



Research Article

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Principles of Social Integration in the Constitution of Medina

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Abstract

A diverse community often faces social conflicts. This can lead to issues such as discrimination, fights, wars, oppression, and so on. Social integration plays an important role in achieving harmony in a society. The Constitution of Medina enacted by the Prophet SAW succeeded in managing a plural society until Medina became a country with social cohesion. Therefore, this study aims to identify and analyse the principles of social cohesion that exist in the Constitution of Medina. This study uses data collection methods through library research and in-depth interviews. Meanwhile, the content analysis method is then used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that the Prophet SAW succeeded in forming social cohesion in a plural society through the Clauses contained in the Constitution of Medina. A plural society is recognized as an ummah and has a cooperative relationship and a spirit of belonging in defending Medina from external threats.

Keywords: social integration, plural society, Constitution of Medina, ethnicity, Islam

1. Introduction

Humans are created in different skin colours, backgrounds, races, languages, cultures, and customs (Mohd Arip Kasmoo et. all 2015). They are not supposed to show arrogance and pride between them. The philosophy and wisdom of such diversity are stated by Allah SWT as His word in *surat al-Hujurat* verse 13 which means:

"O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted".

However, the reality that occurs throughout the history of human life, such diversity is the cause of discrimination, fights, and wars. This happens to most countries that consist of a plural society such as Myanmar, Sri Lanka, India, Syria, Palestine, and so on. Society is the victim of murder, rape, persecution, human rights violations, and so on.

In the context of the history of Medina, the plural society often fought and quarrelled because they defended their respective tribes. The event of the migration of the Prophet PBUH from Mecca to Medina opened a new chapter for the people of Medina. The advent of Islam changed the way of life held by the people of Medina. Prophet PBUH as the head of state drafted the Constitution of Medina which aimed to manage and build cooperative relations in the plural society.

1.1 *The Concept of Social Integration*

Social integration is an important element in ensuring a society is in peace and harmony (Nazri Muslim 2015). This is a prerequisite for a conflict-free state. Thus, developed countries such as the United States, Canada, the United Kingdom, France, and Australia have placed social integration as an important policy for their countries. Discussions related to social integration are not new. Sociological Fathers like Emile Durkheim have addressed the state of social integration in her work through the concepts of mechanical solidarity and organic solidarity. Then, followed by later figures such as Ferdinand Tonnies, Robert Redfield, Hillery, and so on. In Malaysia, Baharuddin has highlighted the concept of social integration which is placed as an important formula for managing a plural society (Abdullah, Ismail & Mohd Noor, t.t.).

Durkheim as the Father of Sociology sees that social integration in the effort to assess the ability of society to stay connected in various stages of development. Social integration is the unity of mechanical form (pre-industrial society) to the unity of organic form which refers to the modern world. He claims that social integration can be maintained through government and the laws that are formed. Among the concepts related to seeing unity as opposed to a conflict are the concepts of solidarity (unity), anomism (chaos/division), and alienation (isolation) to see a stable and cooperative society, rather than conflict. Thus, social integration is closely related to the development process of a country.

Weber, on the other hand, suggests social integration as collective ideas and are important values in social development. Meanwhile, Talcott Parsons views social integration in terms of functional structure, i.e. a cohesive society is founded on a shared value system. Among the latest scholars who see integration is Maxwell (1996). He suggests social integration in the dimensions of economic development. Thus, in his view, social integration is a process that builds and maintains a sense of belonging in a society and sensitivity towards a community. Moreover, the concept and definition of social integration are no longer in the community. The value that forms social integration is the feeling of being in a part of the community. The sense of belonging becomes a fundamental to the formation of social integration.

Jenson (1998) states that social integration is used to describe processes that involve the state or country as well as a sense of commitment, responsibility, desire, and the ability to live together in harmony. Social integrations are related to stability, and integration failure (disintegration Berger, 1998; Gough & Olofsson, 1999).

In analysing the definition of social integration, it clearly shows that social integration includes the approaches, administration, and strategies applied by the Prophet PBUH in Medina who has succeeded in achieving social integration. The plural society has given a great cooperation and a sense of belonging in developing society while defending Medina from external harms. This is very different from the situation of the plural society before the advent of Islam in Medina.

