

Strategic Communication between Islam and China

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China is a contemporary world power. Economic and technological progress as well as the global political defence system that was played increasingly emphasised the position of China as a big country ready to become a Western countries' competitor. The spirit of confusion is an important foundation in the work ethic of Chinese society. Also, the entry and development of Islam in China has begun since the beginning of the first century Hijrah. This study aims to get an in-depth overview of the strategic communication patterns of Islam and Chinese culture so that Islam survives to the present in China and has a space of symbolic expression and acculturation with Chinese culture. The method used in this research is qualitative. The results showed that the interaction between Islam and China had been done for a long time. It was proven during the reign of the Ming Dynasty that assimilation occurred through trade, marriage, and government. The Ming Dynasty emperor also had a Muslim wife. Not only that, poems written in Mandarin also show that China glorifies the truth of God and the Prophet Muhammad as a prophet of the Muslims.

Key words: *Communication, Islam, China.*

Introduction

"Demand knowledge reaching China" is a cultural expression of Muslim societies that shows how the development of science and the progress of civilisation controlled by China and as the beginning of a strategic relationship for Muslims to learn everything that has developed in China. Islam appreciates the process of studying, wherever and whenever. Therefore, China's capabilities in the fields of technology, politics, and economy far exceed those of the American and European countries. Therefore, Muslims are encouraged to study abroad in China (Wibowo, 2004).



Islam in China has existed since the beginning of the Hijri year. Islam came to China through Muslim traders from Arabia and Persia. The Chinese welcomed the arrival of Islam to China. This phenomenon is closely related to preachers and spread Islam in harmony, comfort, peace, and friendliness through trade. The traders initially confused Chinese women. In other words, they are married to Chinese people. Muslims as traders, diplomats, and religious figures assimilate to Chinese culture. The acceptance of Islam in China as a religion of peace made Islam develop from dynasty to dynasty so that Muslims still exist today.

In connection with the arrival of Islam to China, Zarkhoviche (2016) mentioned:

Islam has flourished in China for more than 1350 years, with a Muslim population of more than 30 million. Muslims first came to China as traders and as travelling preachers. The expansion of the Chinese people into the Central Asian region has integrated Muslim societies such as the Uyghurs into China so that Muslims in China also belong to the Hui (Muslim Chinese) and Muslims from other ethnic groups. Throughout its history, many Muslims have become prominent court officials as well as opponents of the royal authorities. Islam as a religion "rahmatan lil alamin" (the religion of grace for all of nature) coming to China was mentioned by Yuanzhi (2000):

Regarding the entry of Islam into China, most scholars believe that the event occurred in the middle of the 7th century. An important event that occurred at that time was that the Caliph III, Usman bin Affan (577-656 AD) had sent his first envoy to China on August 25, 651 (2 Muharram 31 Hijri). When facing Emperor Yong Hui of the Tang Dynasty, the Arab envoy had introduced the state of his country and the religion of Islam. So according to Jiu Tan Shu (Old Tang Dynasty Books) how the History of Ta Shi, Vol. 198. "Ta Shi" was referred to as "Arabs" during the Tang dynasty. Since then, Islam began to spread in China (Yuanzhi, 2000: 277).

Historically Islam entered China in the seventh century, at the time of the Caliph, Usman bin Affan. Besides, science and technology in the classical era were highly developed in China, so that many of the Islamic countries sought knowledge there. Vice versa, Muslims also teach mathematics, astronomy and other sciences to the people of China. This collaboration makes Muslims integrated with Chinese culture. The harmony developed by Islam and Chinese culture is a medium for the unification of humanity. Historical facts show that Islam and China as a renewal for the development of science in the past.

The Arabs managed to find a new item from China, namely paper. This is a great discovery. This discovery greatly influenced the progress of Arabic science. In the past, in the world, only China knew how to make paper. Then in 751, there was a struggle for territory between the Abbasiyah army and the Chinese army from the Tang Dynasty in Kazakhstan. Muslim

forces succeeded in winning the battle and arrested several prisoners, some of whom had expertise in making paper (Laksono, 2005: 21).

