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ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF THE CONCEPT OF TOLERANCE IN PHILOSOPHICAL AND RELIGIOUS SOURCES.

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Abstract

In today's conditions of globalization, alongside studying the processes of the historical formation of the concept of tolerance, it is also important to demonstrate the place it occupies in human life. Indeed, while a correct interpretation of the concept of tolerance serves, on the one hand, to counter various bigoted and extremist ideas, its incorrect interpretation creates a basis for various sectarian movements.

Keywords: tolerance, philosophical views, religious concept, Sufism, tariqa, Naqshbandiya, Naqshbandiya-Mujaddidiya, social equality, justice, tolerance, javonmardlik (chivalry), shaykh, murid (disciple), murshid (spiritual guide).

INTRODUCTION

The word «tolerance» has the same or mutually complementary meaning in almost all languages. Generalizing them, one may say that «tolerance» carries such meanings as endurance, forbearance, patience, treating different views and actions with respect, generosity, magnanimity, forgiveness, kindness and compassion. Tolerance in Sufism must be understood in such a way that within it there is no harming even an animal, let alone a human being, nor causing needless harm to plants. Even in conditions of ongoing war, in situations that threaten human life, one was restrained from destroying gardens and orchards in vain or cutting down trees needlessly. According to the Sufi shaykhs, «One hour of fairness and justice is better than a lifetime of supererogatory worship. In both worlds there is no futuwwa (chivalry) that surpasses fairness and justice»[1:73]. It is fitting to explain futuwwa through the following verses: «Futuwwa brightens the eye of the heart and nurtures the garden of the soul with the sun of purity»[2:212]. The word «tolerance» is a modern interpretation of the term «Javonmardlik» (chivalry), and it teaches faithfulness to one's covenant, regarding everyone as better than oneself, and never placing oneself above anyone. Based on the teachings of Sufism, it may be emphasized that the word, the deed, the intention and the thoughts of a chivalrous (javonmard) person must all be pure.

Many sources emphasize that Islam is a teaching that promotes equality of rights. In particular, the sources of the Manghit period provide a great deal of information on the matter of the call to prayer (azan) and the prayer (namaz); these sources stress that when the azan is called in the mosque, those who wish to worship Allah gather at once, and that their hastening — not to outdo one another, but toward worship — is among the praiseworthy deeds. In reality, Muslims pray five times a day standing side by side in a single row. Following a single imam, they perform bowing (ruku) and prostration (sajda). «Islamic equality is manifested in its most beautiful form in prayer»[3:48].

ANALYSIS OF LITERATURE AND METHODS

The practical power of Islam in uniting people of different nations within a system of brotherhood can also be seen in its other acts of worship and devotion. In the fourth chapter of Musokhon Dahbediy's work «Navodir ul-maorif» — "در ذکرحقیقت پیری و مریدی" «Dar zikri haqiqati piri va muridi» (On the reality of the master and the disciple) — he encourages not solitude but communal life in worship and in the acquisition of knowledge. Musokhon Dahbediy states: [1:164]

" طریقت ما گفتگوست و خوبی در جماعت است.نعف گفتگو با جماعت همین است که منفعت متقابل است.

«Our tariqa is conversation (suhbat), and benefit lies in community. Conversation within a community is conditioned upon being of benefit to one another, and if all the travelers of this path hold conversation with one another, then much goodness and blessing comes about», he emphasized. The method of conversation, as he stresses, requires being together with the community, exchanging ideas and keeping company, and here it is made clear that the benefit of the community is greater than solitude. This method dislikes solitude and seclusion, calls a person to solidarity, and brings him goodness, benefit and advantage. In this chapter of his work, Musokhon Dahbediy provides valuable information about the relationship between master and disciple being one of the requirements of Sufism, and about the personal qualities and conduct of the disciple. Besides the disciple's personal characteristics and good manners, he points out six further pillars pertaining to him. These are اطاعت کردن، راست گفتن، وفادار بودن، گوش دادن به نصیحت، حفظ اسرار و دل آزار نبودن «to obey, to speak truthfully, to be faithful, to heed advice, to keep secrets, and not to grieve hearts»[1:168].

In the chapter «Dar zikri haqiqati piri va muridi» of Musokhon Dahbediy's work «Navodir ul-maorif», he emphasizes what a shaykh must be like — that he should look upon everyone with the eye of truth and, at the same time, regard all his disciples as equal. In his view, "شیخ در تصوف مانند پزشکی است که در زندگی واقعی از بیماران مراقبت می کند" — «In Sufism the shaykh is like a physician who cares for the sick in real life»[1:168]. Just as a physician treats the ailments of people's bodies, the shaykh treats the ailments of their hearts. The shaykh must know well both the heart that is deprived of knowledge, deeds, spiritual states, nearness and light, and the heart that is filled with knowledge, deeds, states, nearness and light. The shaykh is a master educator who recognizes both the heart hardened by much sin and heedlessness and the heart made gentle through piety, humility and reverence, and who treats each of them in its own particular way. Musokhon Dahbediy enjoins unity, solidarity and tolerance in the tariqa, even in the relationship between master and disciple.

