



RELIGIOUS MEANING IN SOCIAL PRACTICES: A Study Of Muslims Tolerant Attitudes In South Sulawesi

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Abstract

This study aims to find out the patterns of tolerance of the Muslim community towards other religious communities in South Sulawesi. It also examines opportunities to overcome the barriers to building understanding among religious communities. This study employs the normative theological approach, sociology of religion, and phenomenology as well. This study reveals that the attitude of Muslim society toward other religious communities in South Sulawesi is based on several factors: [a] social integration through economic factors; [b] social integration through a diversity of cultural factors; and [c] social integration through political factors. The tolerant and harmony life among Muslim and non-Muslim communities is reflected in their social interaction due to economic interests and religious beliefs. The implication of this study is to develop social interaction among religious communities based on human and spiritual values.

Keywords: Religious Harmony, Tolerance Behavior, Inter-Religious Relations, Muslims of South Sulawesi.

Abstrak

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui bentuk perilaku toleransi masyarakat Muslim terhadap umat beragama lain di Sulawesi Selatan. Penelitian ini merupakan penelitian lapangan yang bersifat kualitatif, dengan menggunakan pendekatan teologis-normatif, sosiologi agama, dan fenomenologi. Penelitian ini menemukan bahwa bentuk perilaku toleran masyarakat Muslim terhadap umat beragama didasarkan pada factor, yaitu: [a] integrasi sosial melalui faktor ekonomi [b] integrasi sosial melalui faktor budaya dan [c] integrasi sosial melalui faktor politik. Implikasi penelitian ini adalah membangun interaksi antar umat beragama sesuai

dangan nilai-nilai kemanusiaan dan nilai-nilai agama atau kebutuhanan. Hal ini merupakan tuntutan dan kebutuhan masyarakat dalam membangun kehidupan yang lebih baik.

Kata Kunci: Kerukunan beragama, perilaku toleransi, hubungan antar-umat beragama, Muslim di Sulawesi Selatan.

Introduction

Indonesia is a nation of diversity which means having various social dimensions such as ethnicity, race, religion, language, customs, culture, way of life, etc. In terms of personal capacity, the differences among Indonesian society varied among the talent, characters, hobbies, education, skin color, economic status, social class, rank and position, ideas, perspectives, life orientation, organizational loyalty, age, and area of working.¹ One of the differences in religious plurality is a phenomenon of social reality that is playing an important role in life. The plurality in Indonesia is something that should make its people grateful.² It is a legacy that Indonesia is a rich nation and has priceless wealth.³ Indonesia is also one of the countries in the world with various religious communities: Islam, Christianity, Catholic, Hindu, Buddhist, and Confucian. Each religion lives side by side and full of tolerance with other religions. Besides, all Indonesian people are guaranteed to actualize their religion beliefs in everyday life freely.

On one hand, religious diversity becomes the cultural richness and highly contributes to the development of democracy in Indonesia. However, on another hand, it potentially triggers a conflict among the different religious communities if it is not well-managed. As a result, the battle may be a source that threatens the Unity of the Republic of Indonesia.⁴ Some SARA conflicts that

¹ Indonesia has no less than 658 ethnic groups. Of these, 109 ethnic groups are located in western Indonesia, while 549 ethnicities are in eastern Indonesia. Of the 549 ethnic groups, more than 300 are spread in Papua. In other words, ethnic pluralism in the eastern hemisphere is higher than the western hemisphere. See Amiruddin al-Rahab, "Kekerasan Komunal di Indonesia; Sebuah Tinjauan Umum", *Journal of Dignity*, Vol. 5, No. 1, 2008, p. 34.

² A.A. Yewangoe, *Agama dan Kerukunan* (Jakarta: Gunung Mulia, 2002), p. 22.

³ The outside world values Islam in Indonesia as a nation that has an attractive face and a compelling character as rahmatan li al-'alamin, away from radicalism and extreme attitude, a phenomenon that has recently swept through the world today. Not only Muslims in the eastern part of the world who admire the religious approach in Indonesia, even the western world that did not escape the siege of religious extremism, pointed Indonesia as an alternative model for the realization of harmony between religious believers on the surface of this earth. See Alwi Shihab, *Islam Inklusif: Menuju Sikap Terbuka dalam Beragama* (Bandung: Mizan, 1998), p. 335.