The process of interaction and communication of scientists from China and Islam thousands of years ago made the trade community and the results of cultural adaptation as a symbol of unity between Islam and China, so that the Islamic scientific system and its civilisation never clashed because it was assimilated in such a way. The process of scientific interaction between Islam and Confucius has remained harmonious and continues today. The integration and openness of Islam and Chinese society become a symbol that Islam can be integrated with Chinese civilisation as well as Islam is not a new religion, so it does not need to worry. Likewise, the Chinese government now values the Islamic community because they have contributed knowledge to China as well as Muslim Hui ethnicities as well as tough business people who serve the Chinese government.

However, before the arrival of Islam to China, there had been cultural contact between Arabs and Persians with China. After Islam developed in China, the relationship between Islam and its culture became more harmonious. Arabic historical records, mentioning Sa'ad Bin Ibnu Abi Waqqash's visit to China has been carried out since the beginning of the development of Islam itself. Saad Bin Ibnu Waqqash's visit according to these records coincided with the commencement of the codification era of the Qur'an and the Hadith of the Prophet during the Caliphate of Uthman Ibn 'Affan (Sen, 2009; Zarkhoviche, 2016).

Sa'ad Bin Ibnu Waqqash is a preacher sent by the caliph to develop propaganda in China. With the mission of preaching to China then was the beginning of Islam from the land of Cheng Ho. The Compiled by Guangzhou Islamic Association states:

Guangzhou is the cradle of Chinese Islam. Way back in early Tang Dynasty, a mission led by Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqqas trekked along the Maritime Silk Route from the Arabian peninsula to Guangzhou for the sake of trading and preaching. He also managed to build the first mosque ever in China, and which was Huaisheng Mosque along with the famous Guanta Minaret. After Abi waqqas laid down his life, the remains got buried in the Islamic Sage Tomb. There are 4 mosques in Guangzhou now those are: Huaisheng Mosque, Abi Waqqas Mosque, Haopan Mosque and Xiaodongying Mosque. Moreover, more than 14.000 local Muslim and 120.000 Migrant Resident (Compiled by Guangzhou Islamic Association).

Guangzhou is the birthplace of Islam in China. After Sa'ad Bin Ibnu Waqqas settled in Guangzhou, he established the mosque as a place of prayer and call to prayer for Muslims. This mosque is one of the oldest mosques in China. At present more than 14,000 indigenous Chinese are Muslims in Guangzhou, and more than 120,000 immigrants live in Guangzhou. The history of the spread of Islam in China began at the time of the Tang Dynasty. In



Zarkhoviche (2016), it can be traced to the history of the development of Islam in China has stood several empires or dynasties. Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD) and interspersed with four other dynasties namely the Song dynasty (960-1279 AD), the Yuan Dynasty or Mongol (1279-1368 AD), the Ming Dynasty (1368-1644 AD), and the Qing Dynasty (1644-1911 AD).

Islam developed in China thanks to the interaction and communication between Chinese people and Arabs and the Persians. Because Islam developed through the Middle East and Persian routes, Islam in China is actually not a new religion, and even Chinese civilisation is at least influenced by Islamic civilisations such as the Penanggal and Falak Sciences. Likewise, Islam in China was developed in a peaceful way through trade and mixed marriages which were generally by merchants who mistook the Chinese. Cultural assimilation was among them during the Ming Dynasty, namely the Islamic tradition in China in writing. One of them is writing Chinese using Arabic script (Zarkhoviche 2016: 109).

The adaptation process carried out by the Ming Dynasty, which ruled for 276 years from 1368 to 1644 AD. The adaptation process carried out by the Ming Dynasty allowed intermarriage between Han people and Muslims. With this system, the marriage of Muslims increased in China, and the Islamic community began to adjust their children's names to suit Islamic names such as "Mo, Mai, and Mu".

