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## Basic Requirements of *Da'wah* Methods in Multi-Racial and Multi-Religious Societies: A Preamble

Abdul Salam Muhamad Shukri\*

Nurul Aminah Mat Zain\*\*

### Abstract

This article aims to be a preamble for the Islamic discourse of doing *da'wah* in multi-racial and multi-religious societies covering its basic requirements nowadays. The emphasis is made on the basic requirements of *da'wah* methods in multi-racial and multi-religious societies, conditions of *da'wah* in general, directives for the callers and the relationship between society and *da'wah*. This study employs qualitative methodology in which the data collected are analyzed using textual and content analysis approach. Finding reveals that when Muslims call others to their religion, their consciousness is clear that nobody is forced to Islam. The basis of their *da'wah* in multi-racial and multi-religious societies is freedom and voluntarily submission to God. Thus, this is the main reason why Islam maintains the harmony in society especially in multi-cultural world. Islam wishes everybody to co-exist by living in peace and harmony.

**Keywords:** *Da'wah*, Methods, Multi-racial, Multi-religious, Preamble.

### Introduction

Doing *da'wah* is an obligation to every Muslim. In the contemporary context, the society, which consists of different races and religions, needs a special technics in *da'wah* methods. This accountability is in line with the verse in al-Qur'ān from surah Āli 'Imrān verse 104.

In the *tafsīr* of al-Munīr, Wahbah al-Zuhaylī<sup>1</sup> has explained that the word *al-Khayr* (goodness) in this verse is referred to the righteousness that benefits to human being either in religious aspects or the worldly

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<sup>1</sup> Wahbah Al-Zuhayli, *Tafsir Al-Munir: Aqidah, Syariah, Manhaj (Al-Baqarah, Ali Imran. An Nisaa')* Juzu' 3-4, vol. 2 (Dimashq: Dār al-Fikr, 2009), p. 354.

matters.<sup>1</sup> So, it can be assumed that the *da'wah* needs to be proliferated among human being as a whole regardless of any period of time.

The current and post-modern world is the 'world without borders', the 'global world' as well as the 'global village.' It seems that such an existing world is very peaceful and everybody lives happily with a sound mind, happy family and societies, living together in unity as one citizen of the world without conflicts and wars. However, in reality people of the world are not united but living in 'nightmares.' A lot of conflicts, tensions, wars and so on have occurred throughout centuries. It was began with colonisation by the Western powers from 1511 with the fall of Malacca, Russian revolution in 1917, World War I & II, Cold war, Arab-Israel conflicts, Vietnam war, Russian invasion of Afghanistan, Iraq-Iran war, Sept 11 200, invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan, current civil wars in Syria, Iraq and Yemen, as well as the boycott of Qatar followed by a lot of suffering endeared in this world. It seems that the dream of the 'New World Order' cannot be realized on the basis of wrong paths. Multi-cultural societies are merely utopia to many people and the world nowadays. While some scholars promote the concept of religious pluralism while others see the concept of the New World Order as mere conspiracies, which eventually lead the world to a superpower government instead of a sovereign state. Islam however has a better guideline to this world as whole.

Therefore this study will discuss three basic requirements of *da'wah*. Firstly, the discussion is emphasis on the *da'wah* method in multi-racial and multi-religious societies. Secondly, the researcher explains about the conditions of *da'wah* in general and lastly will be focusing on the directive methods for the callers (*da'ie*) as well as the relationship between the society and *da'wah*.

Therefore, this study will discuss the basic requirements of *da'wah* methods in multi-racial and multi-religious societies, conditions of *da'wah* in general, directives for the callers (*da'ie*) and the relationship between society and *da'wah*. Such discussion aims at highlighting the importance and the Islamic approach in playing its role in this world of plurality and how Islam suits the current setting since it is from beginning known as a religion for all humankind.

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<sup>1</sup> Khairul Azhar Meerangani, Muhammad Asyraf Ahmad Termimi, and Rushdi Ramli. "Dakwah Terhadap Bukan Muslim di Malaysia: Realiti dan Cabaran" in *E-Prosiding Seminar Antarabangsa Dakwah Dan Pembangunan Insan 2013* (Research Gate, 2013), pp. 487-504.

[https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322883508\\_Dakwah\\_terhadap\\_Bukan\\_Muslim\\_di\\_Malaysia\\_Realiti\\_dan\\_Cabaran](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/322883508_Dakwah_terhadap_Bukan_Muslim_di_Malaysia_Realiti_dan_Cabaran).

## Basic Requirements of *Da'wah* Methods in Multi-racial and Multi-Religious Societies

The world now is of multi-cultural societies. In fact, the natures of the world people are multi-racial and multi-religious. They are pluralistic by nature and not a single nation or race by birth. They profess different religions and denominations. With the current openness and freedom there are prospects of Islam in this post-modern age after recognizing the failure of the new world order.

In order to trace the right approaches to the current situation there are certain basic requirements of performing *da'wah* in this world. There are many examples of the multi-cultural countries include in China Hun and Hui residences covering Gansu, Sichuan and Shanghai provinces,<sup>1</sup> India, America, European Community, United Kingdom, Australia, Malaysia, Lebanon, Syria etc. Multicultural cities include Amsterdam, London, Los Angeles, Paris, New York City, San Francisco, São Paulo, Beirut, Singapore and Kuala Lumpur.<sup>2</sup>

Although there are some negative views about multicultural society like “multi-cultural societies could never be peaceful, and former colony Suriname was a “failed state,” such views were criticized by many intellectual.<sup>3</sup>

Islam however has its own vision and mission which can be called as *da'wah* to spread the divine message throughout the world. Historically, Muslims ruled the world with fair and just system. Islam through the struggle of the Prophet has successfully developed a very ‘unique Qur’anic generation’ which is called as “*ummatah wasatan*” (a just and the best nation, al-Baqarah, 2:143) and “*khayra ummatin*” (the best of peoples, Ālī ‘Imrān, 3:110). They spread the message of Islām through the method of “*li-ta’ārafu*” (that you may know one another, al-Hujurat, 49:13), i.e. “get to know, learn, share beneficial matters, and contribute something that suits Islamic worldview.” Henceforth, Islām

<sup>1</sup> “Muslim Cities in China,” Muslim Cities in China, accessed October 31, 2020, <https://www.muslim2china.com/MuslimInfo/Muslim-Cities-in-China.html>.

