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## ISLAM AND RELIGIOUS TOLERANCE

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### Abstract

This research was motivated by the author's anxiety related to; 1. Torn religious harmony 2. Degradation of theological understanding held in the midst of other religions 3. Respect for equality, equality and teachings of other religions. The research conducted is qualitative research with a historical approach. The result of the study was that, Islam is the religion of "rahmatan lil 'alamin", the religion of the prophets is Islam, not anything else and believes there is no accepted religion on His side except Islam. Islam is a religion of peace, upholding the value of tolerance and respect for differences of faith. Religious pluralism does not prevent living together, coexisting peacefully and respecting each other. The existence of mutual understanding and deep understanding of each other's existence is the basic capital that is very decisive for the realization of harmony between religious people on the earth of Indonesia. The above experiences of the Prophet and the Islamic leaders carry a moral and ethical dimension. This condition can be reflected in the historical records of Muslims since the time of the Prophet and his companions who treated non-Muslims (kafir zimmy) very well strengthen religious understanding, regenerate the meaning of solidarity, tolerance and moderation

**Keywords:** *Islam, Religious Tolerance*

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## INTRODUCTION

Indonesia is a country that requires diversity, ranging from ethnicity, language, customs and beliefs. This condition makes Indonesian society a pluralistic society, and this is a reality that cannot be avoided. This diversity is recognized and regulated in the constitution which guarantees followers of different religions to practice the teachings according to their respective beliefs. However, religious and cultural diversity certainly contains the potential for conflict and can cause disaster for the Indonesian nation if not managed properly. This religious plurality is often a problem, where religion is considered an autonomous personal right, while this right has complex social implications in people's lives. Every religious believer believes that the teachings and values he adheres to (claim of truth) must be spread in the life of society and nation. The intersection in the spread of religion is often a potential conflict in people's lives.

Religious pluralism is the fact that we are diverse, diverse and sociologically plural in terms of religion. This fact is something that is inevitable and undeniable. The recognition of religious pluralism is sociologically the simplest pluralism, because it does not permit recognition of the theological or even ethical truths of other religions. The truth of a religion depends on its scriptures. Whether it is really God's revelation or not. It may have been originally true from Allah Almighty, but then it was remodeled (changed, supplemented) to suit certain beliefs and philosophies or for political or other purposes at a particular time. The concept of religion and its evolutive book, which developed over time, is not at all appropriate to apply to Islam, because Islam is a religion that has been perfect from the beginning until now and is not subject to change and difference.

Based on the description above, the biggest problem in religious life today is "how does the theology of one religion define itself among other religions?" The basis of theological consciousness in religion, one of which is based on the principle of tolerance (*tasamuh*). Departing from the postulate that to maintain the diversity of religious beliefs in the context of harmony, an atmosphere of mutual understanding and mutual respect among various religious adherents is needed. One way to arrive at that atmosphere of "harmony", mutual understanding and respect is through an attempt to understand doctrines related to religious principles with different religious beliefs. Islam as a religion of *rahmatan lil 'alamin* is predicted as a religion of peace and has a very high level of tolerance, this paper seeks to reveal how the concept of religious harmony is owned and once practiced by the Muslim community.

## METHOD

According to (Moleong, 2013) defines qualitative research as research intended to understand the phenomenon of what is experienced by research subjects such as actors, perceptions, motivations, actions and others holistically and in a descriptive way in the form of words and language in a special natural context and by utilizing various scientific methods.

**Literature Review:** Conduct a literature review on the concept of religious harmony in Islam, the history of its development, key texts that discuss it, and related practices. It will help to understand the background and theoretical framework underlying the concept of religious harmony in Islam.

**Interviews and Observations:** Conduct in-depth interviews with Muslim religious leaders, scholars, and community leaders who have a deep understanding of the concept of religious harmony. In addition, conduct direct observation of activities or practices that support religious harmony in a particular Muslim community.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### A. Harmony Between Religious People in History

Islam is an upright religion (*al-Shirath al-Mutaqim*), a religion in accordance with human nature. His teachings always provide good for everyone who believes in the truth, being a mercy for the universe. Provides assurance of inner and outer tranquility, and promises salvation of the world and the hereafter. History records, that the presence of the Prophet Muhammad and Islam to Medina has provided many very valuable lessons for the journey of mankind and also for religious life. The famous orientalist John L. Esposito mentioned that when the Prophet Muhammad came to Medina he was an arbitrator or judge for the entire community, both Muslim and non-Muslim. This is not without reason, because the Prophet Muhammad was sent not only to provide protection to his people but to all circles including the Jews in Medina. In fact, they remained an important minority in the early days of Islam's growth (Paramadina, 1998).

