

## **Inter-Religious Communication in Islam: A Study on Answering and Greeting with a Sociological Approach**

*Abdul Hakim*

State Islamic Institute of Bone-Faculty of Ushuluddin and Da'wah

[hakim150828@gmail.com](mailto:hakim150828@gmail.com)

### **Abstract**

*The purpose of this study is to explore inter-religious communication based on an understanding of the prophetic traditions through a sociological approach. Analyzing inter-religious communication based on Hadiths with a sociological approach is important. This study will propose two forms of Prophetic Interaction in addressing inter-religious communication, namely communication through associative interaction and dissociative interaction. The method used in this study is a descriptive qualitative method based on data and information sourced from the Prophet's traditions. Data were collected, then analyzed using a sociological approach. The findings of this study are that by examining the Prophet's traditions about inter-religious communication, especially in answering and giving greetings, it is not associated with the law of halal or haram. However, the prohibition and permissibility of answering and greeting non-Muslims are solely related to the social situations and conditions in which interactions are carried out with non-Muslims. Which basically can be divided into two forms or stages, namely associative which includes (cooperation, accommodation and assimilation) and dissociative forms or stages which include competition, contravention and conflict / dispute.*

**Keywords:** *Inter-Religious Communication; Study of Answering and Greeting; Sociological Approach.*

## INTRODUCTION

Hadith is a source of reference in answering all the problems of life both in matters of *aqidah*, worship and *muamalah*. However, knowing and understanding Hadith textually is insufficient to address the evolving problems faced by humanity. Therefore, it is necessary to understand hadith as a source of religious teachings.

In interpreting religious texts including hadith, there are at least two different forms in practice; one is scripturalistic which is more oriented towards textual doctrinal texts and the other is substantialistic which is oriented towards meaning and content or context (Ma'ruf, 2017). Or in other words, a normative approach and a scientific approach. The normative approach is more understanding of religious teachings based on the Qur'an and Hadith which are understood textually. While the scientific approach is an understanding of the Qur'an and Hadith contextually by using scientific approaches such as sociological. Both forms of interpretation certainly need to be considered in understanding religious texts such as hadith to minimize errors and mistakes in understanding the meaning contained therein. Mistakes and errors in understanding the text can cause people to be exclusive which has the potential to cause conflict and can disrupt the stability of religious harmony (Tim Departemen Agama RI, 2008).

It is interesting to note that in the context of Islamic teachings, for example, there are several hadith texts that textually prohibit communication in the form of greeting non-Muslims. This can certainly have consequences on unharmonious relationships in Indonesian society that can threaten the unity of the Indonesian nation. To avoid this, it is necessary to reassess the meaning contained in these traditions using a scientific approach.

Studies on the law of giving and answering non-Muslim greetings have been found. However, these studies are mostly in the form of textual and normative studies. Therefore, this study will be conducted by understanding the Prophet's traditions related to giving and answering greetings through a sociological approach, so that it will provide a different understanding. The study of this with a normative approach, for example, has been done by Ahmad Hanif Fahrudin with the title; "Saying greetings to non-Muslims (Analysis of Al-Qur'an Hadith texts, *Asbab Wurud* and Legal Implications)" (Fahrudin, 2019).

The purpose of this paper, in addition to complementing the lack of previous literature, is specifically to show that understanding the traditions of giving and answering the greetings of non-Muslims with a sociological approach will give birth to the argument that understanding the prophet's traditions relating to this does not lie in the halal and haram of doing so. This study is

conducted with a sociological approach by looking at the forms of interaction that are carried out both associative and dissociative.

## RESEARCH METHODS

This research focuses on the understanding of the traditions on inter-religious communication through answering and greeting by using the sociological approach method. This issue was chosen because in addition to the Indonesian society which is classified as a pluralistic society consisting of several religions, also because the people have various views in understanding the traditions.

Research on the understanding of the traditions of inter-religious communication by answering and giving greetings uses primary data from the prophet's traditions sourced from standard hadith books (recognised as authentic) such as Bukhari, Muslim, Abu Daud, At-Tirmidzi and An-Nasai. Meanwhile, secondary sources are writings that discuss this issue either from books, journals and other writings related to the theme discussed. The data collection process starts from searching for hadiths about interfaith communication by answering and giving greetings from primary and secondary sources.

