

MUSLIM THEOLOGIANS' INITIATIVES TO FOSTER HARMONY AND PEACE AMONG PAKISTAN'S MINORITIES A REVIEW OF THE MEASURES PERFORMED

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ABSTRACT

Minorities rarely have access to full human rights as well as political and religious freedom in today's political states around the world. Local interests predominate everywhere. Minorities have been denied their civil and social rights by the ruling class. Modern democracies have disproportionately benefitted the majority, depriving minority of their fundamental civil, social, political, and religious rights. There isn't a single instance of minorities having first-class citizenship anywhere in the globe. They are in some way denied their fundamental human rights, sometimes as a result of the oppressive religious practices of the majority and other times as a result of the prejudiced dominating class.

Contrarily, Islam's history has consistently shown that it is the only faith in the world that grants minorities a wide range of liberties and fundamental human rights at various points in time and in various locations. Pakistan, an Islamic nation, guarantees minorities all fundamental human rights, complete freedom of expression, and the right to practice their religions in accordance with their cultural and linguistic traditions. From setting goals to finalizing Pakistan's current constitution, all of these privileges are guaranteed to them. Theologians of Islam and Pakistan's founding fathers were responsible for making all of this possible. Mawlana Mawdudi and Dr. Tahir ul Qadri stand out among this group of theologians. This essay primarily investigates and highlights the efforts made by Muslim theologians and national leaders, together with the outcomes seen at the most basic levels of Pakistani society.

Keywords: Rights of Minorities, Dr. Tahir ul Qadri, Maulana Mawdudi, Muslim Theologians, Minorities in Pakistan

INTRODUCTION

Islamic facilitations for minorities

The essential human rights that every citizen of an Islamic state is guaranteed by Islam, such as the right to life, the right to self-defense, the freedom of religion and ritual, and the security of their places of worship, have been extended to minorities. The earliest Islamic state, Madinah, made it a social law. In exchange for a little Dhimmi tax, they were also released from military obligations. In all spheres of life, social equality is

guaranteed to them. Their own set of religious rules and laws regulated them.

The Qur'anic principle, "There is no-compulsion or pressure in religion", (Quran 2:256) as stated in the passage, serves as the foundation for minority rights in religious matters. Similarly, at another place the Qur'an has advised:

"Consequently, your beliefs are for yourself, whereas mine are for myself."

This declaration communicated by the Holy Prophet can be used to assess the standing and significance of minority' rights.

“Beware! I would defend his right against that Muslim on the Day of Resurrection if they ever mistreated the protected person (minority), usurped their authority, troubled him more than he could handle, or got something without his permission. (Al-Sunan Abu Daood p.170v,3, Hadith #3052 Al-Maktabah al Asariya, Beirut, Lebanon). Not only is it a warning, but it is also a law that was practically upheld throughout the time of the Holy Prophet, and it is still a component of Muslim law today in every Muslim state. The Noble Prophet used to receive non-Muslim delegations personally, and he even invited the Ethiopian representative as one of his guests. The Holy Prophet used to show great respect to the delegates who were allies of His companions in order to advance the same Islamic norms. In the Prophet's words.

"Because these people enjoy a distinct status and relationship with our people, I have preferred to treat them respectfully and host them specifically." (Al-Sunan Al-Baihqi, Shoab al Emaan, p.381, vol. 11, Hadith # 8704, Maktabah tul Rusdh Riyadh, KSA).

The Holy Prophet truly explains the nature of relationships with followers of other religions in his own words. In a similar vein, the Holy Prophet said of Abu Sufiyan, who was at the time the opponent of Islam, that "Whoever entered the house of Abu Sufiyan, has actually achieved the peace" at the time of the conquest of Mecca. (Hameed Ullah, Muhammad, Al-Wasa'iq-Al-Siasiya, 323, Waseeqa No:98).

