discrimination against religious minorities, both in the form of government policies and public attitudes. This phenomenon shows that there is a gap between Islamic teachings and social practices that occur in the field (Fatharani et al., 2023). To

overcome this challenge, systematic efforts are needed to revive the values of tolerance taught in Islam. Religious education can be an effective means of instilling these values from an early age (Luthfi, 2023). In addition, interfaith dialogue can also be an important tool for building mutual understanding and reducing prejudice. As exemplified by the Medina Charter and the Ottoman millet system, religious tolerance requires not only moral commitment but also a supportive legal and institutional framework (Ridho & Thibburruhani, 2019). From the Medina Charter to the Ottoman millet policy, Islam has shown how diversity can be managed fairly and harmoniously. In the context of the modern world, where diversity is becoming increasingly complex, these principles remain relevant and can serve as inspiration for global efforts to create inclusive societies. However, the challenges in implementing religious tolerance in the modern Islamic world indicate the need for more serious efforts to bridge the gap between teaching and practice. By referring to theories such as multiculturalism and political pluralism, Islamic communities can find new ways to practice religious tolerance in an ever-changing global context (Neliwati et al., 2023). In the end, tolerance is not just about accepting differences but also about celebrating diversity as a commonwealth of humanity.

CONCLUSION

This research concludes that the concept of religious tolerance in Islamic teachings has been realized in the historical reality of Islamic civilization. The results and discussion in this research show that the dynamics of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization cannot be separated from Muslims' understanding of the concept of tolerance and relations between religious communities, which originates from the Al-Qur'an and the instructions of the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH), as reflected in The Medina Charter, the Treaty of Umar, the birth of the science of Comparative Religion, the Ahlu Dhimmah concept, and the Khilafah system which regulates religious tolerance and freedom. Theoretically, this research is useful as an insight into the concept of religious tolerance in the history of Islamic civilization. Practically, this research is useful as a reference for implementing the practice of religious tolerance for Muslims in particular and the world community in general. Research has theoretical limitations, so it is an opportunity for further research for more in-depth studies with relevant theories. This research recommends that policymakers consider the concept of religious tolerance in Islamic teachings as a reference for regulating relations between religious communities.

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