The hadiths that have been collected are then analysed using a sociological approach by referring to Soerjono Soekanto's view of dividing forms of social interaction into two, namely, associative forms which include (cooperation, accommodation and assimilation) and dissociative forms which include (competition, contravention and conflict). These two forms of interaction will be used in understanding the hadiths about inter-religious communication through answering and giving greetings.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### 1. Greetings From An Islamic Perspective

#### Hadiths on Interfaith Communication Through Answering and Greeting

There are several hadith texts about answering non-Muslim slams including the following :

عن عروة بن الزبير أن عائشة رضي الله عنها زوج النبي صلى الله عليه وسلم قالت : دخل رهط من اليهود على رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم فقالوا السام عليكم قالت عائشة ففهمتها فقلت وعليكم السام واللعنة قالت فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ( مهلا يا عائشة إن الله يحب الرفق في الأمر كله ) . فقلت يا رسول الله أو لم تسمع ما قالوا ؟ قال رسول الله صلى الله عليه وسلم ( قد قلت وعليكم ) (رواه البخارى)

The meaning:

*'Urwah ibn al-Zubair reported that 'Aisha r.a, the wife of the Prophet, said: A group of Jews came to the Messenger of Allah and said: woe to you. 'Ā'ishah said: I understood and said woe and Allah's curse upon you. So the Messenger of Allah said: Calm down,*

*O 'Ā'ishah, Allah loves those who are calm in all matters. So I said: Did Rasullullah not hear what they said? So Rasullullah said: I have said that it is upon you to return. (HR. al-Bukhari) (Al-Bukhari, 1991).*

سمعت أنس بن مالك يقول : مر يهودي برسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم فقال السام عليك فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ( و عليك ) . فقال رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم ( أتدرون ما يقول ؟ قال السام عليك ) . قالوا يا رسول الله ألا نقتله ؟ قال ( لا إذا سلم عليكم أهل الكتاب فقولوا وعليكم ) . (رواه البخاري).

The meaning:

*I heard Anas Ibn Ma>lik say: A Jew passed by the Prophet and said woe to you. So the Prophet replied and upon you too. Then the Prophet said: Do you know what the Jew said? He said woe to you. Then the Companions said: did we not kill him?. The Messenger of Allah said: If the People of the Book salute Ahl al-Kitab, then salute you also. (HR al-Bukhari) (Al-Bukhari, 1991).*

عن أبي هريرة : أن رسول الله صلى الله عليه و سلم قال لا تبدؤوا اليهود ولا النصارى بالسلام فإذا لقيتم أحدهم في طريق فاضطروه إلى أضيقه . (رواه مسلم)

The Meaning:

*Abu Hurairah reported that the Messenger of Allah (peace be upon him) said: Do not initiate the greeting of peace to Jews and Christians. And if you meet them on the road, push them to the side of the road. (HR Muslim) (al-Qusyairi, 1991).*

## **Scholars' Views on the Ruling of Salam to Non-Muslims**

### **a. Scholars Who Prohibit Giving and Answering Greetings to Non-Muslims**

Scholars who do not allow giving and returning greetings to non-Muslims are guided by several traditions of the Prophet Muhammad SAW. The Prophet once stated his prohibition of greeting non-Muslims. The Hadiths in question, among others, as narrated from Abu Hurairah ra., the Apostle once issued a statement: “Do not begin by greeting the Jews and Christians. If you meet one of them on the road, then follow him to his side” (Al-Qusyairi, 1991).

The literal meaning of this Hadith clearly shows the fierce, deceitful and intimidating face of Islam. This is because, in the text of this Hadith, the Prophet, as a *shari'*, forbids his followers to not only greet non-Muslims (i.e. Jews and Christians) with a greeting, but also to urge (Javanese: *mepet*) any Muslim who passes by or meets a non-Muslim.