At a later stage, the Jewish minority was given a legal umbrella that guaranteed them continued to exist as part of a community guaranteed by the legal constitution stipulated and formulated by the Prophet of Allah. This constitution became known as the Charter of Medina or the constitution of Medina. The constitution stipulates the rights and duties of all citizens and also regulates relations between the ummah (Muslim

community) and other communities. Muslims are a people whose main identity and attachment is no longer tribal ties but religious faith and shared commitments. Jews were recognized as a separate community allied with Muslims, but with religious and cultural autonomy. Esposito and Maftuhin, *Colourful Islam: A Variety of Expressions Towards the "Straight Way"*, 16.

While acknowledging differences in status, wealth, and origin, the Qur'an teaches supra-tribal (transnational) supreme unity and equality of all believers before God. Not tribal or family ties, binding society as a whole. The Qur'an wants a society based on the unity and equality of believers, a society where moral and social justice will compensate for the oppression of the weak and economic exploitation. Esposito and Maftuhin, *Colourful Islam: A Variety of Expressions Towards the "Straight Way"*, 39.

The relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims in a country led by a Muslim ruler, namely the Prophet Muhammad in the early days of the development of Islam at that time can be seen from the heterogeneous composition of the population of the city of Medina. Lewis mentions that there were at least three major religions growing and developing in Medina, namely Islam, Judaism, and Christianity, even some of the people of Medina at that time were pagans (idolaters) and Magi (fire worshippers). They were scattered around Medina and they were given freedom by Islam to live a normal life without being pressured and harassed or forced to embrace Islam See Bernard Lewis (2001)

What Esposito and Lewis have argued above at first glance can be drawn a common thread that historically Islam brought by the Prophet Muhammad was acceptable among multicultural societies. This is proof of the harmony of Islamic teachings with human nature that wants to live peacefully and peacefully without any oppression of the majority against minorities nor does it want enmity between religious communities. Meanwhile, according to Adian Husaini, the difference in conception among existing religions is a reality, a reality that no one can deny. Adian Husaini, *Historical* (2004),.

Differences, even clashes of conceptions occur in almost all aspects of religion, both in the field of conception of God and conception of the system of life regulation and others. Since the appearance of man on this earth, the difference began to appear. Man is endowed with God in the form of reason with different levels of ability and type and amount of information from one another, so it is very possible to understand something will be different. Where it is a natural process in human life. The sources of information experienced by humans are also different, not to mention a priori attitudes

and fanaticism with various factors that are also the cause of differences in views and attitudes.

Still according to Adian, differences of opinion and religious conceptions do not automatically cause conflict at a practical level. Even throughout history, peaceful and harmonious life has been lived more by religious people, compared to periods of religious conflict. Throughout the famous Islamic-Christian conflicts with the crusades that lasted for hundreds of years, for example, there were many Islamic and Christian social relations found in the Syrian region.

All human beings without exception in terms of the form of events are the same, their father is from the prophet Adam and the mother is from Eve. From the two of them Allah then bred offspring until the Day of Judgment.<sup>1</sup>Abdul Hamid Kisyk (1992). The purpose of God creating man is to obey Him in worship. However, *the Kauniyyah Sunnah* shows that not all people are not in one religion that He preaches.