1.2 *Brotherhood of the Muslim Community*

After establishing the Quba' mosque, Prophet PBUH united fellow Muslims so that they helped each other to have a strong bond of Islamic brotherhood (Sungib, 2013). This is as Allah SWT says in *surat*

al-Anfal verse 72 which means:

"Indeed, people who believe and migrate and jihad with their property and souls in the way of Allah SWT and people who give shelter and help (to the Muhajirun). They protect each other"

As the words of the Prophet PBUH which means:

"The Prophet PBUH said, "A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other." The Prophet PBUH then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced (while saying that)". (Bukhari, No. 285)

The brotherhood practiced by Prophet PBUH includes the brotherhood between the Ansar and Muhajirun and Muhajirun among Muhajirun. The Muhajirun Brotherhood consisted of a person of high rank and a person of lower rank. This aimed to eliminate the gap of difference because according to the practice of the ignorant Quraish society, there was a determination of varying degrees in each tribe. Besides, the fraternity among the Ansar consisted of the Aus and Khazraj tribes. This aimed to strengthen the Islamic brotherhood among the Muslim community (Sungib, 2013). Implications of this brotherhood as Allah SWT says in *surat al-Hasyr* verse 9 which means:

"Those (the Ansar) who had occupied the city of Medina and had believed before their arrival (Muhajirun), they loved the people who migrated to their place. And they do not put a desire in their hearts for what they give (Muhajirun). And they prioritize the Muhajirun over themselves even though they need it".

Al-Ghazaliy (1997) states that this brotherhood aimed to eradicate 'assabiyyah (racism) ignorance and hereditary differences. This brotherhood brought a positive change to society when they were willing to sacrifice their properties.

2. Method

2.1 Secondary Data Collection

Secondary data is existing data collected by previous researchers either in the form of text or numbers (David & Sutton, 2004: 370). In this study, secondary data were collected through a literature review. Data sources are obtained in the form of theses, dissertations, scientific exercises, journals, articles, papers, books, magazines, and other related texts. The data collected provide basic ideas in designing, analysing, and interpreting this study (Marican, 2005).

2.2 Primary Data Collection

In this article, the primary data is obtained directly from the field study. This primary data source was obtained through in-depth interview sessions. This article selects two respondents who expertise to obtain detailed information and explanations regarding the Medina Charter.

2.3 Data Analysis

The method of data analysis is the process of organizing, structuring, and interpreting the data that has been collected. The data obtained in this article were analysed using content analysis methods. Content analysis methods are used to systematically examine and explain the meaning or implicit and implicit content of the document studied (Bryman, 2008; Lebar, 2012). This analysis aims to find specific and general themes from the data collected (Marican, 2005). This method can be used for qualitative studies (Kondracki, Wellman & Amundson, 2002).

3. Discussion

3.1 *The Formation of The Constitution of Medina, is An Agreement between Muslims and Non-Muslims Community*

Medina consisted of a plural society that needs an agreement to build good relations in society. Therefore, the Prophet PBUH outlined several statements that need to be given priority, namely (Ibrahim & El-Qasimy, 1985: 9):

- i. Outline the rights and responsibilities of the Muslim community and the locals of Medina.
- ii. Glorifying the Muslim community that migrated.
- iii. Understanding with non-Muslims, especially Jews.
- iv. The formation of the political and defense system of Medina.
- v. Compensation for loss, loss of life, and property suffered by the Muhajirun of the Quraish of Mecca.

Thus, the Prophet PBUH agreed in the Muslim and non-Muslims community in Medina. According to Ibn Ishaq (1970), Prophet SAW wrote a charter known as the Constitution of Medina which describes the relationship of the Muhajirun and Ansar and the agreement with the Jews. This agreement outlined the role and obligation of each group of people in defending the country. For example, the Jewish tribes as enshrined in the Charter of Medina are Bani 'Auf, Bani al-Najjar, Bani al-Harith, Bani Saidah, Bani Jusyaim, Bani al-Aus, Bani Tha'labah, Bani Jafnah, and Bani Shutaibah. Meanwhile, the Muslim community from Medina consists of Bani Auf, Bani al-Harith, Bani Sa'idah, Bani Jusyaym, Bani al-Najjar, Bani 'Amru bin 'Auf, Bani al-Nabiet, and Bani Aus.