In answering the greetings of non-Muslims, the book of Sahih al-Bukhari, in the chapter *al- isti'dzan*, discusses the traditions concerning how to answer the greetings of non-Muslims. It is narrated that Sayyidah 'Aisha was at home with the Prophet (pbuh) when a group of Jews came and greeted her badly with the words *al-samu 'alaikum* (This greeting has a very negative

connotation. Among other things; misfortune to you, destruction to you)... Angered by this greeting, Sayyidah 'Aisha angrily replied: *Wa 'alaikum al-sam wa al-la'nat*. (A'ishah's reply indicated her anger by replying to the Jews' greeting with the equally sadistic greeting of destruction and curse). Hearing Sayyidah 'Aisha's anger, the Prophet then said to her: "Calm down O 'A'ishah, verily Allah swt., loves gentleness in all matters".

Then the Prophet (pbuh) explained, that answering such greetings is enough with the phrase "wa'alaikum", there is no need to get angry while cursing. This is because Allah loves politeness and gentleness in all matters. In addition, there is also a tradition that is commonly used as a corridor for answering the greetings of non-Muslims based on the Prophet's tradition from the Companion Anas Ibn Malik which states: "If a person of the book (Jew or Christian) greets you, then reply with *wa'alaikum*" (Al-Bukhari, 1991).

In al-Bukhari's Hadith no. 6258 mentioned above, the obligation of Muslims to answer the greetings of non-Muslims is simply "*wa'alaikum*" (to you also). Such an answer is justified because, at that time, Jews and Christians often greeted Muslims with inappropriate remarks. As explained by the Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim, Hadith no. 2163 from the Companion Ibn Umar (may Allah be pleased with him); Meaning: The Apostle (pbuh) said: "When the Jews greet you, they greet you with '*al-saami 'alaikum*', so say: '*alaik*'!" (Narrated by Muslim) (Al-Qusyairi, 1991).

In addition to the above text, there is also a redaction of the hadith that provides advice to reply to greetings to non-Muslims by replying to them through the greeting *wa'alaikum* as the narration of the Bukhori hadith no. 6926 which describes that.

Meaning: "A Jew passed by the Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings be upon him) and said 'as saamu 'alaik' (woe to you)." The Messenger of Allah (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) replied 'wa 'alaik' (you are wretched). The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) then said, "Do you know that the Jew said 'as saamu 'alaik' (woe to you)?" The Companions then said, "O Messenger of Allah, what if we kill him?" The Messenger of Allah (blessings and peace of Allah be upon him) said, "Do not. If they greet you, then say '*wa 'alaikum*'" (Al-Bukhari, 1991).

#### **b. Cleric who allow answering and greeting non-Muslims**

Quraisy Syihab in the book Tafsir Al Misbah notes that many scholars allow to start greeting non-Muslims. As the Companion of the Prophet Muhammad, Ibn Abbas and a group of scholars' other than him argued that it is allowed to say greetings to non-Muslims. Ibn Abbas and other scholars understand that the Prophet's prohibition on greeting non-Muslims is in the context of his time, where non-Muslims is in the context of his time, where the Jews say "al-samu 'alaikum' instead of Assalamu 'alaikum.

Quraish Shihab also noted that the Prophet Muhammad's instructions forbidding to start greeting non-Muslims (Jews and Christians) because of the hostility of non-Muslims to the Prophet Muhammad and his companions were very clear (Shihab, 2012). As illustrated in QS. Ali Imron verse 118: "O you who believe, do not take as your confidants those who are outside your ranks (for) they do not cease (to cause) harm to you. They love what troubles you." Hatred is evident from their mouths, and what their hearts conceal is even greater. Indeed We have explained to you (Our) verses, if you understand them (Departemen Agama RI, 1991).

## **2. Social Interaction and Its Forms**

### **Defition of Social Interaction**

Interaction according to language means action, mutual action, contact and influence between relationships (Al-Rais, 2012). Meanwhile, according to the term is the act of influencing or influencing between two parties. As for social science, social interaction is a dynamic social relationship between individuals, between individuals and groups and between groups and groups through communication methods which in social terms are commonly referred to as social contact (Al-Rais, 2012).

Sociologists view that drives, ideas and institutions affect and are affected by social forces. Sociology is a science that studies society from the aspect of generality and regularity and studies humans and their relationships with other humans (interaction).