The relationship between the Islamic community and the Chinese people is through cultural, legal and also governmental relations. A great deal of Muslim members of the military in the Ming Dynasty. When the Hong Wu Emperor ruled the Ming Dynasty, he established several mosques located in South China. He also wrote poetry consisting of 100 words that contain praise for the Prophet Muhammad as a carrier of Islamic teachings (Zarkhoviche 2016: 114). So harmonious Islam in China in the Ming Dynasty made Chinese people unite with Islam. According to Zarkhoviche (2016) states that if historical evidence is traced, many of the world's historians claim that the Ming Dynasty was the Islamic Dynasty that had ruled China. The founder of the Ming Dynasty was Zhu Yuanzhang in addition to having a Muslim wife; he also had several military members from among the Muslims. Zhu Yuanzhang (Emperor Hong Wu) was also known as a person who greatly admired Islam. Emperor Hong Wu also as a just and prosperous leader ordered the Governors to build mosques and maintain Islamic law, especially laws relating to marriage.

The capital of the Ming Dynasty as the seat of government was in Nanjing City. Islamic education in China during the Ming Dynasty was very well known and practised by the local people. At that time, Islamic schools in China implemented a learning system that was grouped into Arabic and Persian languages. However, Islamic schools in one region are different from other regions. For example, Islamic schools in Lintao and Hezhou Provinces

specialise in teaching Arabic to their students. While in Shandong Province, Islamic schools place more emphasis on mastering Persian texts (Zarkhoviche, 2016: 120-121).

Besides, Chinese scholars translate Arabic into Mandarin and vice versa. During the Ming Dynasty, many Islamic scholars also studied monotheism, morality and Islamic philosophy. When the Ming Dynasty came to power, the centre of Chinese civilisation was in Nanjing, so automatically the government policies that adopted the Islamic-based education system were mostly found in the city of Nanjing. In the development of the science of geography, it also contributed greatly. One of them is the making of Da Ming Hun Yi Tu, the oldest map in the world originating from East Asia (Zarkhoviche, 2016: 120-121).

The Qur'an is also translated into Mandarin. In the writer's observation at the Shanghai Mosque exhibited scholars who translated the Qur'an into Mandarin as well as the translation of Islamic sciences from Arabic into Mandarin. If you look at every major mosque in China, you can find pictures of the great scholars. The scholars of the teachings about harmony were preached to the Chinese community through the study or Islamic education in large mosques in China.

As the centre of civilisation and trade in the Ming Dynasty, in the Nanjing area, there are also several mosques, such as the Jingjue Mosque in the Qinhuai District, Jiangsu Province. This mosque is always crowded and filled with Chinese Muslims and from other countries. According to the author's observations, while studying at Nanjing Normal University in 2004-2005, this mosque besides being a place of prayer every Saturday, the mothers made it as a place of study and one of the Islamic cultural sites visited by many tourists from both local and foreign countries. While in the month of fasting in this mosque, we can see many of the Muslims, especially religious leaders who break they are fast together and tarawih prayers together. The Islamic atmosphere that the author observed while studying in China is no different from Indonesia. This means that if we go to the mosque, then the atmosphere of intimacy can be seen among diverse and racial Muslim fellow.

Method

This study uses qualitative research, namely research that explains data descriptively (Berger, 2000: 109; Lindlof & Taylor, 2002: 209). The data collection technique is done through library research because the data or materials needed to complete this research come from libraries in the form of books, encyclopedias, dictionaries, journals, documents, magazines and so on that are related to this research. Then the data is also taken based on observations or based on the experience of researchers when educators in 2004-2005.

