

Muslims' Relationships with Non-Muslims

Relationships between human are very crucial in the formation of cohabiting and harmonious society especially with the existence of multiple cultures, religions, and civilizations. Improper construction of such relationships between inhabitants with different grounds of religion and civilization leads to chaotic and unstable societies.

Relationship between Muslims and Non-Muslims can be pictured in several phases in connection with history timeline into three separate phases; the era of Prophet Muhammed and his four guided caliphs, and the second phase depicting from the previous Islamic dynasties to the end of the Ottoman era which I prefer to call the golden ages of Islam, and the third phase being the present relations Muslims have with non-Muslims and the world at large.

Muslims with non-Muslims relations can be traced back to the era of Prophet Muhammed being the first phase views how Prophet Muhammed co-existed with the non-Muslims in Mecca in the early stage of his propagation to Islam, his followers were treated unjust but endured the pain of his companions without any violence from Prophet Muhammed nor apostles till he migrated from Mecca to the city of Medina in modern Saudi Arabia.

Upon the arrival of Prophet Muhammed to Medina, he established the Islamic state there without any pre-battle or violence. Despite Medina being the nucleus of the Islamic state with the Jews being the second largest society therein, with also believers of other faith. Prophet Muhammad wrote a treaty between the Muslims and the Non-Muslims as occupants of the city to live in harmony and respect for each party's believes. All parties lived by the treaty, consequently, Medina became multicultural society together with their interfaith relations. Inhabitants of Medina lived peacefully and there was a strong relationship between the Muslims and the non-Muslims to the extent of committing business transactions between themselves and also borrowing from one another. Some of the Jewish community of Medina accepted Islam and some likewise maintained their faith as there is no coercion in accepting Islam.

The four guided caliphs followed suit by their establishment of good relations with the non-Muslims after the demise of Prophet Muhammed. Then followed the dynasties that changed the face of the world and Europe in particular with its advancement in science, medicine, mathematics, art, literature, philosophy in addition to its complexity of culture and civilization. The second caliph of Abbasid dynasty Abu Ja'faril Mansur founded the House of Wisdom in Bagdad, now in modern Iraq and later became the center of knowledge where scholars across the globe gather to share, collaborate in various fields of knowledge which led to the Renaissance of Europe and the advancement of our modern age. Among the scholars who contributed to these successes and advancements were Muslims, Christians, Jews, Greeks and others from a different faith, nevertheless,

they all contributed within the sovereignty of Muslims with the support of the Islamic government at the time till the Mongols invaded and devastated Bagdad.

During the era of Andalusia in the Iberian peninsula which expanded from modern Spain, Portugal, and France and was ruled by Muslim. Muslims and non-Muslims resided there in the dominion of Muslims, they lived peacefully with each other under the common ground they all share which is humanity. Both Muslims, Christian, Jews and people of other faith collaborated together and they contributed massively to various advanced fields today. Both Muslims and non-Muslims were given equal opportunity to bring the best out their talents, both parties were protected by the Islamic government regardless of faith, race or background.

Before the spread of Islam across the Arabian peninsula, Islamic faith first reached Africa through the migration embarked by the apostles of Prophet Muhammed in their struggle to practice their faith in peace. Prophet Muhammad commanded his companions to migrate to Ethiopia which was governed by Christians at that time, King Najashi welcomed the Muslims in Ethiopia and treated them marvelously well. The companions displayed their tolerance and respect for the people of Ethiopia. African society is a diverse society with its multiple cultures and ethnic groups. When Islam emerged in several parts of Africa with the Christian faith and traditionalist alongside, there were tolerance, understanding, and respect for

interreligious bond among the people.

Muslims and non-Muslims lived in peace regardless of the complexity of the African settings. Muslims in Ghana, Nigeria, Uganda and other parts of Africa gather at one function and share dignitaries, eat together and visit each other peacefully and this type of relationship between the followers of these faiths still exist till date. Nevertheless, this relations and bond between Muslim and their non-Muslims neighbors still exit with a slight shift in some part of the African continent ranging from Nigeria, Mali, Niger, and Somalia due to the invention of the terrorist group Boko Haram in some part of Africa.

Considering our modern day as the third phase of the relationship between Muslims and non-Muslims across the globe. There is a switch of these unprecedented relations between Muslims and the other faith tracing back to the foundation of term terrorism, Jihadist and Islamophobia in the political arena relating this sudden shift of relation between these with the acclaimed attack on American on September 11. The acclaimed 9/11 attack has completely destroyed the enjoyed relationships between this faiths because of a political interest of some governments around the world. Currently, Islam and Muslims are being identified by the terrorist attacks being influenced by some Western governments.

Non-Muslims no long perceive Muslims as their neighbors because of this sudden invention of terrorism which created and funded by some Western countries. Muslims and Islam as a religion as fall victim of this chaotic atmosphere.

The aim of the terrorism industry was to deter these centuries relationships that Muslims had with others across the globe and also to blacken the image and dignity of Islam and Muslims.

Islam has established grounds on how Muslims should relate and interact with the non-Muslims neighbors and friends in the Glorious Quran in conjunction with the prophetic guidance on human relations. The Glorious Quran stated clearly as on which ground should Muslims relate with the followers of other faiths.

And indeed We have honored the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and have a provided them with At-Taiyibat (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preference. [Quran 17:70]

The human hood is the first ground Islam laid for interfaith relations, before our faith we are all human and the Al-Mighty Allah has elevated the rank of mankind from the rest of his creations and therefore, the human need to be respected and treated justly regardless of faith, culture, background or social status.

Allah does not forbid you to deal justly and kindly with those who fought not against you on account of your religion and did not drive you out of your homes. Verily, Allah loves those who deal with equality. [Quran 60:08]

Justice and kindness is another platform Islam established for relationships between Muslims and non-Muslims and the above relationships throughout the history demonstrate that Islam is open to diversity, interfaith relations and multiculturalism and teaches its followers to cohabited with other people with respect and without discrimination against any religion or person.