

THE CONCEPT OF TOLERANCE AS ONE OF THE ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS OF HUMAN PERFECTION

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ABSTRACT

This article discusses the human perfection in Islam, and the traditional tasks assigned to human, value of religious tolerance is a perfection of human being in the holy book of Qur'an and Hadiths.

INTRODUCTION, LITERATURE REVIEW AND DISCUSSION

In the first days of Independence, the concept of tolerance, particularly religious tolerance became essential in the upbringing of a perfect man. Working out the elements of tolerance as a humanitarian moral quality relevant to harmoniously developed individual, and its advocacy became one of the main issues. It has been claimed that in this world of globalization it is impossible to imagine perfect individual's upbringing without the ideas of tolerance. The study of the root, conditions of origin of tolerant ideas and their features suiting each historical era became an issue.

Accordingly, the most ancient period of the formation of perfect individual was the formation of primitive civilizations. This era is played fundamentally significant role, and is considered vital in the origin and development of the concept of tolerance. It serves as a basis for the structure of universal values. We included followings into the principles of tolerance relevant to ancient civilizations:

- The structure of cultural and educational values, and features of tolerance relevant to ancient civilizations and individual perfection
- The principles of the Ancient East and individual perfection: matters of individual perfection, and advocacy of tolerance in Egypt, China, India, Middle and Far East
- The problem of upbringing of individual in the Western civilizations: the principles of religious tolerance in the structure of the world religions related to human perfection

According to our opinions, next step in the origin of the concept of tolerance as moral norms is connected with the period of national geographical cultural progress. During this period, diverse local-regional civilizations came into existence in different places; for example, Ancient Chinese, Indian, Egyptian and Greek-Roman civilizations. The principals of tolerance started to develop within their spiritual and moral values. Compared to the previous period, the principles of tolerance started to illustrate themselves in more complex way.

Followings are included into the local and regional content of the concept of tolerance in the structure of the ancient civilizations relevant to requirements of human morals:

- Steps of historical formation of national views and principles of tolerance relevant to human perfection
- Views on the concept of individual perfection, and descriptions given to the principles of tolerance in "Avesta", "Sogd Inscriptions", "Orhan Enasoy" inscriptions

- Characteristics of the idea of perfect individual formed within the culture of Islam by the scholars of Islam and Movarounnahr, and the solution of the principles of tolerance within the structure of it
- Development of Sufism in Central Asia and the idea of "perfect individual" as the basis for the cultural, religious and secular tolerance
- Requirements of the tolerance assigned to the perfect individual during the period of Timurids culture
- Educational movements, and principles of tolerance on the basis of perfection
- Elements of perfect man in the movement and literature of Jadids; the new features of the new principles of tolerance
- National liberation movements and the standards of perfect man; tolerance as the criterion for individual liberation
- Formed ideas during the rule of the totalitarian regime in the development of individual and its crisis: internationalism and false tolerance
- Transition from the idea of traditional "perfect individual" to modern "harmoniously developed individual", and the educational significance of tolerance as a daily issue

Religious tolerance has been impregnated in the criterion of the pillars of the religion of Islam. The precepts of humanitarian and religious tolerance have been widely promoted and encouraged. The human perfection in Islam and the traditional tasks assigned to them have been raised on the same level of individual's self-esteem, patience, respect and appreciation of others.

It has been claimed in the Qur'an and the Hadiths that religious tolerance is valued as a trait of individual perfection. The religion of Islam and its processes during its historical formation have always urged to respect other cultures and beliefs, tried to embody the positive aspects of them, and at the same time Islam could influence moral values of other cultures with its positive sides. Religious tolerance urges to respect other religions, appreciate existing harmony among the other members of society. These matters have always been underlying values of the Islamic religion.

During the first stages of Islam's formation, the principles of tolerance was worked out so perfectly that no Muslim was allowed to feel themselves more righteous than non-Muslims. Instead, justice and logic were one of the criteria for the person following Islam. Furthermore, they have to consider all religions as equal, show respect to people of other faiths and beliefs, judge people based not on their religious status but their deeds, and it has been mentioned in Islam that all religions serve for the perfection of individual. However, at the same time extremism, aggression and violence in any case were condemned in Islam. For example, the Qur'an says, 'Verily, Allah condemns transgressors (the violent).

Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w) has reported in the Hadiths that people should do good and kind deeds and avoid evil: "Muslim is a man who does not encroach on the property and lives of others. Emigrants (Mujahideer) is a man who has left the sin and evil. Mujahideen is the person who has struggled against his or her lust and desire in the way of Allah". He has also quoted: "My people will never follow evil"; "The man who does good to other is one who is praised by the Allah himself and His angels, the creatures of heaven and earth, even the fish of the sea and the ants says blessings in their names.