Results and Discussion

Islamic Civilisation and China

Chinese civilisation is one of the oldest in the world. The basic civilisation of China was built based on Taoism and Confucius. Taoism is a philosophical school originating in China. While Confucius is a religion of humanism, whose beliefs have a great impact on the life, social structure, and political philosophy of the Chinese nation. Chinese civilisation adopted from foreigners is based on Buddhism, Islam and Communism. Chinese civilisation is also in contact with other civilisations such as Persia and the Middle East. With a touch of foreign civilisation made China develop rapidly. Cultural interaction in China is built based on different cultural gatherings. But the teachings of Taoism and Confucius that teach harmonisation make their civilisations develop rapidly. Islam and Confucius as two civilisations that have ruled the world and will rule the world again. Huntington (2001: 125) says that clashes between civilisations, said that if Islam and Confucius were united, there would be a threat to the Western world.

In general, Islamic civilisation and Confucius are different, but the two civilisations complement each other in the course of history in China. Confucius's civilisation as the ancestral heritage of the Chinese people accepted Islam as sacred teaching, so that it coloured the government, especially during the Ming Dynasty which was in power from 1368 to 1644 AD, Therefore, it is not surprising that Muslims in China were very united with the Confucius people. Chinese Muslims, known as Hui, consider themselves to be descended from Arabia. Hefner mentioned that Chinese Muslims who claim to be descended from mixed marriages between Arabs and other Muslims and Chinese in China for 1,200 years ago (Hefner, 1999: 149).

If traced Hui people identify themselves with Muslims whose lives depend on trade. Therefore, their lives were also marginalised, but with their tenacity and ethos, they were able to compete in trade based on fair competition with other ethnic groups in China. Hui Muslims are known throughout Chinese history as traders specialising in transportation, wool trade, jewellery, and food stalls. Specialisation is wide in regional numbers and variations according to the socio-economic position of Hui in urban settings and agricultural areas (Hefner, 1999: 151).

Ethnic Hui is as a resilient Muslim community and a trader specialising in agriculture and urban areas. That is, in addition to controlling the Muslims who live in urban agriculture as well as their lives in cities that specialise in business and commerce, Ethnic Hui controls the trade, and of course, are more skilled than other ethnic groups, so they can adapt to different cultural and ethnic environments in China.



Besides, Gladney added that the debate about the market among Han people is as a branching point (divergence), where Han people often debate the value of prosperity (and social problems that go together), while Hui people consider the success of the market as an opportunity for ethnic and religious progress. Indeed, in a broad discussion of economic history in China, (Lai Cunli, 1988: 310) states that the Hui capital of commercial capital played an active role in the growth of Chinese capitalists (Gladney in Hefner, 1999: 150).

The Hui ethnic spirit of doing business is based on Islam, so success in business is seen as a success in religion. The link between religious advice and trying as well as their exclusion in politics made them successful like the ethnic Chinese overseas. Alienation in politics makes them work and strive hard in the economic field to achieve the success that makes them valuable and their identity elevated in a pluralistic Chinese society.

During the development of the Chinese economy which mobilised and promoted privatisation, Hui's identity rose while increasing religious enthusiasm and ethnicity so that it affected the empowerment of '*zakat*' and the empowerment of imams in mosques where the Hui inhabited. The marginalised ethnic identity of the Hui was gradually increasing as economic liberalisation was implemented in China. Ethnicities who have successfully paid '*zakat*' are empowered to '*muzakki*', including the prosperity of the Imams in mosques in China.

The role of the Hui people in the Chinese economy is very supportive of the Chinese government's program. The work ethic of the Hui is closely related to the history of trade in Arabs and Persians. Gladney as a researcher quoted from Lai (1988) mentions that the culture of the Hui minority is unique entrepreneurship compared to other nations in China and that this business culture contributes significantly to China's economic development. One can see that the business activities of the earliest Hui ancestors greatly affected the formation of the Hui nation. The famous Hui historian, Ma Tong, made a similar statement; from a very early period, very large followers of Islam in China were involved in trade and business activities (Hefner, 1999: 154).