3.2 *The Formation of The Constitution of Medina*

The Constitution of Medina was written in full by two Muslim scholars, Ibn Ishaq (Died 151H) and Ibn Hisham (Died 213H) (Izzuddin, 2008: 110). This charter was the first written constitution in the world drafted by the Prophet PBUH as a guide to the plural society in Medina (Watt, 1956; Hamidullah, 1968; Ahmad, 1973; Rahman, 1992; Sidek, 2004; Ibrahim & El-Qasimy, 1985). According to Watt (1956), Peters (1994), and Khairuddin (2007), the Constitution of Medina is an authentic document and has content that is appropriate to the sociological and historical conditions of the time. Guillame (2004) names the Constitution of Medina as a Friendly Agreement in his book entitled *The Life of Muhammad*. According to Guillame (2004), this charter emphasizes the coexistence between the Muhajirun and the Ansar as well as the Jews. These people respect each other's religion, protect their property, and have the same obligation in defending Medina. Ibn Ishaq is of the view that (quoted from Peters, 1994: 198):

"And the Apostle of God wrote document between the Migrants and the Helpers and in it he made a peace (wada'a) with the Jews and the pact ('ahada) with them and he confirmed them according to their religion/law ('ala dinihim) and properties and laid down obligations due to them and imposed obligations upon them".

Besides, the Constitution of Medina touches on issues such as the rights and obligations of the government and those in power, law, justice, defense, the position of head of state, service to non-Muslims, social security, and understanding of the ummah (Ibrahim & El-Qasimy, 1985). According to Che Mat et al. (2007: 27), there are nine main statements in the Constitution of Medina, namely the formation of the ummah, human rights, religious associations, associations of all citizens, minorities, duties, protecting the country, national leadership and ensuring peace. This charter, Prophet SAW practiced the principles of tolerance, responsibility, justice, love, and respect to form the social integration of a plural society. This shows the seriousness of the Prophet PBUH to create harmony under Islamic rule (Mohamad Al-Bakri, 2013).

3.3 Social Integration in Constitution of Medina

3.3.1 Principles of Respect

In the Charter of Medina, it is seen that there is a principle of respect. Prophet PBUH recognised the entire community of Medina as one ummah so that the community would respect each other and work together to defend Medina (Zaleha Embong, Nik Yusri Musa & Nazri Muslim, 2018). Muslim society was forbidden to interfere with and ignore the rights of non-Muslims (Al-Siba'ei, 1985). Mohamad Al-Bakri (2013) argues that the principle of respect exists in the Constitution of Medina when all members of society are recognised for their rights as citizens.

According to Ab. Majid (2013), the principle of respect exists between the ruling class and the ruled. The people of Medina recognize Prophet SAW as the head of state and be a reference in any problem. This is also in agreement with Ibrahim and El-Qasimy (1985) and Ali (1975). Sidik (2004), Yaacob (1986), and Watt (1956) also argue that when differences and disputes arise then it is necessary to resolve by the law of Allah SWT and the decision of Prophet PBUH. Prophet PBUH owned the highest authority and was the point of reference as recorded in Clauses 23 and 42. Clause 23 states that:

"However, even if you argue in a matter, you should refer the matter to Allah SWT and Prophet PBUH".

Clause 42 states that:

"That any wrong doing (murder) or any quarrel between the participants of this Charter if it is feared to bring disaster then it should be referred to the law of Allah SWT and the solution by Muhammad PBUH, the Messenger of Allah and Allah SWT witnessed the goodness of the contents of this Charter and bless it".

Besides, this principle can also be seen in Clause 40 which explains the obligation of society to protect and respect neighbours. Sidik (2004: 107) argues that in Clause 40 describes the responsibility of each member of society to be responsible for their neighbours. According to Jusoh (1982) and Dollah (1978), Islam emphasises the importance of respecting neighbours and is one of the factors that can perfect faith. The community needs to extend assistance and maintain the safety of neighbours in the event of a problem. Clause 40 states that:

"That the neighbour should be treated like himself, no harm or sin can be done against him".

This principle can also be seen in Clause 41 which describes the rights of women that need to be respected. According to Che Mat et al. (2007), Islam recognises and honours women by guaranteeing protection and safety. Women's honour must be preserved in all circumstances and it is forbidden to tarnish the dignity of women. Clause 41 explains the rights of women, namely:

"No woman's honour can be approached except with the permission of her own family".