⁴ Muhammad Hisyam et.al., *Budaya Kewargaan Komunitas Islam di Daerah Rentan Konflik* (Jakarta: LIPI Press, 2006), p. 1. See also Muhammad Imarah, *Islam dan Pluralitas; Perbedaan dan*

occurred in several regions throughout Indonesia during the reformation era proved that different religious communities were being at risk of conflict. Ethnic and religious differences are often used as a powerful tool to trigger the battle.⁵ Meanwhile, religious pluralism⁶ or religious diversity is an axiomatic reality (not indisputable) and a historical necessity that is universal.⁷

Besides, understanding religion exclusively is one of the factors that potentially interfere the religious freedom. Some terms closely associated with Islam are radical,⁸ Islamic fundamentalist, militant Islam, and Extreme Islam.⁹ Furthermore, the religious plurality today is seen as a severe problem in social issues. This is primarily because some of the society members do not understand the existence of different groups and they do not have a willingness to live with various groups of society peacefully.¹⁰

This study focuses on the Parepare of South Sulawesi where tolerance and harmony among religious communities exist. In terms of religion, Parepare is also famous as a heterogeneous city with the following statistics: Islam (majority) with 135,882 adherents (93.09%), Buddhism with 770 adherents (0.539%), Catholic and Protestant Christian 3,440 (2,35%) and 4,975 adherents (3,41%), and Hindu 907 (0,62%).¹¹ However, in social life, they have remained side by side for a long time without any conflict. Religious differences do not become psychological barriers to society. Therefore people can work together and free to run their religion, even in some religious activities, other religions often attend it.

Kemajemukan dalam Bingkai Persatuan (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1999), p. 283.

⁵ Ibnu Hasan Muchtar, *Riuh di Beranda Satu: Peta Kerukunan Umat Bergama di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Depag RI, 2013), p. 203.

⁶ Pluralism cannot be understood simply by saying that a pluralistic society, diverse, consists of tribes and religions, which only describes the fragmentation, not pluralism. Pluralism cannot be interpreted as a negative good which is only judging by its usefulness to exclude fanaticism. Pluralism must be understood as a genuine connection of diversity in the bonds of civilization. See Budhy Munawar Rachman, *Islam Pluralis; Wacana Kesetaraan Kaum Beriman* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2001), p. 31

⁷ Pluralism is not merely an act of actual plurality that portrays the fragmentation impression, nor in the sense of “negative good” as opposed to fanaticism, but rather as “the genuine engagement of diversity within the bounds of civility, . See Hendar Riyadi *Melampaui Pluralisme: Etika Al-Qur’an tentang Keragaman Agama* (Jakarta: RMBooks & PSAP, 2006), p. 59-60.

⁸ The use of radical Islamic terms for example in Khamami Zada, *Islam Radikal; Pergulatan Ormas-ormas Islam Garis Keras di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Teraju, 2002).

⁹ M. Dawam Rahardjo, “Islam Radikal Vs Islam Liberal.” *Tempo*. January 12th, 2003. p.84 .

¹⁰ Ibnu Hasan Muchtar, *Riuh di Beranda Satu: Peta Kerukunan Umat Bergama di Indonesia* (Jakarta: Depag RO, 2013), p. 204.

¹¹ Recapitulation of Population-based on the Religion of Parepare City, Central Bureau of Statistics of 2013

Besides, the undeniable fact is, in Parepare, some religion worship places are close in distance one to another. The tolerant aspect of this city is shown when this fact does not trigger conflict among the religious communities. The communities are socializing with a good relationship even among the different religions. The above phenomenon can occur because of the high tolerance and attitude that encourage the creation of harmony among the people. Tolerance does not mean that a person should give up his or her religious belief because they are different from others, but allow the distinction to remain.¹² That becomes the primary data in studying the patterns of tolerance of Muslims toward other religious communities in Parepare, South Sulawesi.