#### **B. Interreligious Relations in the Eyes of Scholars**

Mukti Ali explained that there are several ideas put forward by people to achieve harmony in religious life. *First*, syncretism, that is, the opinion that all religions are equal. *Second*, reconception, which is to dive into and review one's own religion in confrontation with other religions. *Third*, synthesis, which is to create a new religion whose elements are taken from various religions, so that each believer feels that some of his religious teachings have been taken in the synthesis (mixed) religion. *Fourth*, substitute, which is to admit that one's own religion is right, while other religions are wrong and try to get people of different religions to enter into their religion. *Fifth*, *agree in disagreement*, which is to believe that the religion embraced is the best religion and allow others to believe that the religion they embrace is the best religion as well. It is believed that between religion and other religions, in addition to differences, there are also similarities. (Daya & Beck, 1992, 229–227. ص.ص)

The discourse of religious pluralism, Djohan Efendi is different from Mukti Ali above. Where Djohan Efendi's recognition of pluralism is not only a sociological recognition that religious people are different, but also a recognition of theological meeting points among religious people. Djohan disagreed with religious absolutism. He distinguishes between religion itself and human religion. The understanding between religion and religion

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<sup>1</sup>Abdul Hamid Kisyk, *Dialog Haq and Bathil*, (Solo: Pustaka Mantiq, 1992), Cet. II, 49.

must be understood proportionally. According to him, religion – especially those derived from revelation, is believed to be divine. Religion has absolute value, but when it is understood by man, then the truth of religion cannot be fully grasped and reached by man, because man himself is relative. Therefore, any truth put forward by man, including religious truths spoken by man, is relative, not absolute. The absolute is the truth of religion itself, while the truth of religion spoken by man is relative. That absolute truth can only be known by God's science. (Effendi, 1978, 16 ص) (Efenidi, 1994, 55-54. ص.ص)

Greg Barton mentions that Djohan Efendi rejects religious absolutism and recognizes religious pluralism. Djohan suggests that as a relative being, human understanding and knowledge cannot possibly reach and grasp religion as a doctrine of truth precisely and comprehensively. It exists only in the science of God. Thus, when a religious believer says the word religion, what he has in mind is not only his own religion, but also the sect he adheres to, even his own understanding and understanding. Therefore, his understanding and understanding of religion is definitely not religion itself and therefore there is no reason to absolutely and a priori blame the notions and understandings of others. (Barton, 1999, 237 ص)

The same thing was also stated by Nurkholish Majid. He expressed his disagreement with absolutism, because absolutism is the root of hostility. He said another concrete guide to maintaining ukhuwah is that it is not allowed at all for one group of believers to look down on or have little respect for others, because who knows those who are looked down upon are better than those who look down upon. This teaches us in association with fellow human beings, especially those who believe in God, not to practice absolutism, the root of all hostility." (Hidayat, 1998, 225 ص)

Referring to the holy book of the Qur'an, Nurcholis affirmed that every human being or group has been resurrected or sent by a messenger of God, carrying the task of calling his people to worship God only (in the understanding of the pure Godhead). Then He quotes Sura al-Nahl (16): 36.

وَلَقَدْ بَعَثْنَا فِي كُلِّ أُمَّةٍ رَسُولًا أَنِ اعْبُدُوا اللَّهَ وَاجْتَنِبُوا الطَّاغُوتَ فَمِنْهُمْ مَّنْ هَدَى اللَّهُ وَمِنْهُمْ

مَّنْ حَقَّتْ عَلَيْهِ الضَّلَالَةُ فَسِيرُوا فِي الْأَرْضِ فَانظُرُوا كَيْفَ كَانَ عَاقِبَةُ الْمُكَذِّبِينَ

"Truly, We have sent an apostle to every people (to exclaim), "Worship God and stay away from tagut!" Some of them are instructed by God and some are set apart in error. Then walk ye on the earth and see how the lying (apostles) end." (Q.S. An-Nahl [16]:36

Based on these words of God, Nurcholis said that all religions of Prophets and Apostles who have been resurrected in every community are the same, and the core of all the teachings of the Prophet and Messenger is the Supreme Godhead and resistance to tyrannical forces. In other words, the Supreme Godhead and resistance to tyranny are meeting points, common platforms or in the language of the Qur'an, called *kalimatun sawa* (the same sentence or teaching) between all holy books".(Madjid, 1993, ص 12)

What Nurcholis said above at first glance is nothing strange, but if examined there is something tendentious and very dangerous aqidah for anyone who justifies his remarks about the sentence sawa (the same teaching) between all adherents of the holy book, as understood by Nurcholis. Whereas the correct meaning is that prophets and apostles are sent to call people to tawhid (submission) and Islam (submission and submission) only to the One God and none other and do not associate in worshiping Him. This religious method was practiced by the Prophet and his companions in the early days of the emergence of Islam in Mecca and Medina.