Minorities have equal rights in an Islamic state, which also protects them. The following exemplary tradition, in fact, affirms the equality of state law for Muslims and non-Muslims: The Holy Prophet proclaimed it a Qisas when a Muslim killed a non-Muslim and gave that Muslim the death punishment."I have primary responsibility for upholding and defending non-Muslims' rights." (Al-Baihqi, Al-Sunan al Kubra, p.56, vol. 8, Hadith #15919, Dar ul Kutab al-Ilmiya, Beirut Lebanon 2003). In accordance with the civil and criminal laws that are enforced in Muslim governments, the Muslim society guarantees the availability and

freedom to enjoy the fundamental human rights. The Muslim nation guarantees both majority and minority citizens equal religious freedom. In both legal and social aspects, it guarantees freedom of expression and fair pay. The duty of the Muslim state is to guarantee social and economic security, as well as private and individual liberty, and the protection of family rights. Additionally, it guarantees the ability to live as one pleases while yet benefiting from social security and group support. The Islamic state is required to uphold the social agreement that exempts minorities from serving in the military. The fact that Islam guarantees a broad range of rights for war prisoners is another reason to uphold agreements with non-Muslims and other countries. The holy Prophet placed a high priority on treating prisoners of war humanely, as evidenced by the treatment of the Badr battle prisoners. In general, the Holy Prophet's interactions with non-Muslims, particularly with Christians and Jews, and His practical life are manifestations of all the rights previously enumerated. The Caliphs and the rulers of Banu Ummayyah and Abbasides attempted to uphold this responsibility in response to the Holy Prophet's emphasis on the rights of minorities. For instance, the agreement struck by the 'Aanaat' people under the reign of Hazrat Abu Bakr states that:

- a. Their temples and other places of worship would survive.
- b. With the exception of the five summons for Muslim prayer, they may do whatever they want.
- c. They are allowed to publicly display their cross during their annual Easter and other rituals.

The minorities were happy and felt secure under Islamic governments because of this.

There are several expressions in a number of Muslim laws, and members of relative minorities have admitted to them. Some of them are listed below, Bernard Lewis, who was born in 1916, recalls a Jew who urged European Jews to go to Turkey in a letter written in the fourteenth century, Isn't it preferable for you to be ruled by Muslims rather than Christians? Here, each guy is free to live in peace beneath his own fig and vine trees. Here, you are free to dress in your most priceless items and dress your kids in red or blue without

having to subject them to the humiliation of being beaten black and blue. According to Lewis, Jews in Germany are "pursued even to death." Jewish reports on Turkish conduct and attitudes are overwhelmingly positive. According to Watt (2006), a well-known orientalist, Under the rule of Muslim Arab monarchs, Christians were probably treated more humanely as Dhimmis than they had been under Byzantine Greek rule. As we discussed earlier, Islam not only established the fundamental human rights but also put them into practice. Additionally, this feature of Islamic law has received acclaim from non-Muslim writers and philosophers on various dates and in various locations.

Muslim theologians' initiatives and Pakistani State Law for Minorities' Protection.

We aim to concentrate on this subject because it is more closely tied to the theologians' efforts in this paper. The majority of Muslim theologians have historically made significant contributions to fostering interreligious tolerance and safeguarding the protection of minority rights. The genuine Islamic answer to defending minorities' rights and fostering religious unity in Pakistan has been correctly underlined. Most of Pakistan's theologians, including Mawlana Mawdudi (1979), Justice Peer Karam Shah Al-Azhari (1998), Dr. Tahir ul Qadri (1951), Shah Ahmad Noorani (2003), Mawlana Ghulam Ghous Hazarvi (1981), and Mawlana Kosar Niyazi (1994), worked diligently in this area throughout the Pakistani movement and afterward until the constitution of 1973 was finalized. Non-Muslim intellectuals like Justice Alvin Robert Carnilious (1991) and Justice Rand Bhagwan Das (2015) have actively contributed to the interreligious dialogue's social assimilation and theological advancement in the area of humanitarianism alongside the Muslim theologians. Making the Pakistani constitution to reflect *Mesaaq-e-Madinah* has required a concerted effort from all Pakistanis in order to provide justice to both the majority and minority. As Quaid-e-Azam (1948) stated in his address to Pakistan's Constituent Assembly on August 11, 1947, the notion of Pakistan taking shape of the constitutional laws provides the human liberty, freedom of expression, and free religious practice.