According to Blummer quoted by Imam Suprayogo in his book *Symbolic Interactionism: Prespective and Method* that interaction rests on three things, namely: a) Humans act towards something based on the meanings that something has on them, b) the meaning comes from one's social interaction with others and c) the meaning is refined during the interaction process (Suprayogo, 2003).

Sociology of religion as part of social science studies the social aspects of religion. The object of religious research according to Keith A. Robert is focused on: a). Religious groups and institutions which include formation, activities for survival, maintenance and dissolution, b). Individual behaviour in social processes that influence each other and c). Conflict relationships between groups (Robertson, 1988).

Based on these three aspects, the object of study in the form of interaction is the study of behaviour and conflict. Human behaviour in interacting with other humans includes; a). Individual behaviour in relation to his beliefs, b). Individual behaviour in relation to the group, c). Individual behaviour in relation to its leader, d). Group behaviour in relation to its beliefs, e).

Group behaviour in relation to its leader, f). The leader's behaviour in relation to his/her religious beliefs and g). Leader behaviour in relation to social strata (Suprayogo, 2003).

Research from one or more of the above is said to be a study of religion (religiosity) with a sociological perspective which is the area of study of the sociology of religion.

### **Forms of Social Interaction**

According to Soerjono Soekanto, there are basically two general forms of social interaction, namely, associative general forms and dissociative general forms.

#### **1. Associative Social Interaction**

A social interaction can be said to be associative if the process of social interaction leads to a co-operation. Process of social interaction leads to a collaboration. Associative social interaction itself can be divided into 3 special forms of interaction, namely:

##### **a. Cooperation**

Cooperation is intended as a joint effort between individuals or groups in order to achieve common goals. Cooperation arises because there is an orientation of the individual towards his group (which is his in-group) and other groups (which are his out-group).

According to Charles H. Cooley, cooperation arises when people realise that they have common interests, and at the same time have enough knowledge and control over themselves to fulfil these interests through cooperation (Haryanto, 2011). So here it can be said that the driving factor for cooperation is the existence of common interests.

Cooperation can be in the form of spontaneous cooperation, direct cooperation, and contractual cooperation, as well as traditional cooperation. Spontaneous cooperation is cooperation that occurs immediately, while direct cooperation is the result of orders from superiors or rulers, and contract cooperation is cooperation that occurs on a certain basis, and traditional cooperation is cooperation as part of the social system element (Soekanto, 2013).

##### **b. Accommodation**

Accommodation is an effort made to resolve a dispute or conflict of the conflicting parties that leads to the condition or state of the completion of a conflict of the dispute. The objectives of accommodation are as follows:

- a) Accommodation aims to reduce differences in understanding, political opposition or hostility between groups.
- b) Prevent conflict explosions in the form of clashes between groups such as war.
- c) Unite two or more separate groups to achieve unity and integrity.
- d) Strive for processes between tribes, ethnicities, or races, between religions, or groups and so on that lead to the process of assimilation.

**c. Assimilation**

Assimilation is a social process characterised by efforts to reduce the differences that exist between individuals or between social groups followed by efforts to achieve unity of action, attitudes, and mental processes with regard to common interests.

Factors that can facilitate the occurrence of an assimilation include.

- a) Tolerance
- b) Equal opportunities in the economic field
- c) Respect for foreigners and their culture
- d) Open attitude of the ruling group in society
- e) Equality in cultural elements
- f) Mixed marriages
- g) The existence of a common enemy from outside

Factors that become obstacles to assimilation are as follows:

- a) Isolation of certain groups in society
- b) Lack of knowledge about the culture faced.
- c) Feeling of fear of the power of a culture faced
- d) The feeling of a particular group culture feels higher than the culture of other groups.
- e) Racial differences.
- f) Strong group feeling (in-group feeling).
- g) Minority groups experience interference from the ruling group
- h) Difference in interests (Setiadi, 2011).