The culture and businesslike nature of the Hui tribe passed down from their ancestors as history from Islam. That is, the Hui descendants they consider to be from the Middle East are good traders. Likewise, business communication is instilled by their culturally contaminated ancestors. Their business communication with Middle Eastern immigrants lifted their prestige in China. Likewise, the government promotes diplomacy with Middle Eastern countries in order to develop business activities in both China and the Middle East. This is very beneficial for the rise of ethnoreligious in China. The economic revival of the Hui tribe will inadvertently result in a spirit of diversity there. This means that the work ethic and business



spirit of the Hui people at least influences the relationship between Islam and Chinese society.

The ethnic prosperity of Hui is mentioned in Hefner (1999) as follows:

The latter economic prosperity achieved in the Hui agricultural region as a result of supporting policies and Hui's entrepreneurial abilities resulted in unintentional and unexpected increases in support for religious matters. Na Jingling, for example, wants to use the profits to help the Hui people in Ningxia, help mosques and build a hotel that is truly Qing Zhen (pure and true) Islamic.

The Islamic spirit that exists in the Hui ethnicity is a logical consequence of economic policy in China. The success of the Hui ethnic in the business field is a new hope of revival of the Islamic spirit there. This phenomenon can be seen from their cohesiveness in building mosques and other religious activities.

Another Wanyuan Hu Hui said that because Allah is the source of his new wealth, they would contribute several benefits to the propagation of Islam and the construction of the mosque. Wealthier Hui people sometimes complain about the pressure they receive from donating to the mosque. Local Communist Party cadres complained that they could not stop religious donations without causing anger from the Hui residents there and disrupting economic development (Gladney in Hefner, 1999: 158-159).

Ethnic Hui who is already rich contributes more to mosques and other religious needs. Willingness to contribute to Islam has overwhelmed the government. However, donations made to mosques and recitals do not conflict with government regulations because of the sake of the economic prosperity of the people. Politically, Hui people are also more profitable because they become a priority in leading the party because they are a minority.

Hui people in China have a new spirit in developing their identity. This phenomenon can be traced to the improvement of the minority economy in China. The Chinese government's attention to the Hui ethnicity makes them grow more rapidly. Especially for ethnic minorities, it is allowed to have more than one child. These facts can be seen from Gladney's 1999 report, including Hui people also benefit from being a minority nation in the form of preferential treatment entering high school and college.

Under the special family planning policy for minorities, they are also permitted to have one additional child; this is different from the Han people. Hui's representation in the local government is also higher than the proportion of the Han population. Two out of ten



representatives on the party committee (Changwei) used the surname Ding in 1985, as only in the city party secretary (Hefner, 1999: 161).

Special treatment from the government for the Hui tribe makes the tribe develop as it should. However, because they are a minority considered politically marginalised, they are privileged to interact with the outside world, especially with people from different parts of the world. There is interaction with other Muslim brothers from the Middle East as well as from Indonesia or Pakistan so that the liveliness of Islam in China is felt. Increased interaction between Muslims from various countries can increase tourism to China.

Foreign tourists who come to China create an economic passion for the Hui tribe. This fact shows they can open halal restaurants. Halal restaurants and food are abundant in major cities throughout China. Muslim tourists easily mark the restaurant with halal writing in Arabic or '*Bismillah*' in Arabic. At the same time, the halal writing on food is also in Mandarin. However, for foreign Muslims, it can signify halal writing in Arabic.

If you buy meat at the market, then you can see women selling meat wearing headcovers. The place of selling meat is separated from the non-halal, halal meat with the word halal on the edge. For Muslims who migrate very easily go shopping for halal food and meat in the market. The author's observations while in Nanjing in 2004-2005 found a lot of halal food and halal meat on the market.