<sup>2</sup> All of these countries listed could be referred in “Most Multicultural Countries In the World,” TheTopTens, <https://www.thetoptens.com/multicultural-countries/>. See also Marcelina Morfin, “The 10 Most Multicultural Cities in the World,” Culture Trip (The Culture Trip, March 31, 2015).

<https://theculturetrip.com/north-america/usa/california/articles/the-10-most-multicultural-cities-in-the-world/>. Accessed on October 31<sup>st</sup>, 2020.

<sup>3</sup> See Appendix I: ‘Multiracial, multicultural societies are violent’: Dutch Foreign Minister, [https://www.nst.com.my/world/2018/07/392203/multiracial-multicultural-societies-are-violent-dutch-foreign-minister#cxrecs\\_s](https://www.nst.com.my/world/2018/07/392203/multiracial-multicultural-societies-are-violent-dutch-foreign-minister#cxrecs_s), Accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

never holds us to learn other civilization culture. Islam wishes to establish a generation of excellence through the attaining the divine purpose of “*li-ya ‘budūnī*” (that they should worship Me (Alone), i.e. worship and serve God alone. Al-Dhāriyāt, 51:56). At the end Islam wishes to accomplish the position of “*baldataṅ tayyiban wa rabb ḡhafūr*” (a fair land and an Oft-Forgiving Lord! Sabā’, 34:15) in this world leading to upholding the divine message.

Such a sincere heart should only accomplish with a pure call only to God. As missionary religion Islam has set particular standard in preaching. The followings are several requirements of *da'wah* methods in multicultural societies:

### **1. Paying due Respect of others’.**

Respecting others in spreading *da'wah* is vital especially in terms of faith, culture, race and ethnic group. Paying due respect promotes a peaceful and harmonious life with each other. This is in line with God saying in the Qur’an: “To you be your religion, and to me my religion [Islamic monotheism (al-Kāfirūn 109: 6)].

It is said that if Allah had pleased He would have created all human being a single nation but He did not do so in order to test them, that is to say whether they can live in harmony with each other despite their differences in laws and ways of life.

God clearly mentions the place of the Prophet, the Qur’ān, earlier revelation, the nature of human communities and divine purpose behind pluralistic world as in the following verse: “And We have sent down to you (O Muḡammad) the Book (this Qur’ān) in truth, confirming the Scripture that came before it and *Mohayminan* (trustworthy in highness and a witness) over it (old Scriptures). So, judge among them by what Allah has revealed, and follow not their vain desires, diverging away from the truth that has come to you. To each among you, We have prescribed a law and a clear way. If Allah has willed, He would have made you one nation, but that (He) may test you in what He has given you; so compete in good deeds. The return of you (all) is to Allah; then He will inform you about that in which you used to differ.” (al-Mā’idah 5:48).

### **2. The Concept of Dignity**

The second significance requirements in doing *da'wah* is by Promoting the concept of dignity of all children of Adam (*karāmah insāniyyah*) irrespective of their race, tribe, nationality and language which is equivalent to qur’anic verse in surah al-Hujurāt 49:13.

The Qur`ān confirms the high status of human being in comparison to the other creatures. Human being created with perfect form preparing them with a divine mission as Allah says: “And indeed We have honoured the Children of Adam, and We have carried them on land and sea, and We have provided them with *al-Tayyibāt* (lawful good things), and have preferred them above many of those whom We have created with a marked preferment.” (al-`Isrā’ 17: 70)

In another verse, al-Qur`ān maintains that only the spirit of God’s consciousness or piety, quality that differs to human status as Allah says: “O mankind! We have created you from a male and female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Verily, the most honourable of you with Allah is that (believer) who has *Al-Taḳwa* [he is one of the *Muttaqūn* (the pious)]. Verily, Allah is All-Knowing, All-Aware.” (al-Ḥujurāt 49:13)

### **3. Asserting That Every People Have Their Own Ways of Worshipping God.**

Insulting other people on their way of worshipping God is totally unacceptable in Islam. It is because the Qur`ān advises that Muslims should not insult those whom disbelievers worship, i.e. their God as indicated in this verse: “And insult not those whom they (disbelievers) worship besides Allah, lest they insult Allah wrongfully without knowledge. Thus We have made fair-seeming to each people its own doings; then their Lord is their return and He shall then inform them of all that they used to do.” (al-An‘am 6:108).

### **4. Maintaining That No Religious Place Should Be Demolished Be It A Synagogue, Church And Monastery As Well As The Mosques.**

All these places should be protected as indicated in this verse: “Those who have been expelled from their homes unjustly only because they said: “Our Lord is Allah.” For had it not been checks one set of people by means of another, monasteries, churches, synagogues, and mosques, wherein the Name of Allah is mentioned much would surely, have been pulled down. Verily, Allah will help those who help His (cause). Truly Allah is All-Strong, All-Mighty.” (al-Ḥajj, 22: 40).

### **5. Freedom of Religion and the Idea of Peaceful Co-operation and Co-existence.**

Da’wah must be conducted with absolute integrity. The called must feel free, absolutely convinced before accepting Islam. The conditions of their da’wah have been set by God to include freedom of religion as

Allah says: "There is no compulsion in religion. Verily, the Right Path has become distinct from the wrong path. Whoever disbelieves in *Ṭāghūt* and believes in Allah, then he has grasped the most trustworthy handhold that will never break. And Allah is All-Hearer, All-Knower." (al-Baqarah 2:256). In another verse, Allah says: "And say: "The truth is from your Lord." Then whoever wills, let him believe; and whosever wills, let him disbelieve. ..." (al-Kahf 18:29). Allah also says: "Verily, We have sent down to (O Muḥammad) the Book (this Qur'ān) for mankind in truth. So whosoever accepts the guidance, it is only for oneself, and whosever goes astray, he goes astray only for his (own) loss, And you (O Muḥammad) are not a *Wakīl* (trustee or disposer of affairs, or guardian) over them (al-Zumar 39:41).

