

# Islamic World Unity Through Developing Cross-Culture Communication and Religion

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## Abstract

Every one in every religion needs unity, peace and security in their daily life, especially in performing worship peacefully on this earth. It is not only for special worshipping, but also for interaction among human beings. The objective of this paper is to explore the development of cross-culture communication and religion. It is of human innate nature to possess skills in communication with others. The experts on communication are really appreciative of the communication skills of human being because it very important to develop self-existence for continuous life, to acquire happiness, to avoid threat, especially in developing communication between culture and religion.

**Keywords:** Unity; Communication; Cross-culture; Religion

## Introduction

The unity of the Muslim world is a term that refers to establishing a good and peaceful relationship among the various Islamic denominations, and usually refers to political unity in the form of a caliphate of some sort of federalism between Muslim nations ([www.islamicworldunity.com](http://www.islamicworldunity.com)). The primary objective of Muslim unity is to unite all Muslims around the world. Although some divisions such as Shia/Sunni exist among Muslims, according to the proponents of Muslim unity these divisions

are negligible and Muslims from different countries should forge closer ties with one another, especially after the Amman Message was signed by more than 500 Ulama from Syiah and Sunni denomination on November 9<sup>th</sup>, 2004 or 27 Ramadhan 1425 H. It is also signed by King Abdullah II bin al-Husein in Amman, Jordan. The Amman Message started from searching definition of which is "Islam" is right and which is not "Islam". The aim was to re-define the right Islam into modern society, about "the right Islam" and "the right in Islam" (The Amman Message, 2004). In the Amman Message (2004), it is said that anyone who is the follower of the four mazhabs of Islamic law of Sunni (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafii dan Hambali), two mazhabs Islamic law of Syiah (Ja'fari and Zaidi), mazhab Islamic law of Ibadhi and mazhab Islamic law of Zahiri is a Muslim. Therefore, it is hoped that all Muslims within the followers of those mazhabs mentioned are strengthening brotherhood (ukhuwah Islamiah) to show that Islam is Rahmatan Lil Alamin.

Furthermore, during the International Conference on Islamic World Unity held by Universitas Muslim Indonesia Makassar in cooperation with the Ambassador Islamic Republic of Iran, it is recommended that all Muslims in the world with full consciousness are upholding, keeping and developing brotherhood among one another. It is a fact that Muslims consist of different mazhabs, so it is hoped that these differences are not becoming a gap among

Muslims of having brotherhood and corporation in many different activities for the world good including religious activities. Therefore, the objective of this writing is to inform the concept of unity of Muslims around the world through developing communication cross-culture and religion.

### **Agreement in Disagreement**

It is hoped that Muslims around the world within different mazhabs become role models for all Muslims in the world through understanding one another and living together within one strong brotherhood. Islamic organizations, Islamic institutions, all da'i and muballigh have active role in strengthening the brotherhood of Islam, and avoiding dakwah which lacks ukhuwah Islamiyah. Another hope that the government is developing is a conducive situation for the brotherhood of every mazhab in Islam and a brotherhood within different religions. It is appreciated that the difference thoughts among Muslims can agree within the disagreement of the differences of thoughts ethically and in the spirit of brotherhood of Islam.

### **Islamic Scholar as Pioneer in Islamic World Unity**

It is optimistic that Islamic scholars will be pioneer in creating Islamic world unity. According to the Ambassador of the Republic of Islam Iran that the logo of the international seminar is drawn about Ka'abah and the Muslims around it which indicates that there is no difference among Muslims. Muslim has the mindset, not only in mazhab but also in other aspects namely politic and economic. It happens because Muslims have differing interpretation of which some of them focus on justice and law, while some of them focus on economic and many more.

### **Benefits of Islamic World Unity**

Ideas that have transpired during the seminar on 'Islamic World Unity' rendered many benefits

with the unity of the Muslims in the world: First, from the aspect of security, the unity amongst Muslims will decrease conflict. Even though the conflict is not only among Muslims, it is also among other believers. Second, Islamic world unity will increase the development of Islamic countries, namely on the scientific and technology front. A few Islamic countries are rich in natural resources, such as oil, mining and many more. Therefore, the ability of the Muslims to use and maintain them in the right way can prove beneficial to the community. It is believed that this will increase development. Unfortunately, until now most of the countries with majority Muslim population are not developing as well as developing countries because they are daunted with many problems. The big deal is the different idea and different interpretation of Islamic verses.

In another case is that Islamic countries still imitate the system of the West, and most of them are not suitable with the culture and Islam. In addition, many revolution and changes of the systems are taking place in Muslim's countries. These are situations found in Yemen, Libya, Syria and many more. The last is, some expectation that is held up is that there are different mazhab, different style and different culture. However, still Muslims believe in one prophet who is Prophet Muhammad (pbuh) as well as one God, Allah (s.w.t).

### **Developing Cross Culture Communication and Religion**

The origins of human beings differ amongst ethnics and cultures, pluralism in different languages, and different religion (Ali, 2003). The difference of languages, cultures and religion sometimes become obstacles for someone to understand each other. That is why, it is needed a process of communication. Through communication will decrease differences in culture and religion or having dialogue about religion and culture will make every one understand each other. One of the important elements that is a great concern is communicating

cross-culture. This will help people understand and respect one another, even though they are different in religion or culture (Tubbs and Moss, 2000). Communication between religion and culture is very important. This is a new era of pluralism of religions and cultures, especially after the tragedy of September 11<sup>st</sup>, 2001 in the United States which caused many people having differences of view on religion. This argument is strengthened by the thesis of Samuel P. Huntington that the basic conflict in the new world is fundamentally on ideology and economy (Esposito, 2002). Furthermore Huntington noticed that clash of civilization in the world will potentially cause a conflict, especially within differences of civilization and the domination of politics in the globalization era (Huntington, 1996). The statement made by Huntington on the clash of civilization, even though it is just a prediction, it should be anticipated because the rapid move of technology and transportation development is without any border. The impact will be positive or negative. On the contrary communication between culture, especially on religion perspective will open chance of having dialogue of finding similarities among others in the communities (Alwi Shihab, 1999).

Cross culture communication and religion are very important because in the history of religion there have been many conflicts that had happened for centuries without any efforts to be self released on trying not too suspicious with others. However, the new era of communication of cross culture, especially the experts on religions regularly holds dialog among them. As mentioned previously that communication via cross-culture is a process of interaction through development and dynamics of human being and its culture. Religion is also dynamic because people are having potentially interpreting the concept of religious teaching. The attitude of exclusivism in religion cannot be separated from religious doctrines that someone's religion is the most rights and claimed that the most blessed from God. To avoid the exclusivity within religion, the holy

scripture should be read with faith and love, which is daily discussed, just like having dialog on finding the truth.

## Conclusion

The concept of Islamic world unity within agreement in disagreement of different mazhabs through Islamic scholar as pioneers because there are differences in school of thoughts among the people. So, it is hope that in the disagreement of the differences in each school of thoughts within ethically and showing the brotherhood of the world through developing communication cross-culture and religion. This will decrease conflict among people and will increase the development of science and technology amongst Islamic nations.

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