### C. Medina Charter and Religious Tolerance

The Charter of Medina was established in 622 AD (1 Hijri). At that time, there was not a single country that had regulations on how to regulate relations between religious communities. The constitution of Medina begins with the expression "*Bismilla>hirrahma>nirrahi>m. Ha>za> us>bun min Muhammadin Nabiy Sallalla>hu 'alaihi wa sallam, bainal mu'mini>na wal-muslimi>na min qurayshin wa-yatsriba wa man tabi'ahum falahiqa bihim wa ja>hada ma'ahum.*" (In the name of Allah the Most Merciful and Merciful. This is the written Charter of the Holy Prophet(sa) to believers and Muslims, both Quraysh and Yathrib, and to all those who went with them, who had formed common interests with them and had fought alongside them).

The Medina Charter, in some of its articles, clearly regulated the relationship. Article 16 states "That indeed the Jewish peoples who are loyal to our (state), entitled to assistance and protection, shall not be deprived of their rights and shall not be excluded from public association." Article 24: "Jewish citizens bear the duty together with the faithful, as long as the state is at war." Article 25: (1) The Jews of the tribe of *Banu 'Awf* are one nation-state (ummah) with believers. (2) Jews are free to profess their religion, just

as Muslims are free to profess their religion. (3) This freedom applies also to their followers/allies, and to themselves. (4) Unless anyone is disruptive and commits a crime, which befalls the person concerned and his family.

By the time of his death, the Holy Prophetsa had intensive interaction with all religious groups (pagans, Jews, Christians), dominant cultures, and the greatest political powers of the time (Persians and Romans). The Qur'anic verses that speak of Jews, Christians, Persians, Romans, describe how Muslims have been galvanized and given very clear guidance in addressing cultures and religions outside of Islam.

In fact, the Qur'an also does not forbid Muslims to do good to people of other religions. From the beginning, Muslims have been taught to accept awareness of diversity in religion (plurality). For example, in Surah Al Mumtahanah verse 8 it is stated:

لَا يَنْهَىٰكُمْ اللَّهُ عَنِ الَّذِينَ لَمْ يُقَاتِلُوكُمْ فِي الدِّينِ وَلَمْ يُخْرِجُوكُمْ مِنْ دِيَارِكُمْ أَنْ تَبَرُّوهُمْ وَتُقْسِطُوا إِلَيْهِمْ إِنَّ اللَّهَ يُحِبُّ الْمُقْسِطِينَ

*"Allah does not forbid you to do good and to do justice to those who do not fight you in religious matters and do not expel you from your hometown. Indeed, God loves those who do justice. (Q.S. Al-Mumtahanah [60]: 8)*

In fact, the Holy Prophet(sa) said, "Whoever hurts a zimmi really hurts me, and whoever hurts me hurts Allah." (HR Thabrani).

#### D. Comparison with Europe

Islam has an amazing concept of tolerance, this can be seen from the recognition of the right to life and religious rights of the Jews/minorities in Medina at that time. As a comparison, we can see how the fate of the Jews in their history in Europe. Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx note that early Jewish communities in Europe can be found in Rome around 200 BC. A number of bitter events marked Jewish life in this territory of the Roman Empire. In the 19th year, Emperor Tiberius expelled Jews from Rome and Italy. However, it seems that they are still coming back again. In 44, Jews were among those who wept over Julius Cesar's death. In 54, for opposing Christian propaganda, Jews were forbidden to gather in synagogues. In 139, a number of Jews were expelled from Rome. (Margolis & Marx, 1955, . ص.ص 287-298)

During the time of Emperor Constantine (311-337), Jews generally had considerable freedom in practicing their religion. Even after the Council of



Nicaea, 325, Judaism was still allowed to be practiced. Only, in the time of Constantius II (337-361), there was an incident. Under Gallus, Constantius' brother-in-law, who ruled the East (including Palestine), there were clashes between Jews and Roman soldiers. The commander of the Roman army in the region stormed and destroyed the cities of Tiberias, Sepphoris, and Lod. The Encyclopaedia Judaica Vol II, however, notes that since Christianity became the official Roman religion in 321, the Jewish position has been cornered. The privileges that Jews had received in earlier times were abolished. Jewish rabbinic jurisdiction was also abolished. Proselytism is forbidden and carries the death penalty, as is the case with Christian women. Finally, forbidden Jews held high positions in the government or military.