## **6. Inter-faith dialogue/meeting**

The Qur'ān has established the relationship between Islam and others including other religions, races and nations. This had been confirmed by Muslim practices throughout history until now. In other words, despite differences of ethnics, cultures, languages, races and custom, the understanding and practice of Islam have been of the same.<sup>1</sup>

The inter-faith dialogue as well as debate is one of the ways of connecting with the others. Knowing the history of religion will contribute to the understanding of the common grounds of Islam with other religions especially Judaism and Christianity as well as the contentions among them. As far as the inter-faith dialogue is concerned, Islam has identified the objectives of this dialogue are as follows:

### **1. To Know Each Other.**

Since many differences among human being, the concept of knowing each other is promoted in the Qur'ān as indicated in the verse 13 from Surah al-Ḥujurāt cited earlier. Thus, the tensions and conflicts can be avoided by knowing each other's dissimilarities. People will cement good relationship among difference genders, race and religion. At the end they will learn from each other. This is the leading foundation of human civilization.

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<sup>1</sup> Isma'il R. al Faruqi and Lois Lamya' al-Faruqi, *The Cultural Atlas of Islam* (New York & London: Macmillan Publishing Company and Collier Macmillan Publishers, 1986), p. 191.

## **2. To Work For Common Ground and Understanding between Islam and Others.**

In order to tie good relationship among people, knowing and understanding their similarities are extremely important. On this basis of similarities people can work together. The Qur'an has already highlighted this approach towards the people of the Book in the following verse: "Say (O Muḥammad): O people of the Scripture (Jews and Christians): Come to a word that is just between us and you, that we worship none but Allah (Alone), and that we associate no partners with Him, and that none of us shall take others as lords besides Allah, Then if they turn away, say: "Bear witness that we are Muslims." (Ālī-Imrān 3:64). There are important cases in dialogue, namely "A Common Word between Us & You" is an open letter dated 13 Oct 2007 from the leaders of Islamic religion to the Christian religion written on the basis of the above verse.<sup>1</sup> The common word may include love of God, neighbors, be tolerant and compassion.

## **3. To Reach the Truth**

The ultimate objective for the dialogue is to search and adherence to the truth. Al-Faruqi is of the opinion that conversion and conviction to the truth as obligatory. Such the main objective should be claimed by all so the need for dialogue.

Allah says in the famous verse on the methods of da'wah: "Invite (mankind, O Muḥammad) to the Way of your Lord (i.e. Islām) with wisdom (i.e. with the Divine Revelation and the Qur'ān) and fair preaching, and argue with them in a way that is better. Truly, your Lord knows best who has gone astray from His Path, and He is the Best Aware of those who are guided." (al-Naḥl 16:125).

In conducting a dialogue, reaching to the truth should be the main focus, and not just to find common ground between people and leave differences aside as indicated earlier in the Surah al-Hujurat, verse 13. The truth in terms of the relationship between Islam with other religion including intra Christians and Jews only but comprising the inter Muslim issues covering Sunnis-Shiites relation together with their conflict should also be covered in the dialogue conducted.

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<sup>1</sup> See "The ACW Letter," <http://www.acommonword.com/>, accessed on 8<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

In addition, a few points under this themes of *da'wah* should be highlighted. Generally, the themes of *da'wah* are boiled down to:

### **1. Man's nature – not sinful**

Islam sees human nature as pure without any contamination during their birth. They are born out of *fiṭrah* (nature) without holding any sin. It is the parents and society who are responsible to educate their newborn baby accordingly.

The Prophet used to say: “Every child is born on ‘*fiṭrah*’ (the natural inclination to Islām), however the child’s parents make him a Jew or Christian or Magian. It is as an animal delivers a perfect baby animal. Do you find it mutilated?” (Ṣaḥīḥ Bukhārī, Ḥadīth: 4775<sup>1</sup> and Ṣaḥīḥ Muslim, Ḥadīth: 2658<sup>2</sup>)

### **2. God's Will – To Be Realized In Line With the Purpose behind Human Creation**

The will of God is clearly mentioned in the Qur'an as indicated in the verse: “And I (Allah) created not the jinn and mankind except that they should worship Me (Alone).” (al-Dhāriyat 51:56). Instead of translate the verse “*li-ya'budūn*” as the above al-Faruqi prefers to translate in this verse as “to serve Me.” In other verses such as in 4: 36, 5: 151, 16:36 and 17: 23, they also translate as “serve” to indicate more clearly the very purpose of man's creation, that is to say “the service of God alone. Only God is worthy of worship; only He is worthy of service.”<sup>3</sup> Indeed the concept of *'ibādah* (service) must be according to the principle of *tawḥīd*.

### **3. Man's Mission–Moral Existence and Striving Lead to Salvation (success)**

Man's mission is closely related to the purpose behind his creation. He is a moral being, was created actualize his moral existence. He

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<sup>1</sup> Sunnah.com, “Kitab Al-Tafsir,” Hadith - Prophetic Commentary on the Qur'an (Tafseer of the Prophet (pbuh)) - Sahih al-Bukhari - Sunnah.com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), accessed on November 19, 2020, <https://sunnah.com/urn/44530>.

<sup>2</sup> Sunnah.com, “The Book of Destiny,” Hadith - The Book of Destiny - Sahih Muslim - Sunnah.com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), accessed October 31, 2020, <https://sunnah.com/muslim/46/40>.