Tolerance among the Religious Communities

According to Sullivan, Pierson, and Marcus, as quoted by Saiful Mujani, tolerance is defined as a willingness to respect, accept, or honor everything that is rejected or challenged by someone.¹³ JP Chaplin said tolerance is a liberal attitude or will not intervene and is not interfered with by the behaviors and beliefs of others.¹⁴ Moreover, Lorens explained that tolerance is the attitude of someone patient with the philosophical and moral beliefs of others who are considered different, refuted, or even wrong. With that attitude, he also does not try to suppress the legitimate expressions of others' beliefs but has to respect the differences and human dignity.¹⁵

Using the perspective of social psychology, Yayah Khisbiyah explains that tolerance is the ability to keep things that we do not approve or dislike, to build better social relationships. Tolerance requires acceptance and respect for the views, beliefs, values, and practices of other people/groups different from us. Meanwhile, intolerance is the inability or unwillingness to tolerate. It arises because we cannot or will not accept and respect differences. Intolerance can

¹² Trisni Sutanto, *Melampaui Toleransi; Merenung Bersama Walzer* in Ihsan Ali Fauzi, dkk., *Demi Toleransi Demi Pluralisme* (Jakarta: Paramadna, 2007), p. 346-353. Yusuf Qordhowi argues that tolerance is not passive, but dynamic. Tolerance is divided into 3 (three) levels, namely: 1) tolerance in the form of freedom only to others but not give him the opportunity to perform the religious duties required of him; 2) giving him the right to embrace a religion he believes in and not to impose a ban on his religion; 3) do not narrow their motion in doing things which according to their religion is halal, even though it is forbidden according to our religion. See also Yusuf al-Qardhawi, *Minoritas Nonmuslim di dalam Masyarakat Islam* (Bandung: Mizan, 1985), p. 95-97.

¹³ Saiful Mujani, *Muslim Demokrat: Islam, Budaya Demokrasi, dan Partisipasi Politik di Indonesia Pasca-Orde Baru* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 2007), p. 162.

¹⁴ JP Chaplin, *Kamus Lengkap Psikologi* (Jakarta: RajaGrafindo Persada, 2006), p. 512; Paul Edwards, Editor in Chief. "Toleration" in *The Encyclopedia of Philosophy*. Volume 7 and 8 Paul Edwards (New York & London: Macmillan Publisher. 1967), p. 143.

¹⁵ Lorens Bagus, *Kamus Filsafat* (Jakarta: Gramedia Pustaka Utama, 1996), p. 1111-1112.

occur at the level of interpersonal relationships, such as the relationship between brother and sister, parents and children, husband and wife, between friends, or inter groups, such as tribe, religion, nation, and ideology.¹⁶

An interesting explanation of the concepts and practices of tolerance is stated by Walzer as quoted by Trisno Sutanto. He takes a different approach than the people who are busy looking for universal rules. For him, the practices of tolerance should always be put in concrete historical situations. Tolerance is an attitude; according to Walzer, it refers to the various dimensions within a continuum line. *First*, reflecting religious tolerance in Europe since the 16th and 17th centuries is merely a passive acceptance of differences for the sake of peace after people feel tired of killing each other. This is not enough and therefore, can lead to the dynamic movement toward *the second* dimension: the soft indifference of difference. *The third* dimension is there is a recognition in principle where others will have their rights even if their expressions are not approved. *The fourth* dimension not only demonstrates recognition, but also opens to others, or at least has the curiosity to understand others. The furthest position in this continuum, the *fifth* dimension, is not only recognizing and opening but also wanting to support or even caring for and celebrating the differences.¹⁷

John Locke first examined religious tolerance in the context of the relationship between church and state in England. Tolerance here refers to the willingness to not interfere with the beliefs, attitudes, and actions of others, even if they are not favored. A State should not engage in religious affairs, nor should they be handled by certain religious groups. In Muslim societies, tolerance refers to the attitude and behavior of Muslims towards non-Muslims, and vice versa. Historically, personal tolerance refers to the relationship between Muslims and other Semitic followers of Judaism and Christianity. The relationship between Muslims, Christians, and Jews is very complicated and has its ups and downs in recent years.¹⁸

In line with the above opinion, according to AM Hardjana, religious tolerance consists of two categories, namely tolerance dogmatic and practical tolerance.¹⁹ Dogmatic tolerance is a limited tolerance or concerning to religious

¹⁶ Yayah Khisbiyah, *Menepis Prasangka, Memupuk Toleransi untuk Multi-Kulturalisme: Dukungan dari Psikologi Sosial* (Surakarta: PSB-PS UMS, 2007), p. 4.