Therefore, saying it with the meaningful words in the Islamic religion, each person should be engaged in "tazkiyatul nafs", self-cleansing of soul.

Messenger of Allah (s.a.a.w) leaving Medina to Mecca said facing His motherland Medina: "If my tribe did not force me to flee from Mecca, I would not never leave it out of my own impulse". Therefore, loving motherland, being patriotic, cherish what the motherland offers are the feelings and senses existing in human nature. Hence, sense of patriotism, love and the appreciation of the native land are promoted as spiritual and moral human traits, glorifying the human as an important facet of the belief. It is reported in the Hadith, "Khubbul va'tan mihnal iyman", "Patriotism and Faith". Glorifying the homeland and serving for its prosperity have been regarded as integral part of human belief and faith.

Tolerance in Arabic language is translated as "Halim"; one of the 99 names of Allah, it means the concept of tolerance is included in the one of the names of Allah. The laws accepted by the prophet of Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) emphasize the respect for the Christians and the Jews beliefs, freedom of religion and regard their faiths with respect. In the sacred Qur'ans verses dedicated to the people of the Bible, the rights of the followers of the belief of the Monotheism were mentioned. According to Islam, the followers of the Bible were regarded as "zimmi" (non-muslims). Their status was lower than the Muslims, but the people who profess were regarded higher. At the same time, the structure of the different religious organizations of Muslim countries were given certain rights, most importantly the right to work in their organizations, and they were regarded equally.

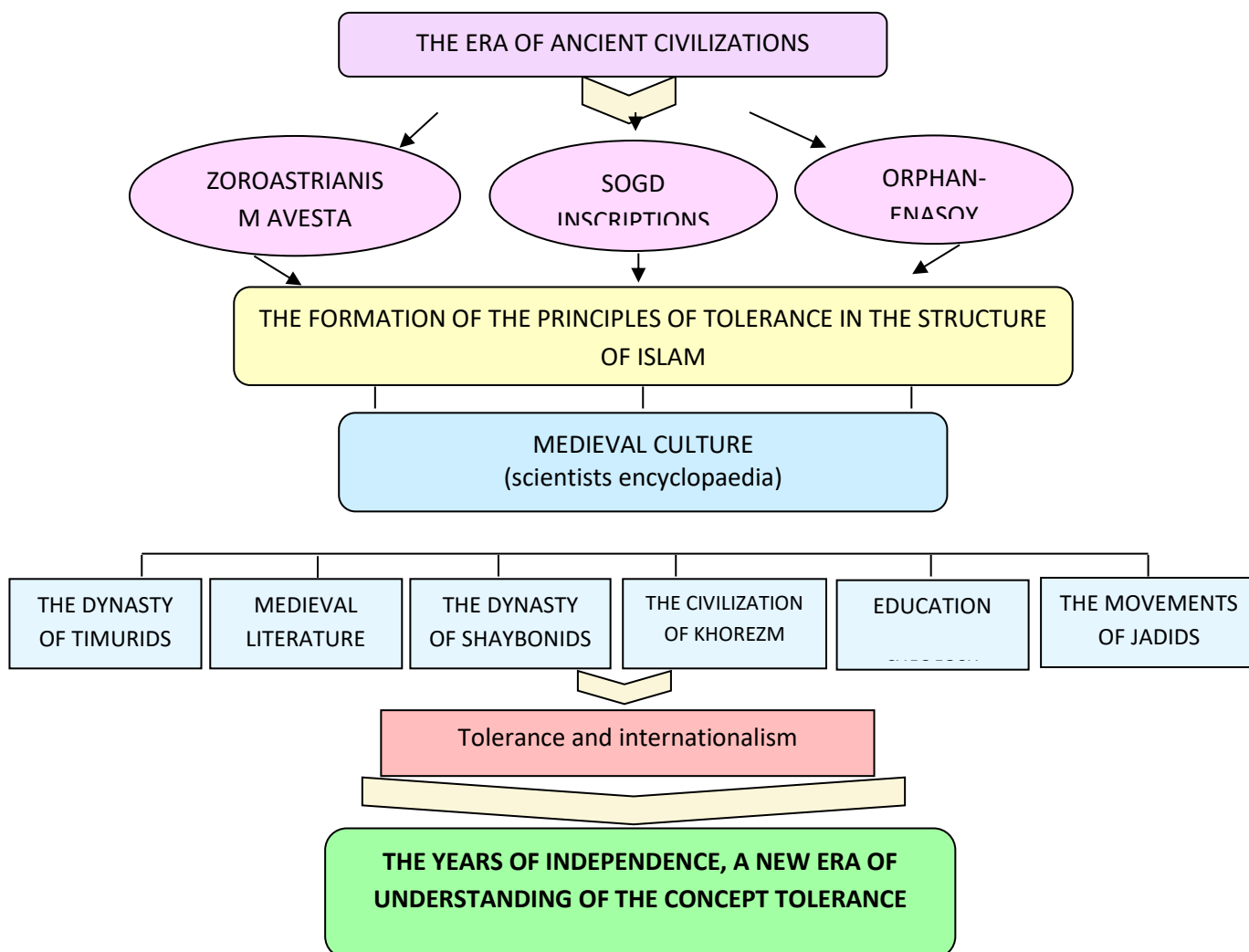
A great scholar Al-Bukhari narrated that the Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) said: "Muslim is the person who does not hurt others". So, first and foremost to be Muslim is not to hurt or abuse anybody in any way. The hurt must be not either physically or morally. It leads to that the true Muslims should help others, and live in cooperation, mutual respect and support the people around them. Furthermore, they must be tolerant toward others.