Under Emperors Theodosius I (379-395) and Theodosius II (408-450), Jews were actually quite entitled to the principles of freedom, although Theodosius was dubbed "the *First Christian Inquisitor*" and established Catholicism as the official state religion. But, because of the influence of fanatical church figures, Jews were subjected to painful arrangements. Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx described the situation:

"However, under the influence of fanatical pastors, Jews were subjected to increasing obnoxious regulations in order to reduce the number of conversions of Christians to Jews. It is in the spirit of church figures, that Jews are portrayed as wicked men and sorcerers, and their sect as despicable and animal-like. Moreover, Christian merchants lusted for freedom from Jewish competition. It was not legal for Jews to circumcise their slaves or own Christian slaves. Jews have no authority over Christianity and therefore should be banned from public offices. Interfaith marriage between Jews and Christians is a criminal act."(Margolis & Marx, 1955)

In Europe, when Christianity came to power in many countries, the way Christians viewed Jews was greatly influenced by the policies of Pope Gregory I, known as Gregory the *Great* (590-604). Max L. Margolis and Alexander Marx noted Gregory I's perceptions and policies:

"The Jewish method of understanding scripture in its literal form is a bad thing; Jewish arguments against Christianity are absurd. Jews must be invited to become Christians by reason and persuasion... Therefore, Jews suffered in practicing their own religion and life, along with the guarantees of rights provided by Roman law."(Margolis & Marx, 1955)

In the following centuries, Jews were subjected to murder and oppression by Europeans. A number of other popes became known to be

strongly anti-Jewish. On July 17, 1555, just two months after his appointment, Pope Paul IV, issued a document (Papal Bull) known as *nimis absurdum*. Here the Pope stresses that Christ's murderers, the Jews, are essentially slaves and should be treated as slaves. Jews were then forced to live in 'ghettos'. Each ghetto had only one entrance. Jews were forced to sell all their possessions to Christians at very low prices; a maximum of 20 percent of the supposed price. In each city there can only be one synagogue. In Rome, seven of the eight synagogues were destroyed. In Campagna, 17 of the 18 synagogues were destroyed. Nor should Jews have Scripture. While a cardinal, Pope Paul IV burned all Jewish Scriptures, including the Talmud. Pope Paul IV died in 1559. But *nimis absurdum* survived for three centuries. (Rosa, 1988, 260-266. ص.ص)

The attitude of such Church figures proved to be very influential on the fate of Jews in Christian Europe. In Spain, for example, Jews already existed in the region, around 300 A.D. King Aleric II (485-507), inspired by the *Code of Theodosius*, placed strict restrictions on Jews. The fate of Spain's Jews was further squeezed, following the conversion of King Recarred I (586-601) to Catholicism. The King made the conversion to The *Third Council of Toledo* (589), and later made Catholicism the state religion. *The Council of Toledo* itself made a number of decisions: (1) prohibiting marriages between Jews and Christians, (2) descendants of the couple had to be baptized by force, (3) Christian slaves were not allowed to be owned by Jews, (4) Jews were to be expelled from all public offices, (5) Jews were forbidden to read Psalms openly at death ceremonies. (Margolis & Marx, 1955)

In the period 612-620, many cases occurred where Jews were forcibly baptized. Thousands of Jews fled to France and Africa. In 621-631, under Swinthila's rule, Jewish treatment was somewhat more lenient. Jewish refugees returned to their original homes and those who were forcibly baptized returned to Judaism. However, Swinthila was overthrown by Sisinad (631-636), who continued the practice of forced baptism. During the reign of Chintila (636-640), a decree was made in *the Six Council of Toledo* (638), that other Catholics were prohibited from living in his territory. Euric (680-687) made a decision: all baptized Jews were forcibly placed under special supervision of church officials and leaders. King Egica (687-701) made a decision: all Jews in Spain were declared slaves forever, their possessions confiscated, and they were expelled from their homes, so they were scattered to various provinces. Jewish religious ceremonies were strictly forbidden. Moreover, Jewish children, age 7 and above, were

forcibly taken from their parents and handed over to Christian families.(Margolis & Marx, 1955)

