

The United Colors of Islam (part 3 of 3)

Description: The racial equality espoused by Islam and practical examples from history. Part 3: The Hajj and the diversity found amongst the Muslims of today.

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This universal brotherhood preached by Islam was championed by the Prophet's Companions after him. When the Companion, Ubada bin as-Samit, led a delegation to Muqawqis, the Christian patriarch of Alexandria, the latter exclaimed: 'Get this black man away from me and bring in his stead another to talk to me! ... How can you be content that a black man should be the foremost among you? Is it not more fitting that he be below you?' 'Indeed no!', Ubada's comrades replied, 'Though he is black as you see, he is still the foremost among us in position, intelligence and wisdom; for black is not despised among us.'

"Truly, the Believers are but brothers..." (Quran 49:10)

It is the Hajj, or pilgrimage to Mecca, which remains the ultimate symbol of the oneness and brotherhood of man. Here, rich and poor from all nations stand and bow in unison before God in what is the largest gathering of humanity; testifying to the Prophet's words when he said:

"There is truly no excellence for an Arab over a non-Arab; or for a non-Arab over an Arab; or for a white man over a black man; or for a black man over a white man; except through piety." (*Ahmad*)

And this confirms the Quran, which says:

"O humanity! We have created you from a single male and female and have made you into nations and tribes that you may know one another (not that you have pride over one another). Verily, the most honorable of you in the God's Sight is the one most pious..." (Quran 49:13)

As for nationalism, with its factionalizing of Muslims along ethnic and tribal lines, it is considered an evil innovation.

"If your fathers, your sons, your brothers, your wives, your tribe, the wealth you have gained, the commerce in which you fear a decline, and the dwellings in which you delight are dearer to you than God and His Messenger and striving hard in His Cause, then wait until God brings about His Decision. And God guides not a rebellious people." (Quran 9:24)

The Prophet said:

"... whoever fights under the banner of the blind, becoming angry for nationalism, calling to nationalism, or assisting nationalism, and dies: then he dies a death of jahiliyya (i.e. pre-Islamic ignorance and disbelief)." (*Saheeh Muslim*)

Rather, the Quran says:

"While those who disbelieved placed in their hearts pride and haughtiness - the pride and haughtiness of jahiliyya, God sent down His tranquility upon His Messenger and upon the Believers..." (Quran 48:26)

In fact, the Muslims in and of themselves constitute a single body and supra-nation, as the Prophet explained:

"The parable of the Believers in their mutual love and mercy is like that of a living body: if one part feels pain, the whole body suffers in sleeplessness and fever." (*Saheeh Muslim*)

The Quran confirms this unity:

"Thus, We have made you (Believers into) a (single) justly-balanced community..." (Quran 2:143)

Perhaps one of the greatest barriers to the acceptance of Islam by many Westerners is the fallacy that it is primarily a religion for Orientals or dark-skinned people. No doubt, the racial injustices against many blacks, be they Abyssinian slaves of pre-Islamic Arabia, or 20th century Afro-Americans, has prompted many to embrace Islam. But this is beside the point. The Prophet Muhammad was himself of whitish complexion, described by his Companions as being 'white and ruddy' - a description many tens of millions of believing Arabs, Berbers and Persians share. Even blue-eyed blondes are not so rare amongst Near Easterners. Furthermore, Europe has more indigenous white Muslims than it has 'colored' immigrants. The Bosnians, for example, whose numbers were decimated at the end of the 20th century but who, due to their heroism and tradition of tolerance, have contributed most to Balkan peace and stability. Albanians too, descended from Europe's ancient Illyrians, are also largely Muslim. In fact, one of the 20th century's leading Muslim scholars, Imam Muhammad Nasir-ud-Deen al-Albani, was, as his title suggests, Albanian.

"Truly, We created humans in the best stature." (Quran 5:4)

Whites have been called 'caucasian' ever since anthropologists declared the Caucasus Mountains, home to Europe's highest peaks, to be the 'Cradle of the White Race.' Today, the natives of these mountains are Muslims. Amongst many a lesser-known tribe of fierce mountaineers and fair maidens are the Circassians famed for their bravery and beauty and who, as Mamluke rulers of Syria and Egypt, helped defend the civilized world and safeguard its holy lands from the ravages of the Mongol hordes. Then there is the brutalized Chechen, arguably the most unwieldy of all God's creatures, whose tenacity and resistance has helped them avoid the fate of the Circassians. Meanwhile, over

1,000,000 American and North European Caucasian whites - Anglo-Saxons, Franks, Germans, Scandinavians and Celts included - now profess Islam. In fact, Islam peacefully entered parts of Europe before Christianity, when: 'In times long ago, when the Russian Slav had not yet started to build Christian churches on the Oka nor conquered these places in the name of European civilization, the Bulgar was already listening to the Quran on the banks of the Volga and the Kama.' (Solov'ev, 1965) [On 16 May 922, Islam became the official state religion of the Volga Bulgars, with whom today's Bulgarians share a common ancestry.]

Every faith besides Islam calls for the worship of creation in some way, shape or form. Moreover, race and color play a central and divisive role in almost all non-Islamic belief systems. A Christian's deification of Jesus and the saints or a Buddhist's deification of Buddha and the Dalai Lamas has people of a particular race and color being worshipped in derogation of God. In Judaism, salvation is withheld from the non-Jew Gentile. Hinduism's caste system likewise checks the spiritual, socio-political and economic aspirations of the 'unclean' lower castes. Islam, however, seeks to unite and make one all the creatures of the world upon the Unity and Oneness of their Creator. Thus, Islam alone liberates all peoples, races and colors in the worship of God alone.

"And among His Signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the (wonderful) differences of your languages and colors. Verily, in that are indeed signs for people of sound knowledge." (Quran 30:22)

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