Islam does not support forced conversion into the religion. The Qur'an declares: "There is no force in religion; the right direction is henceforth distinct from error" (Surat al-Baqara, 256).

Indeed, this is also reflected in the Constitution of our country: it highlights, "Freedom of conscience is guaranteed for all. Every person has a right to practice any religion or no religion at all. The forced imposition of religious views is not allowed". Such harmony is felt almost in all articles of the Constitution. Religious freedom and freedom of beliefs in Uzbekistan are established and guaranteed by law to any citizen of the country within the territories of its land.

The Prophet Muhammad (s.a.a.w.) said: "I have come to you only to teach only religious matters, you know your world matters by yourselves better than me. In another Hadith, he says: "I am also a human being, if I order you to do something regarding the matters of religion, take it for granted, and take it into account if I order something based on my mood and personality ". Hence, since the most ancient times, the principles of the secular and religious tolerance were separated from one another, and they were advocated without being controversial one another.

The historical stages of development of the concept of tolerance in Uzbekistan



Assessment of religious values as a unique style of human civilization is a specific to all stages of development. "Islam emphasizes the conscience, justice, humanitarian right of man and all humanity. It strongly advocates to regard and treat someone with great respect, justice and compassion. It points out to be there for others during the time of hardships, and always be willing to help them

The religion of Islam puts Muslims, namely the servants of Allah above other nations and ethnic groups. In the religion of Islam, the entire population is mutually united, and turned into a unity; "Followers of God", that is, people of God. The criterions of fairness and justice in Islam is prescribed to be followed even during the fight with an enemy. "The ideas of humanism and love to others were built on the basis of values to glorify a man like God does so, and respect others faiths and beliefs, show compassion to people, especially to the elderly people, pregnant women, orphans, and the one who lost their breadwinners.

Islamic culture also puts great importance to educate the youth based on a healthy spirit. It concentrates on humanism and patriotism, glorification of a man, the thirst for knowledge, positive thinking and freedom, contemplation, charity, kindness, respecting women, tolerance, respect for all religious beliefs and heritage, honor religious monuments and values in teaching the youth religious principles and moral factors.

The religion of Islam is considered to be the religion of peace. Peace, harmony, stability, religious tolerance and cooperation are important features of the religion. Peace and harmony in the society, mobilization of the population to good and creative work, contribute to the prosperity of the Earth, showing compassion for all living things on earth and being merciful are promoted in the framework of the concept of religious tolerance in Islam.

Muhammad (s.a.a.w) condemns aggression and aggressive actions in many Hadiths. For example, He says: "Do not wish a military conflict with the enemy, but ask for peace and tranquility from God". In another Hadith, He declares: "On the Day of Judgment you will be questioned about the blood you shed unjustly".

Another Hadith reports: Abu Saeed was asked, "How many ways are there to reach the God?". Abu Said responded: " Some people say that there are thousands of ways, some say, they are the same as number of people. But the most optimal and shortest way is showing mercy, doing good to others, and serving for the benefit of humanity". Showing mercy to every living thing, helping others to find their ways and directing them to the noble way are evaluated as a pure faith.

The medieval Renaissance period (XI-XVII) has played a very vital role in the development of our culture. That time made the people Central Asia well-known to the world. Moreover, exchange with the samples of other cultures increased the spiritual influence. The ancient Indian, Persian, Arabic, Greek cultural values, and publications contribute to the formation of "Muslim culture", a new cultural layer.