This clause proves that Islam recognises the rights of women in contrast to the ignorant age which does not recognize and despise women as described in surah al-Nahl verses 58 to 59. At that time, women were under the influence of the powerful and traded like goods-basic needs. The ignorant community also killed baby girls because they were considered unlucky carriers (Al-Mubarakfuri, 2011).

3.3.2 Principles of Justice

The principle of justice aims to free human beings from tyranny and oppression (Nik Mat & Suradi, 2012). The justice implemented by Prophet PBUH succeeded in creating the sociopolitical stability of Medina (Siddiqi, 1982). This principle is the goal of the struggle of Prophet PBUH as Allah SWT says

which means:

"We sent the Apostles to bring clear evidence. We have sent down with them the book (as a guide) and the scale of justice so that people can exercise justice". (Al-Hadid, 57:25)

"Allah SWT asks you to convey the trust to those who are entitled to receive it and when you set the law between human beings, you should set it fairly. Indeed, Allah SWT is the best among those who teach you. Allah SWT is ever Listening and Seeing". (Al-Nisa', 4:58)

According Qaradhawi (1999), Allah SWT made human beings as caliphs so that human beings perform good deeds and avoid the evil. Therefore, Islam emphasizes the principle of justice in human life. According to Alatas (1996), social justice is an absolute demand needed in a country to ensure the rights and interests of society. Therefore, Prophet PBUH drafted the Constitution of Medina based on the principle of justice. Clause 21 for example explains about the offense of murder committed without solid evidence will be repaid with the punishment of *qisas* unless the guardian agrees to accept the *diat* as replacement. The punishment of *qisas* and *diat* aims to protect the human right to live while maintaining harmony and ensuring peace (Ibrahim & El-Qasimy, 1985). Clause 21 states that:

"Whoever kills a believer arbitrarily with not enough evidence should be sentenced to death unless agreed otherwise by the guardian of the one who was killed to receive other compensation. Believers should be united in condemning the person's actions, they should fight for the right of the death".

Besides, this principle can also be seen in Clause 22 which explains the responsibility of every member of the society not to help and provide protection to someone who commits an offense. Members of society who protect offenders will be considered guilty and accept the wrath of Allah SWT in the hereafter. Giving compensation to escape punishment is not accepted. Clause 22 states that:

"Believers of Allah who acknowledge the contents of this Constitution and believe in Allah SWT and the Hereafter should not help or protect the person who violates. Whoever helps the person then upon him is the curse of Allah SWT and his wrath on the Day of Judgement. And no ransom or repentance will be accepted from the person".

This clause shows that the principles of justice and the rule of law are fully guaranteed. According to Yaacob (1986), the people of Medina are entitled to legal protection and justice as stated in Clauses 36 (b) and 47. Clause 36 (b) explains that punishment will be imposed according to the offenses committed regardless of position. Punishment will be imposed on self and family but the oppressed will not be punished. Clause 36 (b) states that:

"Cannot be prevented from retaliating against the injuries inflicted by any person on himself. Whoever commits a crime then the retribution is upon himself and his family except for the oppressed person. Allah SWT will protect people who respect this charter".

In Clause 47 it states that:

"That this Charter cannot be used to protect the oppressive and guilty. From now on anyone who travels from Medina or resides in it is guaranteed his safety except the oppressor or the guilty. And that Allah SWT blesses everyone who does good and pious and Prophet PBUH must be recognized as the Messenger of Allah SWT".

Further, this principle can also be seen in Clause 37 (b) which explains that a person will not be punished for the offenses committed by another individual. A person who commits an offense should be held accountable while the oppressed individual should be given appropriate help (Ibrahim & El-Qasimy, 1985). Clause 37 (b) states that:

"No person shall be held guilty of any penal offense on account of any act or omission which did not

constitute a penal offense, under national or international law, at the time when it was committed"

These clauses prove that Prophet PBUH exercised justice to the entire community of Medina regardless of differences in social background. This principle is to create a social balance to create a peaceful and harmonious country. According Maududi (1986), the rights of Muslim and non-Muslim communities are guaranteed under Islamic rule.