**2. Dissociative Social Interaction**

Dissociative interaction can be interpreted as a struggle against a person or group of people. Dissociative interaction is divided into three forms, namely as follows:

**a. Competition**

Competition can be defined as a social process in which competing individuals or groups of people seek advantage through areas of life that at a certain time become the centre of public attention (both individuals and human groups) by attracting public attention or by sharpening existing prejudices, without using threats or violence. Competition can be personal and can also be between groups. Some forms of competition are economic competition, cultural competition, competition for position and role, and racial competition.

### **b. Contravention**

Contravention is essentially a form of social process that is between competition and opposition or contention. This contravention is characterised by symptoms of uncertainty about oneself or a plan and feelings of dislike that are hidden, hatred or conflict dislike, resentment, or doubt about someone's personality. Such feelings develop into a possibility, usefulness, necessity, or assessment of a proposal, thought, belief, or plan put forward by other individuals or groups of people.

According to Leopold von Weise and Howard Becker, there are five things in contravention that include:

- a) The general process of contravention includes actions such as rejection and so on.
- b) Simple forms of contravention such as cursing at others.
- c) Intensive forms of contravention such as incitement.
- d) Secretive contravention such as treason.
- e) Tactical contravention such as disturbing or confusing the other party.

### **c. Conflict or Conflict**

Conflict or dispute is a social process in which individuals or groups try to fulfil their goals by opposing the opposing party accompanied by threats or violence. The factors behind the occurrence of conflict or dispute are:

- a) Differences between individuals
- b) Cultural differences

### **Understanding Hadith on Associative Forms of Interaction**

There are two Hadiths about giving and answering the greetings of non-Muslims that can be studied with a sociological approach in the form of associative both in the model of cooperation, accommodation and assimilation, namely; first the Hadith which reads 'That 'Aisha r.a the wife of the Prophet PBUH. said: A group of Jews came to the Prophet and said: woe to you. Then 'A'ishah said I understand and said woe and Allah's curse upon you. So the Messenger of Allah said: Calm down, O 'Ā'ishah, Allah loves those who are calm in all matters. So I said: Did Rasullullah not hear what they said? So Rasullullah said: I have said that it is upon you to return. (HR. al-Bukhari). The second tradition reads; 'I heard Anas Ibn Malik say: A Jew passed by the Prophet's side and said woe to you. So the Prophet replied and upon you too. Then the Prophet said. said: Do you know what the Jew said? He said woe to you. Then the Companions said: did we not kill him?. The Messenger of Allah saw. said: If the People of the Book salute Ahl al-Kitab, then answer you. (HR al-Bukhari).

Based on the understanding of this sociological approach, it can be drawn a red thread that in fact the Prophet PBUH. in establishing communication with Jews and Christians through this approach with steps that are full of peace in stages, namely starting from 'cooperation' then accommodation and assimilation.

- a. The first hadith explains that when a group of Jews came to the Prophet and greeted him (with woe), Aisha immediately replied woe and curse on you. So, the Prophet reminded Aisha to be patient. Through a sociological approach, the Prophet's words to Aisha with the words 'patience' sociologically can be understood that we are new people in Medina so do not look for problems (enemies) as long as there is still a way to work together.
- b. The second Hadith explains about a Jew who passed by the Prophet and said woe to you. Then it was conveyed to his companions so that they wanted to be angry and wanted to kill him. But the Prophet said no, it is enough to say the same thing. If this hadith is approached with a sociological approach then the answer given by the Prophet by simply answering with the same words or returning his words is one form of interaction that is accommodative and assimilation.

The Prophet's behaviour in communicating in interacting between religious communities as stated in the two traditions above shows that the Prophet when he first moved to Medina tried to establish cooperation with all residents of Medina both Muslim and non-Muslim.

#### **Hadith Understanding on Dissociative Forms of Interaction**

The understanding of the Hadith on the prohibition of greeting non-Muslims is focused on the Hadith narrated by Imam Muslim through Abu Hurairah which reads: 'That the Messenger of Allah said: Do not initiate the greeting of peace to the Jews and Christians. And if you meet them on the road then push them to the side of the road.' To understand the meaning of this Hadith with a sociological approach, it is necessary to look at the history of the narrator and the situation and conditions at the time the Hadith was narrated.