Until the 15th century, the massacre of Jews continued in Spain. In Russia, the oppression and murder of Jews became known as '*mob violence*' and continued well into the 20th century. Some Russian government officials joined in mobilizing the masses to expel the Jews. For example, between 1903-1906, pogroms occurred in 690 towns and villages, mostly in Ukraine.(Perry, 2015, 447 ص) In other parts of Europe, persecution of Jews was everywhere. For hundreds of years, political and religious leaders in Western Europe did not hesitate to eliminate or destroy Jewish communities in Europe. The persecution and murder of Jews, some of which were carried out by threats and intimidation, led to renounce Judaism and convert to Christianity. If they refuse, then the death penalty awaits them. In France, for example, Louis IX (1226-1270), ordered the expulsion of all Jews from his kingdom, shortly after Louis left for the Crusades.

The command was not executed perfectly. Many Jews who left France later returned. However, Philip the Fair (1285-1314) then ordered all French Jews arrested. Later, King Charles IV, again expelled French Jews in 1322. Josephine Bacon records the expulsion and murder of Jews in France between 800 and 1500. In 1420, the Jewish community was exterminated from Toulouse. In the same year, Jews were also expelled from Lyon. In 1321, 160 Jews were buried in a pit in the town of Chinon. In 1394, all Jews were expelled from the city of Sens. In 1495, Jews were expelled from Lithuania. In this country, the Jews fled persecution by Western Christians, because they did not accept Christianity. In Russia, as a result of hatred spread by the Russian Orthodox Christian church, Jews were excommunicated and expelled from Russia between the 15th century and 1722. At that time, in general, it could be said, the Christian lands of Europe were not a safe haven for Jews.(Shaw, 2016, 9-7. ص.ص) (Gilbert, 2013)

Christian hostility towards Jews can also be seen in the story of the Crusades. In Jerusalem, when the Crusaders conquered the holy city in 1099, they massacred some 30,000 of its inhabitants, Muslims and Jews. Tens of thousands of Muslims seeking rescue on the roof of al-Aqsa Mosque were brutally slaughtered. The atrocities of the Crusaders in Jerusalem are indeed very difficult to imagine common sense. For the record, the actions of the Crusaders were very different from those of Saladin al-Ayyubi when he recaptured Jerusalem in 1187. Under Saladin, Jerusalem became a safe haven for Jews. At that time Saladin brought back

many Jews to Jerusalem and allowed them to live there. (Armstrong, 2011, 4-3. ص.ص) (Ali, 2013, 326-322. ص.ص) (Brownrigg, 1991, 141-139. ص.ص)

The 15th century saw the massacre of Jews and Muslims in Spain and Portugal by European Christians. In 1483 alone, a reported 13,000 Jews were executed on the orders of the Commander of the Inquisition in Spain, Fray Thomas de Torquemada. Over the next decades, thousands of Jews were tortured and murdered. The fall of Granada, the last Muslim rule in Spain, on January 20, 1492, had ended 781 years of Muslim rule in Spain. The fall of Granada to Christianity was celebrated with religious ceremonies throughout Europe. Later, the Pope invited all Christian nations to send a delegation to Rome, to discuss plans for a crusade against the Ottoman Turks.

In 1494, Ferdinand and Isabella were given the title '*the Catholic Kings*' by Pope Alexander VI. The couple had committed numerous massacres of Jews and Muslims since the establishment of the Inquisition in Castile by papal decree in 1478. The climax was in 1492, when they gave the Jews a choice: leave Spain or be baptized. After the fall of Christianity, the Muslims of Granada (whom the Spanish Christians called Moors) were still given the freedom to practice some of their religious rituals and traditions. Isabella forced mass baptisms. Finally, the Muslims put up resistance in 1499, but were crushed. Thereafter, like the Jews, they too were given a choice: leave Spain or be baptized. If you refuse, death is waiting.