¹⁷ Trisno Sutanto, "Melampaui Toleransi?: Merenung Bersama Walzer", in Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, dkk., *Demi Toleransi Demi Pluralisme* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 2007), p. 346-353.

¹⁸ Saiful Mujani, *Muslim Demokrat: Islam, Budaya Demokrasi, dan Partisipasi Politik di Indonesia Pasca-Orde Baru*, p. 159

¹⁹ The term agree in disagreement was popularized by the Minister of Religion, A. Mukti Ali.

teachings. In this case, the members of religion do not take each other dizziness of the religious teachings of others. Whereas in possible tolerance, religious believers let each other express their faith, practice worship, and other religious activities in social life. In a real implementation, the two kinds of tolerances can be joined or separated. Religious believers can be tolerant in both ways and can oppose in one area, such as doctrine. In religious tolerance, it takes their honesty, greatness of soul, wisdom and responsible, to cultivate a sense of solidarity and elimination of group egoism. Therefore, every member of religion should be able to live with religious teachings. Moreover, as stated by Djohan Effendi, appreciation of the depth aspect of religion will be able to make someone abler to respect others as human. This illustrates that in the depth aspect of religion, there is a more fundamental point of contact.²⁰

However, in relation to the tolerance among religious people, according to Anwar Harjono, there are two things that are as dangerous as a big threat: first, when we only charge with ideology of our religion and ignore the rights of other religious communities, and second, when we assume that all religions are the same, equally, or equally wrong.²¹

Meanwhile, the tolerance given by Nurcholish Madjid is Islam which recognizes the rights of other religions and justifies the other converts to practice their own religious teachings. Here, there is the basis of Islamic teachings on religious tolerance. Tolerance is not interpreted as a stupid attitude toward religion or even does not need to preach the teachings of truth. Therefore, every believer is always called upon to communicate his understanding and trust the truths but must adhere to social ethics and morals, and respect the individual's rights to decide on their own choice of choice.²²

The Patterns of Relationship among Religious Communities

Cooperation

Cooperation is formulated as a joint effort to reach a goal. The term cooperation is derived from the Latin word "co" means together and "operate"

²⁰ Djohan Effendi. "Persahabatan Lebih Penting Daripada Kesepakatan Formal" dalam *Mimbar Ulama*, No. 128 Tahun XII/1988. p. 29-30

²¹ Anwar Harjono, *Indonesia Kita: Pemikiran Berwawasan Iman-Islam* (Jakarta: Gema Insani Press, 1995), p. 153.

²² Nurcholish Madjid, *Dialog Keterbukaan Artikulasi Nilai Islam dalam Wacana Sosial Politik Kontemporer* (Jakarta: Paramadina, 1998), p. 267-268.

means work. So, when two or more people or groups work or act together to pursue a common goal, they have formed cooperation.²³

An individual cooperates with others or an institution in solving some problems such as humanitarian crises, natural disasters, terrorist acts, etc. The problem solving is based on humanitarian consciousness, without limited by theological and democratic barriers. The pattern of some religious communities in accomplishing humanitarian missions is more tightly and effectively because all religions have doctrine. Sumartana asserted that religion is always looking for better and perfect conclusions about humanity. The presence of religion is to safeguard and preserve human purity.²⁴

In cooperation, there are some forms of attitude performed by a religious group to others:

- a) *Indifferentism* (not different), namely the existence of other religions deemed not to have meaning and benefits, this can be because it does not know about the nature of religion or distrust to the meaning of other religions.
- b) *Relativism* (placed with the others), an attitude which holds that everything is determined by the culture and the state of society subscribes.
- c) Appreciate, regardless of other religions with indifference or consider them to be as good as their own.
- d) Unsafe, anxious, threatened so they shut down, defend themselves and protect their own religious purity.
- e) Fanatism considered his religion as the most righteous to fight against everything that threatens the existence of his religion.