3.3.3 Principles of Responsibility

Islam places the responsibility on all Muslims to implement Islamic law, especially justice for the welfare of the universal human being (Wan Ali & Zuhdi, t.t.). Therefore, the principle of responsibility is very important to develop individuals, communities, and nations. Therefore, Prophet PBUH set responsibility for every member of the community of Medina (Sidik, 2004). This is so that the plural society can work together in maintaining the security of Medina as the opinion of Ab. Majid (2013):

"Prophet PBUH did not underestimate the differences and diversity of races. His Holiness set responsibility to the entire community of Medina so that they can work together to maintain the peace of Medina".

Therefore, a plural society has roles and responsibilities that need to be implemented. According Mohamad Al-Bakri (2013), the Constitution of Medina explains in detail the responsibilities of the people of Medina. For example, the Muhajirun of the Quraish have the original right to bear each other's payment and receive a ransom in a good and fairway. This is as stated in Clause 3 namely:

"The Muhajirun from Quraish are on their old beliefs. They bear each other's payment and receive a ransom (diat) from each other in which they redeem anyone who is taken captive in a benevolent and just manner among the believers".

The tribes from Medina such as Bani Auf, Bani al-Harith, Bani Sa'idah, Bani Jusyam, Bani al-Najjar, Bani 'Amru bin Auf, Bani al-Nabiet, and Bani Aus also have the same responsibility of bearing each other pay and receive blood redemption in a good and fair manner. The responsibility of these tribes as stated in Clauses 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, and 11. Meanwhile, Clause 12 explains the responsibility of the Muslim community to each other helping to contribute to paying blood redemption fairly. Clause 12 states that:

"That believers cannot let any problems between themselves and even must be equally responsible to contribute with the charity to pay the blood ransom justly".

Besides, Muslim and non-Muslim communities are responsible for defending Medina and financing the country as stated in Clauses 24, 37, and 38. The responsibility borne is to finance the cost of war, donate property and weapons and cooperate with the Muslim community in defending Medina (Che' Noh, 2001; Sidik, 2004; Yaacob, 1986). The Clauses are as follows:

Clause 24:

"That the Jews should also spend with the Believers as long as they are at war".

Clause 37:

"That the Jews should finance the country and they should help each other against anyone who fights the people who are members of this charter. And let them advise one another, do good to the deeds of sin".

Clause 38:

"That the Jews should bear the burden with the believers as long as they are in a state of war".

According to Sidik (2004), members of the community are responsible for participating in peace

as stated in Clause 45 (b) and 46. Clause 45 (b) states that:

"Each party is obliged to participate in their respective peace".

Whereas, Clause 46 states that:

"That the Aus Jews themselves and likewise the people associated with them should bear the same obligations as any other party who is a member of this charter for the sole good (reconciliation) of the members of this charter. They should do good by not committing sins because whoever does something then he bears it himself. Allah SWT testifies to the truth of the contents of this charter and approves it".

These Clauses clearly show the existence of the principle of responsibility in the Constitution of Medina. Prophet PBUH set the responsibility to every member of society to work together to maintain the peace of Medina from the threat of the enemy (Zaleha Embong, Nik Yusri Musa & Nazri Muslim, 2018). As a result, Medina became a symbol of Islamic strength and the main fortress of Islamic defence in the face of the threat of the four great powers, namely Rome, Persia, the Arab tribes in the Arabian Peninsula, and the infidels of the Quraysh of Mecca (Ramadhan, 1991).

4. Conclusion

The discussion shows that in the Constitution of Medina, there is a principle of respect where Prophet PBUH recognised the entire community of Medina as one ummah so that the community respects each other and works together to defend Medina. The same goes for the principle of justice which aims to free humanity from tyranny and oppression. The justice implemented by Prophet PBUH succeeded in creating the socio-political stability of Medina. Islam has also placed a responsibility on all Muslims to implement Islamic law, especially justice for the welfare of the universal human being because, the principle of responsibility is very important to develop individuals, society, and the country. Social integration can be clearly seen in the Constitution of Medina and succeeded in uniting the plural society in Medina.

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List of Interviews

- Interview with Ab. Majid, M. Z. at the Department of Fiqh and Usul Fiqh, Kulliyah Ilmu Wahyu dan Sains Manusia, IIUM, Gombak on 30 January 2013, at 11.30 am.
- Interview with Mohamad Al-Bakri, Z. at the Cahaya Kasturi Library Office, Putra Nilai, Nilai, Negeri Sembilan on 29 January 2013, at 9.30 am.