The fall of Granada was also a disaster for the Jews of Spain. In just a few months, between late April and August 2, 1492, some 150,000 Jews were expelled from Spain. Most of them then took refuge in Ottoman territory that provided safe haven for Jews. Some put the number of Jews expelled from Spain in 1492 at 160,000. Of those, 90,000 fled to Turkey/Uthmani, 25,000 to the Netherlands, 20,000 to Morocco, 10,000 to France, 10,000 to Italy, and 5,000 to America. The dead on the way are estimated at 20,000 people. Those baptized and remained in Spain were 50,000. The reigns of Ferdinand - the *King of Aragon* - and Isabella - the *Queen of Castile* - are recorded as the height of Jewish persecution in Spain. Both are known as "*the Catholic Kings*", who are hailed as unifying Spain. (Lea, 2020, 36 ص) (Inalcik, 2010)

#### **E. Islamic Tradition of Tolerance**

The achievements of the Holy Prophetsa in building a superior civilization in Medina in terms of building religious tolerance were then followed by Umar ibn Khattab who in 636 AD signed the Treaty of Aelia

with the Christians in Jerusalem. As the victor of the War, Omar ibn Khathab did not apply the politics of slaughter to the Christians. Karen Armstrong praised Omar bin Khatab's attitude and the height of Islam's stance in conquering Jerusalem, which no ruler had done before. Karen Armstrong notes:

"Omar also expressed the ideal of affection of monotheistic adherents, compared to all other conquerors of Jerusalem, with the possible exception of King David. He led a very peaceful and bloodless conquest, which the City had never witnessed in its long and often tragic history. At the time when the Christians surrendered, there were no killings there, no destruction of property, no burning of symbols of other religions, no expulsions or expropriations, and no attempt to force the inhabitants of Jerusalem to convert to Islam. If respect for the conquered population of the city of Jerusalem is used as a sign of the integrity of the monotheistic forces, then Islam has started for a long time in Jerusalem, very well of course."(Armstrong, 2011)

Islam's tolerance of Jews and other religions is actually recorded in gold ink in history. After being expelled from Spain, Jews were housed and protected in Ottoman territory. For example, in Jerusalem, during the reign of Sultan Suleiman the Magnificent (1520-1566), Jews lived side by side with Muslims. Some Jewish visitors from Europe were astonished by the freedoms enjoyed by the Jews in Palestine. In 1535, David dei Rossi, an Italian Jew, noted that in Ottoman territory, Jews even held government positions, something that was impossible in Europe. He noted: "*Here we are not in exile, as in our own country.*" (We are not here living in exile, but as in our own country.)(Armstrong, 1996, 326-325. ص.ص)

The condition of the Jews in the Ottomans was so contrary to the treatment that Jews received in mainland Europe, that they had to flee en masse outside Europe, and especially to Ottoman territory. In fact, when Spain was under Islamic rule, the Jews also experienced very good treatment. Some Jewish writers describe the Jewish condition in Spain under Islamic rule as a "Jewish golden age in Spain." Martin Gilbert, the Jewish writer, for example, noted the policies of the Spanish Muslim rulers toward Jews. He said that the Muslim rulers also employed Jewish scholars as an activity of their love of science and the spread of knowledge. Thus began the golden age of Judaism in Spain, in which poets, physicians, and scholars blended secular and religious knowledge in methods never before achieved. These Jews even occupied the highest positions in the Muslim

world, including prime minister of several caliphs in the Eastern and Western Islamic regions.(Gilbert, 2013)

Karen Armstrong also described the harmonious relationship between Muslims and Jews in Spain and Palestine. According to Armstrong, under Islam, Jews enjoyed a golden age in al-Andalus. The extermination of Spanish Jews has caused worldwide regret and is seen as the greatest disaster to befall Israel since the destruction of the Temple (Solomon). The 15th century also saw a rise in anti-Semitic persecution in Europe, where Jews were deported from various cities. (*Under Islam, the Jews had enjoyed a golden age in al-Andalus. The loss of Spanish Jewry was mourned throughout the world as the greatest catastrophe to have befallen Israel since the destruction of the Temple. The fifteenth century had also seen an escalation of anti-Semitic persecution in Europe, where Jews had been deported from one city after another*). Armstrong A History of Jerusalem. One City, Three Faiths, 326-327.