With the Hui and other Muslim communities in China, making it very easy for Muslim foreigners to travel or study there. Likewise, students from Islamic countries continue to arrive with Chinese government scholarships and personal expenses. The increase in tourists from Muslim countries is closely related to tourism promotion from the Chinese government. In Gladney, it is stated as follows:

The PRC's policy of approving special economic and political privileges to Hui people along the southeast coast and promoting their interaction with various Islamic governments abroad led to a new interest in Hui ethnic identity. Local provincial and city government publications proudly proclaim Guangzhou as the location of the Islamic holy grave. Ulama and government representatives from thirty Muslim countries were directed to Islamic sites in Guangzhou, part of a State-funded delegation in the spring of 1986 (Hefner, 1999: 162).

Economically and politically, the Chinese government deliberately promotes historic sites and sacred tombs both to visitors from Muslim countries and to non-Muslims. However, the emotional atmosphere of the Islamic state with China is very strategic in business. Thus the fame of China in addition to being published by themselves, also assisted by the Islamic state.



In other words, the emotional connection with China and Islam is not only now, but since the past, present and future.

This phenomenon makes Western countries very careful in negotiating business and politics. Because the relationship between China and an Islamic state cannot be separated. This fact can be proven by the frequent global political decisions supported by Western countries, not necessarily supported by China. This social reality can be proven during the Gulf War and Western policies towards the Middle East. China's global political decisions are in synergy with Turkey and Iran and other Islamic countries, including their support of Palestine. When the writer studied in Nanjing, it was seen how sympathetic the Chinese press was towards Yaser Arafat because he also highly valued China. According to the Chinese Press, all Yaser Arafat's foreign visits aside from the Middle East, the most were to China.

The touch of Chinese civilisation with Confucius became a new hope for ethnic minorities in China. Because the relationship was established thousands of years ago. The fabric of compassion formed by immigrant and ethnic Hui Muslims cannot be separated from the Communist ideology of Russia. Besides having a strong civilisation system, China also respects the system of outside civilisations without damaging their own civilisations. This means that the presence of Islam to China, in addition, brings a positive influence on harmony as well as carrying a good political and economic influence. This fact is proven by the arrival of Islam thousands of years ago from the Tang Dynasty to the Qing Dynasty.

At present Communism is the official ideology of the Chinese state, but the economic and political system is strongly influenced by the concepts of Taoism, Confucius, Buddhism, and Islam. Although the ideology of the state is Communism and only one ruling political party, very many Muslims hold important positions in the position of the Communist party there. Because Islam is integrated with Chinese culture, Muslims can also practice universal Islam.

The consistency of the Hui people in particular and other Muslims in China was formed personally, which was inherited by their ancestors as well as broadcasted their Islam through institutions or mosques available in China. This emotional connection can be seen when the writer visited the mosque in Guangzhou in October 2017. The mosque guards were pleased to receive Muslims who visited them and were very happy to tell about the entry of Islam in China. In connection with the practice of religion for Muslims mentioned in Hefner 1999 as follows:

Economic development has revived ethnoreligious and growing awareness of Muslim relations with the greater Islamic world. Once the country lobbied investors from several foreign Muslim governments, China was confronted with the fact that foreign Muslims generally preferred building mosques over factories, so that among the Hui people, the



country could not divorce the nation from religious interests or separate economic development from Islamist consciousness (Hefner, 1999: 171).

However, interactions between Han and Hui in China can acculturate in such a way, but they sometimes still have practices of Confucian culture that are packed with Islam. For example, the author's observations during the Idul Fitri prayer in 2014. Before the Idul Fitri prayer was held, there was a speech from city officials. After the city official gave a greeting, someone walked into the mosque where, in his hand, there was a small green incense, and before sitting he put the incense in front of the Imam.

Likewise, the cultures of Confucius still attached to Muslims who make pilgrimage to the graves of the scholars in Guangzhou. The author's observation when visiting the ulama's graves, especially Sa'ad Bin Waqqas's grave in Guangzhou, some people burned small incense sticks and placed it near the grave. But if you see the perpetrators of incense burning carried out by people who are ordinary Muslims.