One of the great thinkers of the region of Tashkent Kaffol Shashiy in his book of "Javomiy al Kalim"(Words of Wisdom) mentions the issues of tolerance. Abu Bakr Muhammad ibn Ali ibn Ismail Kaffol Shashiy was one of the linguistic scholars of tafsir, hadith, theology, law, the study of poetry and encyclopedia. He was engaged in the collection of Hadiths on the basis of human perfection. He writes followings in his book of "Javomiy al Kalim":

- Intentions are connected with Actions
- The Qur'an is cure to injuries
- Prayer is a worship
- First the greeting, then the word
- Community work is blessing
- Separation is suffering

As it is known, the Islamic culture had influence on literature, art, science, philosophy, ethics, traditions, issues of education and upbringing as well. In all of these spheres the principles of spirit, culture and tolerance are scientifically, theoretically and practically promoted.

Another popular Sufis scholar of Central Asia, known as Khoja Bahauddin Naqshbandi advocated tolerance in his Sufi teachings. One of the fourth pillar of this teaching called "Khilvat dar anjuman", it promotes the idea of cooperation externally, and justice internally. Bahauddin Naqshbandi said: "*Iza hayyotum bi-tahiyyatul fa-hayyi bi-ahsan minho*", "if a man greets you prays for you in a good way greet him in a better way".

To the question of "What faith is?!" Khodja Bahauddin responds: "Avoiding and preserving from all the harms that can cause one harm is faith".

Great thinkers of Central Asia considered Islamic knowledge, especially in the matters of Islamic jurisprudence, to play vital role in the formation and promotion of religious and

spiritual principals of tolerance . For example, there are great views on tolerance of the Sheikh al-Moturudiy:

- Use the knowledge as weapons.
- Seek partner in each work.
- Learn and teach others.
- If you want to be condemned by people be dishonest.
- Do not eat every man's bread, but give bread to ever body.
- Appreciate the role of ancestors.
- Consider helping others as an important task.
- Do not let down the one who asks for help

In the verse of Al-Isra of Qur'an, it says: "Vaa laqad qaarramna bani odama", "I created the man perfect". "Based on that, the Sufis claim that humans are the caliph of God on earth, the crown of two universes". Khazrat Navoi in his book of "Mahbub ul Qulub" gives following description to the man, "Human being is the most beloved and blessed creature of the world". When the God created the universes, His purpose was the man. Man is a mirror of the beauty of God, and the man is the illustration of the power of God and His mystery, knowledge and miracles. The soul of man is the treasure of knowledge and love of God."

Nowadays, the construction of a democratic state based on Islamic values and the formation of the principles of tolerance in the youth must be focused on the following factors:

- explanation of the relationship between religion and the secular state on the basis of the requirements of civilization;
- make them realize that religion is part of the modern full-fledged civil society;
- pure Islamic religious knowledge, teach them to the right interpretation based on the historical comparison;
- the right and scientific formation of the history of religions;
- impregnation of the evolutionary development of the idea of tolerance in the structure of the religion of Islam as a set of practical and theoretical knowledge;
- teach them to appropriate evaluation of religious, spiritual knowledge, skills and norms as a set of moral knowledge.

Therefore, the religion has always been a important structure of the process of education and upbringing, and a participating organizer of the formation of the idea of religious tolerance and promotion of the ideas of the religious tolerance. Hence we have building a civil society and democratic state in our country, the young generation must comprehend and practice the true concept of both religious and secular tolerance with its close link to the world. The principles of tolerance are essential in teaching the relationship between the state and religion within the requirements of civilization. The youth have to be aware of the rights guaranteed by the democratic state, and they are given freedom of faith and belief at the same time. However, on the other hand, everyone has to take into account and accept that they are not only ones who are given those rights, but every member of the state. That is, freedom of religion is not an individual right, but the right of the whole society, it belongs to everyone. The government of Uzbekistan allows to follow a certain religion or not to follow any. Therefore, when a man follows a particular religion it is his choice of conscience. However, this man must not insult or abuse others, and do not judge followers of other faith. Furthermore, the religious institutions and organizations in our country have been recognized as a full-fledged part of the civil society. So, nor religious people or devotees rights must be violated. Accordingly, while the concept of

religious tolerance is interrelated with the religious belief, the youth must be taught the origin of religion, the discipline and sense, religious history and its skills.

To conclude, tolerance and religious tolerant approach are recognized as one of the main factors of human perfection. Islamic scholars have always pay special attention to the issues of tolerance and advocated it. The greatest representatives of Islamic civilization, poets and scientists, regarded the principles of tolerance as one of the most crucial aspect of human perfection.

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