Muslims and Hindus would no longer be Muslims in the political sense of being citizens of a state, not in the religious sense because it is each person's personal faith. In this province of Pakistan, you are free to visit your mosque or any other house of worship. You can be a member of any caste, religion, or faith, as long as it has nothing to do with the government's business (Zafar, 2001; Jinnah, n.d.). As a result, the Rights of Minorities were recognized in the Objectives Resolution, March 1949, enacted by Pakistan's Constitution Assembly, which was a result of the work of Muslim and non-Muslim theologians. Everybody is treated equally in front of the law and has a right to equal protection under the law. With respect to this, the law must prohibit all forms of discrimination and guarantee that everyone has access to equal and effective protection from discrimination based on any factor, including race, color, sex, language, religion, political opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966). People who are members of ethnic, religious, or linguistic minorities in the states where they exist should not be denied the freedom to enjoy their own culture, to profess and practice their own religion, or to use their own language in the company of other members of their group. (International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, 1966). Briefly stated, the growth of interfaith harmony and the strictest protection of minorities' rights began in 1949 with the regulation of objectives and culminated in the final form of the constitution of 1973. The 1973 Constitution represents a national consensus on the guarantee of religious and social freedoms for minorities as well as their socioeconomic parity. It also represents a unanimity on the equality of citizens before state laws. In accordance with the spirit of Article 36 of the Constitution, which states that the State shall protect the legitimate rights and interests of minorities, including their fair representation in the Federal and Provincial services, the State of Pakistan realistically ensures the execution of the aforementioned regulations. The efforts of theologians with the support of political and national leaders, including the founder of Pakistan, are fully reflected in the tale of the establishment

and evolution of laws protecting minorities that was just discussed.

The initiatives for minorities by Maulana Mawdudi and Dr. Tahir ul Qadri

Mawlana Mawdudi and Dr. Tahir ul Qadri's work and efforts are exemplary from a perspective of Pakistani society, because both have served as social reformers as well as religious leaders. They have a long history of dedication to the cause of humanity, particularly minorities' rights and the upholding of moral, legal, and practical justice. Along with his religious and social importance, Mawlana Mawdudi also served as the leader of a political party, which should be included here. Similar to Dr. Tahir ul Qadri, who is a legal scholar, religious leader, and political party leader, their efforts are extensive and multifaceted. Because they are dedicated to the highest standard of practical performance and the bulk of the populace like and follows their literary work (both spoken and written), the past leaders enjoy a significant following across the nation. As a result, it is the prior most significant factor in the assimilation of various social groups, religious factions, and cultures. Their real-world examples encourage the promotion of societal harmony and judicial fairness.

a) In order to liberalize minorities, Maulana Mawdudi was a leader in social and religious reform. He also advocated for the strict implementation of laws pertaining to minorities' security and freedom. He provided a thorough explanation of the Islamic sources that ensured the rights of the majority and the minority were equal. In his books *Tafheem ul Qur'an*, he has emphasized the rights of minorities. Maulana Mufti Mahmood (1980), Ataullah Shah Bukhari (1961), Maulana Ahmad Saeed Kazmi (1986), Shah Ahmad Noorani (2003), and others are also partners and contributors. The theologians described above have worked to advance interreligious cooperation and have attempted to successfully protect minority' constitutionally protected civil and human rights. As a matter of fact, the aforementioned assurances and guarantees were included in both the 1962 and 1973 constitutions.

b) Dr. Tahir ul Qadri is the next and most significant contributor to interreligious relations. Dr. Tahir ul Qadri has an outstanding reputation for advocating for the rights of minorities in Pakistan and for the improvement of interreligious relations. He is regarded as the sole representative of Pakistan's common people at international religious and social conferences, where he promotes his interfaith harmony and philosophy of peace. He travels around practically all of South-East Asia, the Middle East, Canada, and Europe. In the aforementioned nations, he is creating and sustaining an interreligious harmonial network. He is renowned for being open-minded enough to welcome Christians and other minorities to his Minhaj ul Qur'an meetings and to permit them to freely practice their own religion at the Minhaj ul Qur'an Mosque. By founding the MCDF in Pakistan in 1981, Dr. Tahir ul Qadri effectively began the promotion of minorities' rights.