Conflict

The classic definition of conflict, as stated by Louis Coser, is a struggle to secure the status, power, and resources.²⁵ Some studies have been conducted in the field of conflict. For instance the study of the Patterns of Religious conflict in Indonesia (1990-2008) carried out by Paramadina Endowments Foundation in cooperation with the Masters Program in Peace and Conflict Resolution, Gadjah Mada University (UGM MPRK), and The Asia Foundation (TAF) states that

²³ DA Wila Huky, *Pengantar Sosiologi*, (Surabaya: Usaha Nasional, 1986), p. 160

²⁴ Th. Sumartana, *Upaya Mengikuti Tapak-tapak Gadhi dalam Indonsia* (Jakarta: Kompas, 2000), p. 196

²⁵ Louis Coser, *The Functions of Social Conflict* (New York: Free Press, 1956).

the definition of conflict is looking at general based on rationality of action with political-economic motives.²⁶ As has been shown by several studies, religious activity included in the context of conflict and violence is difficult to understand solely in terms of economic and political rationality of power. Various acts of protest or abuse related to religious conflicts derive much from the cultural and ideological sources of religion itself, and the rationality underlying the battle is more expressive or symbolic; for example, as an expression of what a religious community understands as “obedience” to religious teachings.

It may show one of the weaknesses in the various explanations of the phenomenon of conflict, including an ethnic-religious conflict that became the area of study. Jacques Bertrand states that “*In general, theories of ethnic conflict have been poor at differentiating between forms of conflict and better at developing theoretical propositions about the causes of all forms of ethnic conflict*”.²⁷ In a more general context, Bertrand’s statement can be understood since it indicates some explanations of conflict, including ethnic-religious conflict, but does not pay attention to the variations or specificities of these forms of conflict.

By emphasizing the peculiarities of various forms of religious conflicts, it is possible to explain why a form of religious conflict arises at a particular time and location, while other forms occur at other times and places. The writers agree with the Paramadina Team research which is based on the assumption that religious conflicts need to be distinguished on the basis of the type of religious issue that becomes the source of the conflict. Therefore, in this paper, “religious conflict” is defined as “a dispute over values, claims, and identities involving religious issues or issues framed in religious slogans or phrases.”

Religious Dialogue

Religious dialogue is necessary. In the context of a pluralistic society, the religious dialogue is an effective form of communication to overcome the antagonistic relationship among religions in Indonesia. Moreover, to find a way out for problem-solving, Mukti Ali, who was Minister of Religious Affairs, in

²⁶ Ihsan Ali-Fauzi, et al., *Laporan Penelitian Pola-pola Konflik Keagamaan di Indonesia 1990-2008*, Paramadina Endowments Foundation in cooperation with the Masters Program in Peace and Conflict Resolution, University of Gadjah Mada (UGM MPRK), and The Asia Foundation (TAF) 2009, p. 7.

²⁷ Jacques Bertrand, *Nationalism and Ethnic Conflict in Indonesia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004), p. 14

1971 gave the idea for religious dialogue. Religious dialogue is held as an effort to bring together religious figures in the context of fostering religious harmony.

Religious dialogue is inevitable. In the context of a pluralistic Indonesian society, the religious dialogue is an effective way of communicative. Religious dialogue can be taken in the form of at least four kinds; life dialogue, action dialogue, theological dialogue, and the dialogue of religious experience. In this fourth form, Sumartana said, one's faith shows itself through a different face. Through the discussion of life, we tried to open our lives to the joy, sorrow, concern, and anxiety of living human beings. Through the dialogue of action, we are invited to work together to overcome the restrictions that prevent us from living freely and humanely. In the theological dialogue, the "elite" layers of religion speak religious heritage with its values in order to understand deeper and more sincerely appreciate it. Discussion of their religious experiences rooted in their respective religious traditions.

Religious dialogue is not intended to make our partner of dialogue follow our faith but rather to create a dialogue to make the participants understand the truth of the sides respectively. Mohammad Sobary explains:

"It is true that there are boundaries of infallibility that must be preserved in all religions. But the area of non-believers lies in truth at the ideal level or transcendental and unspeakable divine truth. Conversely, interreligious dialogue speaks of historical truth, earthly truth to which is open a number of avenues for a kind of compromise. There we are not breaking anything sacred. And God does not seem to be angry, even give us a blessing"²⁸

The above statement affirms that religious dialogue is not touching the core scarcity of religion itself, but rather on exoteric aspects such as culture, social, and history. The fear that dialogue opens up a disgrace and raises an untenable dispute. The sacral side is still used as the fundamental principle that must be respected and followed by ethics. In the context of the religion of Islam itself, it is recommended that people have a dialogue with *wisdom* and *ih s̄an* (good ethics). This means that as long as the dialogue is limited to seek understanding of religion, then the law relatively remains open in every religion. That is appropriate with the poet Labid which says "*alā kullu sya'in mā khalā Allāh bāṭil*" (remember, everything apart from God is false).²⁹ That is, only God was absolute and besides Allah.