<sup>3</sup> Isma'il Raji al Faruqi, *Al Tawhid: Its Implications for Thought and Life* (Herndon: International Institute of Islamic Thought, 1992), p. 18.

strives hard in order to achieve success in this world and Hereafter. According al Faruqī man is capable of “changing himself, his fellows or society, nature or his environment, so as to actualize the divine pattern, or commandment, in himself as well in them.”<sup>1</sup>

Glorifying God and uphold his word is human’s life mission as God says, “The seven heavens and the earth and all that is therein, glorify Him and there is not a thing but glorifies His Praise. But you understand not their glorification. Truly, He is Ever Forbearing, Oft-Forgiving.” (al-‘Isrā’ 17:44). In other words, any creature fails to achieve this lofty action concerning his Creator will be the focus of every *da‘ī*.

### **Conditions of *Da‘wah* in General**

There are a few questions to be answered as far as knowing the conditions of *da‘wah* in general. Firstly, Muslims are fitting themselves for the present and future world. Secondly, what contributions Muslims could give to the world and societies. Last but not least, what should be the position of multicultural world in Islam?

In general Muslims have certain answers to these questions. A study on Muslims is conducted to gauge their responses to plural society especially among the community that is composed of diverse ethnic, cultural and religious groups. The first answer contains negative viewpoint, which sees Islam promotes a negative attitude towards plural society. Meanwhile, the second answer encompasses positive viewpoint, which sees Islam promotes positive attitudes towards life in a plural society. The response from the second answer should be the right approach compared to the first, as Islam is a mercy for mankind, which the Qur`ān says “And We have sent you (O Muḥammad) not but as a mercy for the ‘*al-Amīn* (mankind, genie (*jinn*) and all that exists).” (Al-Anbiyā’ 21:107). As far as the second question is concerned and after taking it as the main viewpoint, it is worth highlighting that Islam sees diversity is natural. Based on this fact, it clearly shows that Islam promotes peaceful co-existence, tolerance and respect for other faiths. Thus Islam is inclusive, not exclusive, and taking the rule of non-assimilation especially for the minority in the context of the majority Muslim community. In other words, Muslims have a lot to contribute the peace and harmony in multicultural society. As a result, Islam not just tolerates multicultural society but treat them as fair and well balanced.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Al Faruqī, *Al-Tawhid*, p. 13.

<sup>2</sup> See further Muhammad Haniff Hassan, “Interpreting Islam and Plural Society,” *Islam*

## Conditions of *Da'wah* in a Multicultural World

Living in this multicultural world, Muslims cannot just dismiss their duty of calling others to Islam. The discussion in this section will focus on the four main foundations of *da'wah* including a *da'i* and his characteristics, the *mad'ū* (called), the *da'wah* contents and *da'wah* methods that could be used in this current world of multi-culture.

### 1. A *da'ī* and his characteristics

As mentioned earlier in the first chapter among the main characteristics of a *da'ī* needed are as follows:<sup>1</sup>

- (1) Understanding of Islamic teaching,
- (2) Correct motivation and sincerity,
- (3) Good actions,
- (4) Struggle and sacrifice.

According to al-Qaradāwī's point of view, the focus is on the field of intellect and knowledge. The caller's knowledge of new *fiqh* such as the *fiqh* of balances between interests and evils (*fiqh al-Muwāzanah bayn al-Maṣāliḥ wa al-Mafṣadah*) and the *fiqh* of priorities (*fiqh al-Awlawiyyāt*) is very important.<sup>2</sup>

In this current world, a *da'ī* should focus more on *da'wah* without violence, inviting people to obey God and live in peace, which is in accordance with the central meaning of Islam as "peace."<sup>3</sup> The use of violence itself is against Islam. Islam is also against extremism and terrorism. In this case, a *da'ī* should explain the very nature of Islam as a "religion of peace, always calming himself and his community against untoward incidents that disturb peace and harmony. Furthermore, a *da'ī* could try his best to offer solutions to contemporary life problems. When calling others to Islam, he should apply the method of wisdom, and contextualize his *da'wah* according to the place where he lives. The most important matter is to convey the message of Islam to society perfectly.

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*and Civilisational Renewal: Islam and Pluralism* (2009) 1.1: 99-119,  
<https://www.iais.org.my/icr/index.php/icr/article/viewFile/248/241>

<sup>1</sup> Abdullah M. Zin, *Islamic Da'wah*, pp. 30-33

<sup>2</sup> Shaykh Yusuf al-Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase*, new ed. Revised and Edited by S. M. Hasan Al-Banna (Swansea: Awakening Publications, 2000), p. 46.

<sup>3</sup> See further H. Mohd. Hatta, "Da'wah in the Modern Age: Strategies against Extremism and Fundamentalism," *Jurnal Sultan Alauddin Sulaiman Shah*, 3:2 (2016), 251-56 [http://journal.kuis.edu.my/jsass/images/files5/jsass\\_vol3bil2\\_019\\_hatta.pdf](http://journal.kuis.edu.my/jsass/images/files5/jsass_vol3bil2_019_hatta.pdf)

## 2. The called (*mad'ū*)

According Yusuf al-Qaraḍawī, *da'wah* should be extended to the following groups of people: <sup>1</sup>

- (1) The cultured elite,
- (2) Masses
- (3) Working classes,
- (4) Businessmen and financiers, and
- (5) Women.