According to sources on Sufism, the javonmards (chivalrous men) observed a particular order and set of rules, and whatever occupation they engaged in, they set an example of valor and nobility[5:42]. Each of them had their own community, their master (pir) and teacher, the murshid who instructed them, and a place where they gathered. The chivalrous disciple who gave his hand to the master and, making a vow before his teacher, tied the belt of valor around his waist strove to remain faithful to his covenant for a lifetime. In ancient times nobility, social idealism, human virtues and courage were qualities characteristic of the javonmards, and their ideas laid the foundation for the entry of the futuwwa teaching into the socio-political life of Mawarannahr (Transoxiana). The features characteristic of futuwwa were adopted by the masses engaged in agriculture, and wherever the ideas of futuwwa spread, they also exerted their influence on various social groups and spread among artisans as well; for this reason the principles of chivalry were established in cities, mainly in craft workshops. Through the futuwwa–chivalry movement, people's morals were cultivated and they were gradually brought to the level of the perfect human being (komil inson).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

In the science of Sufism and in the tariqa, such tolerance and solidarity formed the core of the central idea and ideology. Contemporary scholars of Sufism likewise emphasize that tolerance has been one of the most fundamental principles in a person's ascent toward spiritual perfection, in ensuring the peace of society, and in spreading the spirit of brotherhood among people[6:86].

According to the teaching of Islam, Allah has commanded His servants to become acquainted with one another and to live their lives in peace, harmony and concord. In the Holy Quran, the sacred word of Islam, it is said:

يَٰٓأَيُّهَا ٱلنَّاسُ إِنَّا خَلَقۡنَٰكُم مِّن ذَكَرٖ وَأُنثَىٰ وَجَعَلۡنَٰكُمۡ شُعُوبٗا وَقَبَآئِلَ لِتَعَارَفُوٓاْۚ إِنَّ أَكۡرَمَكُمۡ عِندَ ٱللَّهِ أَتۡقَىٰكُمۡۚ إِنَّ ٱللَّهَ عَلِيمٌ خَبِيرٞ

“O mankind! Indeed, We created you from a single male (Adam) and a single female (Eve) and made you into (diverse) peoples and tribes so that you may come to know one another. Truly, the most honored of you in the sight of Allah is the most God-fearing among you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware”[7].

If we analyze the meaning of the above verse, the origin of humanity is one: all are descended from Adam and Eve. At the same time, Allah Almighty divided them into various peoples and tribes. The reason for the division of people into different peoples and tribes is mutual acquaintance, cooperation, and being just toward one another. Islam has also taught treating the followers of other religions with respect. As is known, Islam did not limit itself to honoring the heavenly religions that preceded it, but showed boundless generosity to the followers of those religions. It secured their rights by law. Muslims who lived in accordance with these rules over the centuries showed generosity to the ahl al-dhimma (protected non-Muslims) living among them and have served as an example to all humanity.

CONCLUSION

In whatever society the principles of religious tolerance find their expression in life, mutual respect and sincerity become established in that society, and all people live a peaceful and tranquil life. Just as there is no progress and prosperity without peace, peace cannot be stable without religious tolerance. In Sufi sources, particular emphasis is placed on everyday relations with the followers of other religions. In particular, on such matters as neighborly relations, partaking of the food of the People of the Book, the permissibility of marrying them, the fact that backbiting them is also a sin, establishing financial relations, borrowing from and lending to them, entrusting deposits to them, and praising a non-Muslim, the Sufis substantiated their ideas and views by citing examples from the Holy Quran and the noble hadiths.

In recent years, certain groups have been increasing in number that carry out vile acts in the name of Islam — various forms of subversion, instilling danger and fear among people, shedding the blood of peaceful inhabitants, and damaging their property. The President of the Republic of Uzbekistan said in this regard: “We strictly condemn those who place our sacred religion on a par with violence and bloodshed, and we can never reconcile ourselves with them.”

In conclusion, we may say that Islamic sharia has clearly defined the norms regarding amicable relations with the followers of other religions. The great scholars taught how one should treat the followers of other religions and themselves served as an example to all in this. The cases of religious intolerance occurring in the world today are connected with extreme intolerance toward the followers of other religions, conflict-ridden relations within a single religion, struggle against the secular order, or confrontations at the international level. Indeed, like all religions, Islam not only recognized the religions that preceded it (Judaism, Christianity) but also commanded that their culture and traditions be regarded with respect and that they be treated justly. Islam always calls upon the representatives of all religions and beliefs to cooperate in establishing justice, ensuring security, and preventing the shedding of innocent people's blood.

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