Events and regular meetings were first held in the name of the aforementioned organization. A significant incident occurred in this setting, and as a result, the Christian community was asked to attend Friday prayers at the Minhaj ul Qur'an mosque in order to foster peace and Muslim-Christian discourse. Additionally, Lahore co-celebrates Christmas with other cities every year. The development of interreligious harmony and the advancement of mutual understanding both took place during the 1980s. Interreligious conferences have begun to be held in several nations, and through their lectures and discussions, these conferences have helped to advance minority' rights. Dr. Tahirul Qadri spoke at numerous conferences in South Africa, Europe, and Canada throughout the same decade. The same conference system may see significant advancement in the ten years to come in Denmark, Norway, and Turkey. The system also extended to the nations of the United Kingdom, the United States, Canada, and Australia. Finally, in 2010, a large number of nations joined the system and finished the series. In this regard, MQI produced *The Peace for Humanity*, a conference in the UK in 2011 that drew 11,000 attendees. It was made up of a variety

of religious experts from Sikhism, Buddhism, Christianity, Judaism, and Hinduism.

He has authored several publications on the subject of minorities' rights and roles in Islamic society, particularly Pakistani society. He has written several works, including *Islam on Human Rights*, *Islam on Women's Rights*, *Islam on Children's Rights*, *Islam on Senior Citizens' Rights*, *Islam on Non-Muslims' Rights*, and *Islam on the Rights of the Disabled*. This demonstrates the importance the aforementioned leader and his fellow members of the Minhaj ul Qur'an organization place on minorities' rights. Additionally, Dr. Tahir ul Qadri, the founder of MQI, has given several lectures on the aforementioned subjects in numerous locations throughout the globe. He has done everything in his power to advance interreligious cooperation and the acceptance of minority' rights. Through the help of the staff and leaders of Minhaj ul Qur'an, Dr. Tahir ul Qadri and other reformers are participating in the religious ceremonies of minorities.

The public is immensely supportive of both leaders' efforts (Mawlana Mawdudi and Dr. Tahir ul Qadri). Their activities have evolved into social movements that are advancing and positively changing society on a grassroots level. It is clear that Pakistan's minorities are open to this situation, and consequently, those from the minority classes are cooperating with the aforementioned leaders to achieve the greatest possible level of religious and socioeconomic prosperity. Finally, both of the aforementioned leaders have made an immeasurable contribution to social justice and interreligious tolerance.

Conclusion

In Islamic civilization or Muslim states, minorities are guaranteed all fundamental human rights to which every other citizen or person is also entitled. Pakistan secures the application of Islamic laws on the rights of minorities because it was founded in the name of Islam. The founders and theologians of Pakistan have successfully fought for the protection of minority rights. As a component of the religion of all citizens, the very efforts of religious and political leaders led to the well-being of minorities and a happy social life. Additionally, these circumstances are improving day by day to

the complete pleasure of minorities. The perfect successful lives of Justice A.R. Carnilious and X Chief Justice Rana Bhagwan Das are the best example of how these social chances can be used to their utmost potential. Both of them—a Christian and a Hindu, respectively—belong to the minority classes, and they both rose to the top of their respective institutions to take the most important leadership positions in Pakistan's court. Additionally, all minorities have reserved seats in governmental institutions and the right to representation in forums for religion, business, and society. where they take advantage of their reserve quota in accordance with their population ratio. Since numerous groups have tried to improve the lives of minorities both nationally and internationally, it is humbly claimed that Pakistan is doing too much for the minority. As we stated in the paragraphs above, a variety of theologians and social workers have created and established a variety of organizations to assure the efficient operation of the minor activities of life. This show the contented level of minorities' lives in Pakistan

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[Institute of Islamic Studies](#)

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