According to the author's observations at the time at the tomb of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas, many people make pilgrimages both from China itself and from other nations. The Chinese and foreigners who visit the grave of Sa'ad bin Abi Waqqas, generally do their recitation. The author witnessed people who came to give money to people who do the study at the tomb. This is often done by pilgrims to the holy grave and the tomb of the scholars.

Islamic relations between nations are a spiritual value for Muslims everywhere and at any time, including in China. This phenomenon has been proven by a sense of brotherhood that can unite the preaching spirit. The relationship that has been established between preachers in China can unite Islam with the land of China. However, Muslim relations in China and Southeast Asia, in particular, can be seen from Chinese immigrants who are Muslims living in Indonesia. Chinese Indonesian Muslims form their community, the Indonesian Chinese Islamic Association (PITI). With this unity, they can trade as well as develop their da'wah in their circles. The existence of the Indonesian Chinese Association also established a communication network between Indonesia and China. Muslims in China also have associations to teach Islam to their generation. One of the leaders of Muslim associations in China is Mohammad Daud with the Gwangju organisation from China.

In connection with communication between Chinese religious communities and the Chinese Islamic Society, it is mentioned in Muslim China and the collapse of the Business Republic as follows:

Muhammad Daud Gwangju Islamic Association was formed after the emergence of an era of openness in China. Precisely after the deaths of Mao Zedong and Deng Xioping launched a

leap forward program by making China more liberal, and open to outside influences. Openness also includes everything, one of which is freedom of religion. "We descend from Chinese Muslim communities immediately form an organisation," said Mohammad Daud. We want our children to get back to Islam, the religion of our ancestors for hundreds of years (Setiawan, 2002: 30).

Muhammad Daud, as a Muslim in China, feels happy after economic reforms with a leap forward program can bring blessings to the Muslim community. Besides they can develop Islam properly as well as he can communicate with other Muslims from abroad. He as one of the leaders of Islamic organisations in China was invited to Indonesia to stay in touch with Muslim communities in Indonesia and at the same time be able to see the development of religious harmony in Indonesia. According to Mohammad Daud to teach Islam again, young people in China are more difficult because they are used to atheist habits. According to Mohammad Daud, he devoted the rest of his life to preaching. He felt compelled to do all this because nearly 50 years of Islam in China suffered a setback.

Relations with Muslims in Indonesia

The emotional atmosphere between the nation can be intertwined with Indonesia through spiritual tourism, both in China and in Indonesia. Indonesia, with a variety of heritage and spiritual history, can be used as an object for Chinese tourists. The phenomenon of shrines or mosques, tombs in Nanjing, Beijing, and others have become a spiritual tourist attraction for Muslims from Indonesia. Likewise, the graves of trustees in Indonesia are an important concern for Chinese citizens. Spiritual tourism is a communication opportunity between the people of Indonesia and China in building harmony in the future.

Seeing the spiritual relationship between Islam in China and Indonesia, the phenomenon of Islam will be excited again in China. Indonesia is exploring opportunities for this expectation to be reached naturally by the relations between nations and religions built by these Asian ancestors. Relations between nations built on religion and business are of interest to researchers. Chinese people from the mainland have occupied many areas in the archipelago. They came from the mainland with different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

The diversity of the Chinese in Indonesia adds to the treasury for the development of the diversity of the Indonesian nation itself. The emotional relationship between Indonesia and China was built hundreds of years ago. It brought harmony between nations as well as helped build an atmosphere of harmony. However, behind it all, after the communists came to power in China, the emotional relationship between Indonesia was disrupted. After the reform that was initiated by Deng Xiaoping, the Muslims in China were excited again marked by the many Muslims visiting China. Many Islamic countries began to invest in China. This

phenomenon proves that Islam in China cannot be disturbed, suppressed, let alone eradicated. This phenomenon is because Islam will not interfere with local cultural values.