Al-Qaraḍawī acknowledges that the cultured elite is the first group that Islam should spread into and affect significantly. This is because many misunderstanding as well as ignorance of Islam shown by many people of this cultured elite. Out of their authority, they can immanently influence others. Al-Qaraḍawī suggested two approaches in dealing with them, namely the curative and the preventive approach. The curative approach is a remedial of the wrong concepts and understanding committed, bringing the truth through “quite, objective, academic argument, and not through insulting or enthusiastic eloquence.” Meanwhile, the preventive approach is referred to the “formulation of a documented Islamic culture that combines academic accuracy with clear expression.”<sup>2</sup>

As far as the masses are concerned, they are the general public which *da'wah* should interact and not forgotten. So, it is clear that the *da'wah* cannot be separated from them. As a result, the successfulness of *da'wah* manifests through their acceptance of Islam. They should not be misled through mere slogans such as “Islām is the solution,” “Islām for all” and other similar tag lines without explaining the truth that Islām solves the problems of life through the actions of people themselves. People sometimes may imagine that merely chanting the slogans will definitely solve the problems. Obviously, this kind of perception must be changed, requires work hard and be serious in life. Besides that, the other significance components are like to be just and practice austerity, and not tend to idleness, unproductivity, laziness or favouritism and many more. People must be taught with the correct concepts of *imān* (true belief), *taqwa* (piety), righteousness (*birr*) and *istiqāmah* (steadfast). Indeed, knowing these concepts correctly and applying them in their life, family and society should be promoted in *da'wah*.

<sup>1</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, pp. 69-96.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, p. 74.

The position of workers among working class is extremely important in the society. They are including the industrial workers, craftsmen of all specialisations who form a large group in the society especially in the towns and cities. They are also uniting in the trade unions. Certainly, if they call for strikes especially when facing the injustice, the whole nation will be affected. Al-Qaraḍawi feels that the Islamic *da'wah* needs to reach them and become the main focus besides other segments of societies such as the students. In other words, do not let others such as the capitalists and leftists influence them. It seems that *da'wah* is lacking upon them and others exploit their spirits. Leaving them means creating a vacuum in spiritual development of society.

Another group of the called (*mad'ū*) is the businessmen, traders and financiers. In fact they hold a large portion of the wealth which contributes to the economy of the nation directly. So, Islam should be preached to them on the basis of their position. Islam always highlights this group in the Qur'ān and they should be encouraged to contribute their wealth to the development of *da'wah* and the society as a whole. Their contributions might be in terms of building the educational institutions, market places, food industries or improving public facilities and not just focusing on building the mosques only. One of the contributions that are very beneficial to the society is providing scholarship to students and lecturers to continue their studies to the higher learning institutions domestically or abroad.

On top of that, al-Qaraḍawi also added that women also considered as the main group of the called to Islām. This seems the right approach since women are very influential in the family institutions and society as well as in the country. So, due to this reasons their right and vote are equal in the modern context. Undeniably, women are also contributing to the plight of the nation. Currently, different trends of feminism are also influenced women at large. Al-Qaraḍawi acknowledges that Islamic movements fail in the process of women empowerment throughout the history.

This is clear since women rarely hold any high position in political parties, organisations and institutions. Their voice seems too soft to be heard by others, and especially among men who always looking down towards them. Islamic *da'wah* should be a good mechanism to strengthen women leadership and obviously they should not stay at home. Al-Faruqi even encourages women to be a career woman especially in the present day. They may seek jobs during studies, even during motherhood if needed and

after children bearing.<sup>1</sup> In Islamic history women were given a chance to be educated and contributed throughout their life as seen in the time of the Prophet and later period.

### **3. The *Da'wah* Contents**

The approach of Islamic *da'wah* in a multicultural society should be social-oriented. The *da'wah* contents must be towards instilling unity in the society besides improving and developing them. However, the nature of a multicultural society, which consists of different races, nations, religions as well as many languages, may invite tensions and conflicts. Islam has its approach in uniting them by promoting the spirit of unity and co-existence instead "survival of the fittest."

The first is by identifying issues that incite some disorders in the societies and endangers their existence. Generally, problems faced by a multicultural society include spiritual, social, political, economic, attitudes, theological, and educational issues. Islam stresses the basic and necessary approaches of *da'wah* are to change the state of affairs by changing people themselves. The most important one is to instill the correct belief (*imān*) in every individual in the society. One of the beliefs that people may share is the belief in God that is "a word that is just between us and you" (*Ālī-Imrān* 3:64). Such a belief is very important for the wellbeing of people and nation. Without this belief in God human beings will enslave each other. For Quṭb when "God sent His messengers to preach this faith, their task was to help people free themselves from subjugation to others, so that worship of God alone could be established."<sup>2</sup> Thus human being will submit to God alone, and none claim lordship over the others.

The second aspect of the *da'wah* content revolves around educational contents. Instead of focusing on knowledge and information only, the educational contents should be stressed more on inner aspects as stated below:

- (1) Purity of intention,
- (2) Feeling the presence of Allah,
- (3) self-criticism, and
- (4) Depending and putting one's trust in Allah.

In other words, such values will develop the spiritual dimension in the seeker of knowledge. Current state of education stresses more on

<sup>1</sup> Al Faruqi, *Al-Tawhid*, p. 138.

<sup>2</sup> <https://tafsirzilal.files.wordpress.com/2012/06/ali-imran-eng.pdf>. Accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018

academic achievement and worldly development while Islam prioritizes the dimensions of morality.

Referring to Malaysia, its national educational philosophy emerges to be in line with Islam. It clearly stated that “Education in Malaysia is an on-going effort towards further developing the potential of individuals in a holistic and integrated manner, so as to produce individuals who are intellectually, spiritually, emotionally and physically balanced and harmonious, based on a firm belief in and devotion to God. Such an effort is designed to produce Malaysian citizens who are knowledgeable and competent, who possess high moral standards, and who are responsible and capable of achieving high level of personal well-being as well as being able to contribute to the harmony and betterment of the family, the society and the nation at large.”<sup>1</sup>

Such a well-defined philosophy of education should be implemented in its curriculum and co-curriculum. In fact, Malaysian national curriculum according to Education Act 1996 states: “An educational programme that includes curriculum and co-curricular activities which encompasses all the knowledge, skills, norms, values, cultural elements and beliefs to help develop a pupil fully with respect to the physical, spiritual, mental and emotional aspects as well as to inculcate and develop desirable moral values and to transmit knowledge” [Education (National Curriculum) Regulations 1997].<sup>2</sup> Indeed, such contents of system are in agreement with Islam. Besides that Islam also encourages learning from other civilization culture and excellence so that comparison will be made for development especially in the context of multi-religious society.<sup>3</sup>