²⁸ Mohammad Sobary, "Merombak Primordialisme dalam Agama", dalam Th. Sumartana dkk (peny.); *Spiritualitas Agama dan Aspirasi Rakyat*, Seri Dian II Tahun I, (Yogyakarta: Institut Dian, 1994) p. 42

²⁹ Nurcholis Madjid since the 1970s has developed ideas about the need to renew religious

Accommodation

Accommodation is a process of developing temporary cooperation agreements among individuals or groups in conflict. Housing can be developed when individuals or groups see the benefits of working together even though there are still the differences that become the source of conflict between them. According to Gillin and Gillin, as quoted by Soekanto, accommodation is an understanding used by sociologists to describe a process in social relations that is as important as the adaptations used by biologists to point to a process in which the creatures life adapts itself to the natural surroundings.³⁰ Meanwhile, according to Cuber as quoted by DA Wila Huky, accommodation is an attempt to end the conflict situation, either permanent or temporary between the two parties to work together without having to open or emphasize the hostilities that exist.³¹

The social system is a function of what exists. It is interdependent structures and processes that tend to maintain the stability and relative specificity of patterns and behaviors as being different from their environment. From each individual, there are traditional patterns that constitute the most fundamental aspect in which he acts. The designs also take place to limit the behavior and attitudes expected of others in social relationships. The reaction pattern is universal although it is very diverse in its degree. The offender is involved in social relationships usually through situational and subjective channels. There is an essential concrete relationship with the bond of affection with other elements and interests.³²

An ongoing process of mutual reaction takes place in normal social relations, especially closer relationships such as marriage, friendship, and active cooperation in work, clearly having a major functional meaning for the social system. It is one of the most important channels, as a dynamic process by which the functional system integration is maintained. Institutionally behavior patterns and reactions have latent functions that all produce the right incentives for other individuals to nurture and embark on deviant behavior trends.

worldviews more inclusively. Cak Nur's ideas have been posted in a thick book. See; Nurcholis Madjid, *Islam, Doktrin dan Peradaban: Sebuah Telaah Kritis tentang Masalah Keimanan, Kemanusiaan, dan Kemodernan*, (Jakarta: Paramadina Press, 1992), p. ixx

³⁰ Soejono Soekanto, *Sosiologi Suatu Pengantar* (Jakarta: UI Press, 1981), p. 82-83

³¹ DA Wila Humy, *Pengantar Sosiologi* (Surabaya: Usaha Nasional, 1986), p. 170

³² Talcott Parson, *Esei-esei Sosiologi*, diterjemahkan oleh S. Aji, (Jakarta: Aksara Persada, 1986), p. 23

Muslims Tolerant Attitudes toward other Religious Communities in South Sulawesi

Religion is a guide for its members covering all aspects of life, including social relationships in life. Religion also contains teachings of trust toward something that is considered a good and a principle for its believers. One of the teachings of religion is an attitude that should be performed to create tolerance among religious communities. In Indonesia, furthermore, it has become a *pearl of conventional wisdom* or unwritten law that every person should have a religion or belief recognized by the state.

In this context, tolerance becomes very important because it builds social interaction in an inclusive and heterogeneous society. Inclusiveness and heterogeneity are not sufficient for an area that is only inhabited by a group of people with a particular religion or belief. Through an attitude of tolerance, people with a different background of tradition will be able to respect each other and coexist peacefully. Thus, understanding must be established as a model of thinking and a model of acting in religion. The meaning of tolerance should be a personal and group consciousness that is always maintained, integrated, harmonized in the form of social interaction.