Indonesia, especially leaders and diplomats, sees the excitement of Islam in China as a good opportunity and hope in building international communication at regional and global levels. As a Muslim-majority country, Indonesia is able to make diplomacy with China based on cultural and religious approaches. Because according to Confucius's philosophy, Islam is not an obstacle in the progress of a nation. However, Islam practised by the Chinese is an ancestral heritage, and the readiness of Muslims to build harmonious communication between nations is a bilateral hope of the two major countries in the future. We can learn a lot from them, especially in terms of trade and economy because the Chinese work ethic is institutionalised in their traditions. This opportunity needs to be considered by the Indonesian people to compete in these fields later.

However, Indonesia must not be unaware of their ideological tendencies. If Muslims are not careful about communist ideology, it will be disastrous for Indonesia. Limitation of competition only in the political, economic and ideological fields with China in the future. One way to counter communist ideology is only with Islam. Islam is the main supporter of protecting Indonesia in the future. China in which Hui ethnicity become the backers of the Chinese economy, become a bridge connecting these two nations.

Especially now that China wants to develop sea transportation by opening a sea passageway called the '*Terusan Kra*' which borders the Philippines. The '*Terusan Kra*' will shorten the mileage of Asia and Europe. However, from an economic perspective, it will affect the bustle of the Malacca Strait. If the '*Terusan Kra*' runs smoothly, Indonesia will benefit from the potential of the Malacca Strait to manage the Malacca Strait traffic comfortably, without obstacles and threats from outside countries, especially China.

As we know, the Malacca Strait is one of the busiest routes in the world. Around 40% of the world's sea transportation passes through the Malacca Strait. As an international route bordering Indonesia, the Malacca Strait is an economic resource. The advantage of Indonesia having the Malacca Strait is that marine resources that have not been maximally utilised such as oil and gas have not yet been excavated. If this energy source can be used by the Indonesian people, it will prosper Indonesia in the future.

The utilisation of resources in the Malacca Strait and the Indian Ocean is a stronghold of the Indonesian nation in the future. Indonesia can utilise China '*Jalur Sutra Maritim*' where sea highway connections will occur, and Indonesia will prosper. The expertise of Indonesian leaders in diplomacy and negotiation in the political, economic, cultural and security fields



will determine peace at the regional and global levels because global power in the future is greatly influenced by economic and political phenomena in the Asia Pacific driven by China.

Conclusion

Communication between Islam and Confucianism or Confucius had taken place thousands of years ago during the Tang Dynasty (618-907 AD), beginning with the diplomatic mission of Sa'ad Bin Abi Waqqash in the 7th century AD. However, trade relations between Arabs, Persia with China took place before Islam came, making it easier for Islam to quickly develop in China. The teachings of Confucius and Islam go hand in hand because the moral teachings of Confucius maintain harmony. While Islam as a religion '*Rahmatalil 'alamin*' which teaches people to respect human values.

The form of communication between Islam and Confucius was symbolised by the birth of the Hui tribe who came from Arabia and Persia. Likewise, the names of Muslims were quickly adopted with Chinese names such as Ma, Yui, Mo, and Mai. The arrival of Islam to China began with a trade mission, but gradually the traders as well as preachers. Chinese people openly accept Muslims by making marriages between Muslims and Confucians.

The role of Islam in China, especially from the Hui, they work as traders in various sectors. The reality of the Hui ethnic has the opportunity to communicate with other nations, especially from the Middle East to foster goodwill among others, especially from Arabs and Persians as well as in Southeast Asia. After economic liberalisation in China Hui ethnic-religious ethnic groups is increasingly passionate about improving the quality of their Islam. The Chinese government provides business opportunities for ethnic Hui while at the same time, can prosper the nation's economy.



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