The third *da'wah* content should be focusing on seeking the right in addition to pure intention and other inner qualities above. *Da'wah* should consist of preparing human intellect on how to reach the truth. Indeed the focus of Islam is to bring human from falsehood to the truth. In fact, human has been given the capability of reaching the truth. He will know it on his own initiatives and then use it to change himself and society. At the end, human reach to salvation (Arabic, *barakah*, *rahmah*, *falah*, *sa'adah*) in this world and hereafter. To cite more details, human

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.moe.gov.my/index.php/en/dasar/falsafah-pendidikan-kebangsaan>, accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.moe.gov.my/index.php/en/arkib/kurikulum-kebangsaan>, accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

<sup>3</sup> See further, Selamat Amir et al, “Islam and Muslim in Multi-religious Society: Realities and Challenges in Sabah, Malaysia,” *Middle-East Journal of Scientific Research* (2013), 13 (2): 145-153, [https://www.idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr13\(2\)13/4.pdf](https://www.idosi.org/mejsr/mejsr13(2)13/4.pdf)

will acquire knowledge and the truth through three important means, namely sound senses, true report and reason. By using these means of knowledge human attain the truth. Among the greatest truth is regarding God himself. Human should acknowledge the existence of God and serve Him alone through the act of submission.<sup>1</sup> This must be the core teaching of Islam and essential preach of all times.

The four content of *da'wah* should be set to prepare for new leadership for the future. Among qualities of leaders needed are "strong, honest, dependable and knowledgeable." Preparation needed in having "ideological, educational and political leadership." Current leaders should abandon the idea that leaders are selected for life. They must prepare others to take their position in a near future.

The fifth content of *da'wah* should be based on several features of the required ideology, i.e. the 'scientific mentality,' which according to al-Qaraḍawī by combining "worships Allah with the 'aql and believes with evidence and denounces the imitation of forefathers or prominent figures."<sup>2</sup>

The required ideologies of contemporary Islam are needed including scientific, realistic, traditionalistic, revivalistic, balanced, and futuristic ideologies. A scientific ideology has the characteristics of the scientific spirit include adopting an objective attitude, respecting specialization, having the ability of self-criticism, employing latest and best technique, subjecting everything except religious and intellectual incontestable facts, avoiding haste in passing decision and appreciating the 'other view.'<sup>3</sup> A realistic ideology is to have a balance between ambitions and capabilities, not being preoccupied with controversial problems of the past, and focusing on construction and work rather than debate.<sup>4</sup> A traditionalistic ideology is the understanding and methodology of the early pious generation (*salaf*) on the basis of the textual evidence (revelation). A revivalistic ideology is "an ideology that believes in *ijtihād* and adopts creativity, as it rejects imitation..."<sup>5</sup> It rejects rigidity and approves *tajdīd* (renewal and revival). A balanced ideology is far from being extremist or negligent including between the advocate of strict *madhhabīyyah* and the advocates of loose non-*madhhabīyyah* and adopting the middle course by preferring facilitation (*taysīr*) instead of rigidity and exaggeration. A futuristic ideology means it always looks into the future and does not confine

<sup>1</sup> See al-Qur`ān, Ālī 'Imrān 3: 20.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, p. 112.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, pp. 113-15.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, pp. 117-19.

<sup>5</sup> Al-Qaraḍawī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, p. 129.

itself to the present. The Prophet would like to change the state of affair from ignorance to Islam and the future should be according to the pattern of Allah.<sup>1</sup>

### **Directives for the Callers**

The callers should abandon their self-imposing isolation. They are obligated to participate in all activities involving the society. In order to convey the message of Islam they may choose to conduct interfaith-dialogues with others. Nowadays dialogues with the others are mostly welcomed. Mostly, people are rational in nature and they can accept the views of others. Al-Qaraḍāwī divides people into rational Secularists, rational rulers, rational Westerners including Christians, orientalists, and western politicians. They should be called to Islam through the means of dialogues.<sup>2</sup>

Another way of helping society is to involve in humanitarian aid such as social and welfare work, with special reference particularly among homeless, wars and famines, refugees and the victims of natural disasters. It is usually a short term before the government and other institutions replace it. Compared to the development aid, humanitarian aid involves saving life, alleviating suffering and maintaining human dignity. The callers are highly encouraged to involve in all of these humanitarian works.

In addition, the other important directive for the callers is to show example par excellence to the others. By applying this, it makes easy for others to emulate Islam. As the callers of Islam, they have huge responsibility to walk the talk and not just preaching without practicing what they had preached. By showing the good example, it will make people implement Islam indirectly after observing the role model. This is the way of the Prophet himself when he says: "Pray as you have seen me praying. ..." (Saḥīḥ al-Bukhārī, 631).<sup>3</sup>

Last but not least the callers may do empirical studies by having public survey of the called. For instance, the callers may prepare ten questions concerning Islam and asking the public to get their responses. This could help the callers in their planning of *da'wah* work. Some organisations in Malaysia such as Pertubuhan IKRAM Malaysia (IKRAM)<sup>4</sup> and Multiracial Reverted

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<sup>1</sup> Al-Qaraḍāwī, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement*, pp. 112-47.

<sup>2</sup> Al-Qaraḍāwī, *Priorities of Islamic Movement*, pp. 198-220.

<sup>3</sup> Sunnah. Com, "Call to Prayers (Adhaan) - Kitab Al-Azan," Hadith - Book of Call to Prayers (Adhaan) - Sahih al-Bukhari - Sunnah.com - Sayings and Teachings of Prophet Muhammad (صلى الله عليه وسلم), accessed on November 21, 2020.  
<https://sunnah.com/bukhari/10/28>.