Within the City of Parepare in South Sulawesi, one of the indicators that can be used as the underlying assumption of tolerance is the unwritten agreement among the people to not make the difference of religion as a source of conflict. This agreement can be known from the information submitted by some informants. Generally, the informants commented that the people of Parepare had a strong and equal commitment to maintain unity and did not question the differences, including religious differences. As a social phenomenon, the agreement indicates the existence of an excellent social interaction to create religious tolerance among people in Parepare.

A society is formed and built by some people who are mutually and wholly different but intertwined in the process of interaction. Every human has absolute uniqueness and characteristics. Therefore, everyone must be able to accept the consequences in which among the people there will be many differences. These differences will then continue to develop in the dynamic motion of multidimensional societal life. The challenge faced by the people of Parepare is not to eliminate gaps and disagreements as social and cultural realities, but to cultivate them creatively to make them as related parts of one another.

Religious tolerance has positively conducted in Parepare, South Sulawesi. It is manifested by the social relationship between the members of the same religion and different religions. It is an achievement that should be maintained on an ongoing basis. Although there are still a number of negative religious cases, it is often just a case indicated by a religious mask that is a case of social inequalities and socio-economic inequalities in society. Differences in religion are never an obstacle in establishing fraternity, unity, and integrity.

People in Parepare live in an atmosphere of cooperation despite their different religions. When someone asks for help, they help each other and even when someone dies, they still come to meet the needs without considering what the religion is. The social relation among religious people can also be seen from interfaith braids in communicating on economic aspects as well as in buying and selling activities in markets, shops and other places of economic activities.

In terms of the members, the majority of Parepare societies are Muslim. One of the wonderful facts is that the location of the religious center among the religion existing in Parepare is not quite far. Mosques, churches, and other places of worship are relatively close to each other. Moreover, there is only a kilometer distance between a Mosque and a Church. This fact does not trigger conflict at all. All religions always try to maintain the harmony of the religious relationship among different religions in Parepare, so that it will not cause a religious conflict.

Concerning religious figures or elites, they always act in rational consideration. The elites of Catholic and Christianity make a *silaturrahmi* visit to the house of Islamic religious leaders on Idul Fitri holidays, Eid al-Adha and other religious festivals. In additional opportunity, Muslim figures visit Christian homes, Buddhists, and other religions. They cooperate well since they are aware of the importance of maintaining an excellent relationship to minimize conflict.

Based on the writers' observation, the patterns of relationship among religious communities in Parepare, South Sulawesi are divided into two:

Active Patterns

An active concord pattern means the societies do not differentiate their religions. All the people of Parepare are friends, and they are aware of their unity. In the social aspect, they go hand in hand in working and doing business together without considering the religion. Based on the writers' observation, religious people in Kota Parepare still have consistency and high intensity in

maintaining solidarity and good tolerance. Each party still maintains a sense of security in performing religious *dakwah*, because it is believed that religion is the best principle. People in Parepare also have great solidarity which means they are active in the interaction among others. For example, helping each other when there are people who have different religions get calamity, either dead and sick. If a Christian dies, Muslims participate and listen to the religious lectures, and vice versa. They perform it because they believe that empathy for other people is a form of worship to God.

Passive Patterns

The passive pattern of harmony is formed in the aspect of faith, religion and worship experience. The members of religions in Parepare are being respectful to each other. For instance, Muslims respect Christians, religious activities and vice versa. Although Islam is the majority religion in Parepare, it does not mean that Islam has to take control of other religions. The law constitution also states that every member of religion has the freedom to actualize their religious thought and teaching without being interfered with by other religions. It should be appreciated that the people of Parepare have the same opportunity to carry out their rituals and religious traditions without any obstacles. This opportunity is created from mutual consciousness as a multi-religious and multi-ethnic society. From this awareness, people try to always think about the interests of others in doing their activities and to prioritize the principle of humanity. The most important thing is that all people have to have an awareness to maintain the conflict by developing a good social interaction, especially among the religious communities.

Conclusion

Developing a good pattern of social relationships among religions requires the contribution of all stakeholders, including the religious leaders, governments, educators, and the community. They have to give an education on how religious people should behave with high values of tolerance, even to other different members of the religion. Islam teaches that every Muslim has to enrich life by implementing pure and noble teaching. Religious leaders and figures ideally emphasize the same instructions that human beings have to live with an affection which later will contribute to the creation of peaceful life among societies.

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