As Karen Armstrong, Avigdor Levy, Jewish writer from Brandeis University, chronicles the tragic story of the expulsion of Jews from Spain in 1492. In the collective memory of the Jews, the year 1492 represents, first and foremost, as a tragedy of catastrophic proportions: the world's principal Jewish community, flourishing and building for so long, was suddenly uprooted and destroyed. (*In the collective Jewish memory, this date represented, first and foremost, a tragedy of catastrophic proportions: the world leading Jewish community, efflorescent and long established, was suddenly uprooted and destroyed*). Eleazar Birnbaum, "Avigdor Levy, ed., *The Jews of the Ottoman Empire* (Princeton, NJ: Darwin Press, 1994). Pp. 799.," *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 29, no. 3 (1997): 2.

Islam has a long tradition of managing relations with non-Muslims. There is no tradition and persecution of infidels in Islam, as found in the concept of "heretics" in medieval Europe. Islam does refer to non-Muslims as "infidels", but that is by no means a permit let alone an order to execute infidels because of religious differences. The Quran affirms: "There is no compulsion to embrace religion." (al-Baqarah: 256). Karen Armstrong notes: "*There was no tradition of religious persecution in the Islamic empire. (There is no tradition of religious persecution in the Islamic world.)*"Karen Armstrong, *Holy War: The Crusades and Their Impact on Today's World* (Anchor, 2001), 44.

Thus, Islamic teachings and traditions are filled with various accounts of tolerance between mankind. The height of Islamic civilization once brought mercy to the whole world, including to Western societies, prompting Irish historian, Tim Wallace-Murphy, to write a book entitled "*What Islam Did for Us: Understanding Islam's Contribution to Western Civilization*" (London: Watkins Publishing, 2006). In the midst of numerous

attacks on Islam through various media in the West, this book provides a very beautiful picture of the history of Islam. In fact, he did not hesitate to invite the West to acknowledge the magnitude of their debt to Islam. According to Tim Wallace-Murphy, the West's debt to Islam is priceless. "*Even the brief study of history revealed in these pages demonstrates that European culture owes an immense and immeasurable debt to the world of Islam,*" he wrote.

For this reason, writes Wallace-Murphy, "We in the West bear a debt to the Islamic world that will never be paid off." (*We in the West owe a debt to the Muslim world that can be never fully repaid*). Wallace-Murphy's recognition as part of such a Western community is crucial, both for the West and for Islam, to erode misperceptions between these two great civilizations. Where is the West's debt of gratitude to Islam? This book presents a lot of data about how knowledge was transferred from the Islamic world to the West in what is known in the West as the Middle Ages. It was then, writes Wallace-Murphy, that Muslim-led Andalusia became the largest cultural center, not only in mainland Europe but also in the entire Mediterranean region. (Al-Andalus became not merely the greatest cultural centre in Europe but in the entire Mediterranean basin). At that time, the living situation of the Islamic world and the Western world was in stark contrast. "Life for the majority of people in mainland Christian Europe was short, brutal and barbaric when compared with the sophisticated, learned and tolerant regime in Islamic Spain." So, says Wallace-Murphy, for the majority of societies in the Christian European world, life was short, brutal and barbaric, compared to the sophisticated, educated, and tolerant government of Islamic Spain.

## CONCLUSION

From the description above, the author can conclude several things as follows: *First, Islam is the religion of "rahmatan lil 'a>lami>n", the religion of the prophets is Islam, not anything else and believes that no religion is accepted by His side except Islam. Second, Islam is a religion of peace, upholding the value of tolerance and respecting differences of faith. Religious pluralism does not prevent living together, coexisting peacefully and respecting each other. The existence of mutual understanding and deep understanding of each other's existence is the basic capital that is very decisive for the realization of harmony between religious people on the earth of Indonesia. The above experiences of the Prophet and the Islamic leaders carry a moral and ethical dimension. This condition can be reflected in the historical records of Muslims since the*

time of the Prophet and his companions who treated non-Muslims (kafir zimmy) very well.

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