<sup>4</sup> Registered 22 October 2009, see <http://www.ikram.org.my>, accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

Muslims (MRM)<sup>1</sup> applying street *da'wah* in order to introduce Islam to the public. Another NGO is Islamic Outreach ABIM Centre (IOAC),<sup>2</sup> which involved in research and offering courses on Islam to new converts. The callers should do their best to unite all the Islamic groups as well as they need to win the heart of the official religious institutions to their side.<sup>3</sup>

### **Relationship between the Society and *Da'wah***

Muslims must find ways of expressing and communicating their belief, for the purpose of solving ever-increasing problems for both, and to provide an example so that the other societies might appreciate the nobility of Islam then subsequently follow the path of the believers. As highlighted earlier the best possible way of practising *da'wah* is by example as, both individually and through the community.

#### **1. Priorities to bridge the Gap between the Society and *Da'wah***

Al-Qaradawi in his *Priorities of the Islamic Movement in the Coming Phase* mentions some priorities that Muslims especially the activist leaders and intellectuals of the Islamic movement should undertake in order to bridge the gap between societies and *da'wah*. By having these priorities, the relationship between the society and *da'wah* becomes close-knit.

Al-Qaradawi has divided these priorities to bridge the gap into several categories of efforts, which include diversification of the fields of work covering:<sup>4</sup>

- (i) Educational
- (ii) Political
- (iii) Social
- (iv) Economic
- (v) *Jihād*
- (vi) Media and *da'wah*, and
- (vii) Intellectual and scientific works.

*Da'wah* works in these fields are necessary and none of them should be neglected. However, the emphasis and priority should be addressed in order to achieve the required results.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.facebook.com/MultiracialRevertedMuslims99/>, accessed on 6 August 2018.

<sup>2</sup> <https://ms-my.facebook.com/IslamicOutreachAbim/?fref=nf>, accessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

<sup>3</sup> Al-Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement*, pp. 221-26.

<sup>4</sup> Al-Qaradawi, *Priorities of the Islamic Movement*, pp. 33-36.

## 2. Strategies and Plans in the Context of Western and Non-Muslim Majorities Countries

According to Pew Research Center's Forum on Religion & Public Life, the world's Muslim population is expected to increase by about 35% in the next 20 years, rising from 1.6 billion in 2010 to 2.2 billion by 2030.

In non-Muslim majority countries, for example in the United States the population projections show the number of Muslims will raise from 2.6 million in 2010 to 6.2 million in 2030 and in Europe as a whole Muslim population is projected to grow from 44.1 million in 2010 to 58.2 million in 2030. In China, although Muslims make up about 2% of the population in China, Muslim population is expected to be rising from 23.3 million in 2010 to 29.1 million in 2030.<sup>1</sup> By increasing in number Muslims should have more strategies and plans for the da'wah in the Western context and other parts in which they are the minorities.

This section will focus on the position of Islam as the minority in the West and other parts of the world. Many scholars including Fadlullah Wilmot,<sup>2</sup> Khurram Murad<sup>3</sup> as well as Peter Mandaville and Dilwar Hussain<sup>4</sup> in their studies proposed the method of "contextualization" of the Islamic movement for the western audience.

Mandaville and Hussain point out that a "contextual approach to religion pioneered in Christian theology, emphasizes the importance (and even primacy) of the contexts in which people live as a fundamental aspect of how the texts of the religion are read and approached. The context could be *inter alia* geographical, cultural, about time, or specifically relating to conditions such as poverty, inequality, and powerlessness."<sup>5</sup> They further

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<sup>1</sup> Pew Research Center, "The Future of the Global Muslim Population: Projections for 2010–2030, January 2011,"

<http://www.pewforum.org/files/2011/01/FutureGlobalMuslimPopulation-WebPDF-Feb10.pdf>. Accessed 31st October 2020.

<sup>2</sup> Wilmot, Fadlullah, "Dawa: A Practical Approach for the Future" in *Beyond Frontiers: Islam and Contemporary Needs*, ed. Merryl Wyn Davies and Adnan Khalil Pasha (London and New York, 1989), pp. 36-40.

<sup>3</sup> See Larry Poston, "Khurram Murad: Contextualization of the Islamic Movement for the Western Audience," in Larry Poston, *Islamic Da'wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (New York and Oxford, 1992), pp. 81-90.

<sup>4</sup> Peter Mandaville and Dilwar Hussain, *Contextualizing Islam in Europe and North America: Challenges and Opportunities: The Brookings Project on U.S. Relations with the Islamic World U.S.-Islamic World Forum Papers 2014* (Washington: Center for Middle East Policy, 2015)

<http://www.qaradawi.net/english/books/Tree-View/library.htm>, assessed on 6<sup>th</sup> August 2018.

<sup>5</sup> Mandaville and Hussain, *Contextualizing Islam in Europe and North America*, p. 6.

added that a “contextual approach to Islam in the West would build a stronger synergy with the norms of a Western environment while at the same time critiquing a universalism that creates a homogenized brand of literal and ‘true’ Islam that aims to stand above the cultural contexts.”<sup>1</sup>

Khurram Murad in *Islamic Movement in the West* points out the main focus of da’wah in the Western context is to provide literature on Islam, mainly for two groups, first and foremost is for the ‘elite’ including journalists, politicians, academicians and writers, and second for the children. Murad stresses that “this should be placed first not because it is the most important... but, because of its role in the present-day world... a book can never be a substitute for a man, yet books are crucial to Islam.”<sup>2</sup>

The second element of Murad’s strategy involves concentration upon da’wah among the non-Muslims. The following precepts should be practical to all Muslims involving in calling Islam to non-Muslims:

- (1) People are to be invited to “their own religion”- the “oldest” religion - and not to a “new religion.” This religion is the religion of living in total submission to their creator, namely Islam.
- (2) The starting point and basic core of *da’wah* consists of total surrender to God, to be accountable to God for his deeds, obedience to the Messengers of God, and building a new world in which justice will prevail.
- (3) The Muslim is to begin his *da’wah* not with a repudiation of what is wrong with others but rather with the invitation to reflect upon commonalities, namely worshipping One God alone, accepting prophets and believing in the hereafter.
- (4) No one is to be compelled to accept the “historical Islam” of the last fourteen centuries with full of conflicts and hostilities. Muslims should promote the spirit of mercy for the world.
- (5) Muslims should realize that “if modern man is going astray, the Islamic community must bear at least partial responsibility for this deviance.”
- (6) A qualitative distinction must be made between *kufir* and the natural characteristics of race and culture. Every non-Muslim should not be seen as an enemy but a potential Muslim.
- (7) The message of Islam, though essentially the same in all ages, “must be conveyed through a medium that is understood by the addressees.”<sup>3</sup> The teaching of Islam must be repacked in order to be

<sup>1</sup> Mandaville and Hussain, *Contextualizing Islam in Europe and North America*, p. 6.

<sup>2</sup> As cited in Larry Poston, *Islamic Da’wah in the West: Muslim Missionary Activity and the Dynamics of Conversion to Islam* (New York and Oxford: Oxford University Press 1992), p. 84.

<sup>3</sup> Poston, *Islamic Da’wah in the West*, pp. 84-88.

relevant to contemporary issues such as nuclear disarmament, unemployment, care to the elderly, and the like. It is also in line with this that the message of oneness of God (*tawhīd*), prophethood (*risālah*), and the hereafter must also be made relevant to the average person in the society.

(8) In addition Murad adds to the list that for young people, they should be imbued with a respect and appreciation for Islamic principles in the hope that these will carry over into the adult years.

(9) As far as the community needs, Muslims must take steps to develop for themselves a secure base by seeking to resolve the problem connected to their legal status, employment and others.

(10) Murad also suggests coordination of the thinking, planning, and actions of the various Muslim organizations established in the West.<sup>1</sup>

According to Fadlullah Wilmot, a *da'wah* must start with self-criticism. *Da'wah* should begin with Muslims themselves. Currently, he believes Muslims are not the 'best community' in terms of human thought and behaviour fitted in order to carry the torch of Islam.<sup>2</sup> He suggests a long-term strategy for *da'wah* activities for Muslims to uphold. Among his suggestions include a study must be made on "the situation scientifically with the benefit of news and trend analyses."<sup>3</sup> He highlights that nowadays-modern civilization represented by Western civilization is anti-religious. In this context, spreading Islam is seen very difficult but it can be done. In order to achieve this strategy, a small group of capable leaders must be trained to serve Islam. They must know many problems faced by modern man in terms of their identity, irreligious tendencies, and they are easily influenced by propaganda, which always manipulated them. *Da'wah* should solve the real need of people in all aspects of live, spiritual, social, political, economic and educational.

For Wilmot there is also a need to train capable *da'wah* workers who will not only have a clear understanding of the need of the community, but who will also have vision and capacity to achieve this vision. In Islam *da'wah* is not just confined to the teaching of morals and building a strong character but more widely by taking "the task of making fully operational the dynamic concepts of Islam in the contemporary society." Each

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<sup>1</sup> Poston, *Islamic Da'wah in the West*, pp. 88-89.

<sup>2</sup> Fadlullah Wilmot, "Dawa: A Practical Approach for the Future," in *Beyond Frontiers: Islam and Contemporary Needs*, ed. Merryl Wyn Davies and Adnan Khalil Pasha (London and New York: Mansell, 1989), pp. 22-41.

<sup>3</sup> Wilmot, "Dawa," p. 40.

individual and community should be oriented to the teachings of Islam as in al-Qur'an and Sunnah.

Ultimately, Wilmot believes that the future of *da'wah* depends on appreciating the contemporary needs of the human family as a whole. *Da'wah* is all about "empowering the powerless, delivering the rights of the marginalized, securing justice for the oppressed, eradicating poverty and providing basic necessities to the vast majority of mankind." *Da'wah* can be through humanitarian aids. This is in line with the message of Islam of being compassionate and the Prophet himself was famously known as a man of compassion.

### **Conclusion**

As one of missionary religions Islam seeks to call others to its pole. The Prophet Muhammad SAW with his message of Oneness of God conveyed his *da'wah* to everybody, Arabs and non-Arabs. The message is the same preached by previous messengers of God. Only Christianity breaks this message by adding the concept of trinity to the message of the Prophet Jesus (al-Mā'idah 5: 116-120). However, both religions call all people to their own ways. Exclusively Judaism puts a limit that only Jews are eligible for Judaism. Other religions do not restrict their followers according to races in comparison to Judaism.

When Muslims call others to their religion, their consciousness is clear that nobody is forced to Islam. The basis of their *da'wah* in multi-racial and multi-religious societies is freedom and voluntarily submission to God. Due to this reason Islam maintains the harmony in society especially in multi-cultural world. Islam wishes everybody to co-exist and live in harmony. However, Muslims need to obey the command of God of calling others to Islam. It is a duty of every Muslim conveys the message of truth to the others, for instance submission to God and obeying him, acknowledging the Prophet Muḥammad and believing in the rewards and punishment in the hereafter. In addition, Muslims are commanded to obey Islamic law. This is part of their duty and responsibility to God. By fulfilling this duty Muslims become good believers and respectable citizens of the world then successively contributed to the development of the society and nation. That is why Islam can accept the existence of multi-racial and religious societies without any grudges. Islam accepts the plurality of religions and races as norms and divine destiny. There is no difference among them except the value of piety (*taqwā*).

However, Islam reserves the recognition the concept of religious pluralism as promoted by recent philosophers of religion. Islam surely

acknowledges debates on religious pluralism and will not put its discourse for a stop. Indeed intellectual endeavour to promote peaceful co-existence should be welcomed and one-day scholars will reach the truth.

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