It is known that Abu Hurairah entered Islam in 7 AH and joined the Prophet after the battle of Khaibar and died in 57 H. This means that Abu Hurairah only lived with the Prophet for about 3 years. Although in a relatively short period, but according to Imam Dzahabi's records, has narrated 5,374 traditions. Some people compare him with Siti Aisha (2,210 traditions), Umar bin Khaththab (537 traditions) Abu Bakr Ashiddiq (132 traditions) (Fahrudin, 2019).

Based on this, according to Sheikh Yusuf al- Qaradhawi, the Hadith narrated by Abu Hurairah above (read: about the greeting) was uttered by the Prophet in the context of war. The indication is in the Hadith narrated by Imam Bukhari in the Book of Adab al-Mufrad that the Prophet was about to go to war by riding his vehicle to a Jewish settlement and said not to start greeting them (Hosen, 2018).

Based on this, the understanding of the Hadith when studied with a sociological approach in the form of dissociative interaction in the form of competition, contradiction and opposition and conflict, the attitude of the Prophet Muhammad in a situation like this is very realistic because the prohibition is spoken in war conditions. It is not even possible in such a situation when going to war to say greetings to the enemy. Likewise, the Prophet ordered to push to the side of the road with the aim of showing them that Islam is strong and authoritative so that they are afraid to fight.

If the traditions on inter-religious communication through answering and greeting are understood from a legal perspective then in this case the researcher needs to present the opinion of Imam al'allamah Abu Hasan Al-Mawardi, who has brilliantly and humanistically detailed the meaning of the following traditions on greeting non-Muslims:

When the greeting occurs between a Muslim and a non-Muslim, it is of two kinds:

1. If the one who precedes the greeting is a non-Muslim, then answering his greeting is also a must, but the way of answering the greeting is different:
  - a. He should answer with *wa 'alaika assalaam* and should not add the words *wa rohmatullaahi wa barokaatuh*.
  - b. It is sufficient to answer with *wa 'alaik*. This is in order to anticipate if non-Muslims start the greeting with negative intentions (harassing, making fun of or even praying for evil such as the Hadith which explains that if they say *assaammu 'alaikum* then answer "*alaik* or "*alaika assaam* (*Assaam* = death).
2. If a Muslim initiates the greeting of peace to a non-Muslim, there are two opinions as to its permissibility:
  - a. It is permissible to begin the greeting to them because the greeting is a form of courtesy and sunnah to which Muslims should be more entitled than others, except that the way to begin the greeting is with the phrase *'assalaamu 'alaika'* with *lafadzun mufrad* (singular), and it is not allowed to use the plural *lafadz ('alaikum)* like greetings to fellow Muslims. This is to distinguish between greetings with fellow Muslims and with non-Muslims.
  - b. It is not permissible to initiate the greeting of non-Muslims until they initiate the greeting first, as in the Hadīth: 'Do not initiate the greeting of the Jews, but when they initiate the greeting, answer *wa'alaikum*'.

However, if the above traditions are understood with a sociological approach then it can be understood that answering the greetings of non-Muslims is something that can be in a social interaction like other greetings. It seems that answering the greeting in these two traditions is not related to the law of halal or haram or whether it is permissible or not, but merely answering the greeting in a social interaction in communication.

These two traditions are in line with the peace-loving and merciful character of Islam. In accordance with the verse of the Qur'an which states; 'The servants of the Merciful Lord are those who walk the earth humbly, and when fools address them (with insulting words), they say, "Salam" (a kind and peaceful word) (Departemen Agama RI, 1991). Likewise in QS, Annisa 86; 'When you are honoured with a greeting, then return the honour with something better than it, or return the honour (with something similar). "Verily, Allah accounts for all things" (Departemen Agama RI, 1991).

In addition, to broaden the view of Islam as a religion of mercy, the author also feels the need to highlight the Prophet's Hadith, which has an extraordinary humanitarian mission, as narrated by Imam Bukhari, which means: 'Abdullah ibn 'Amru reported: A man asked the Prophet (peace be upon him): "Which is the best Islam?" The Prophet (peace be upon him) replied: 'You give food and greet people you know and those you don't know' (Prihasmoro, 2007).

This Hadith has tremendous implications for the acceleration of civilisation. In fact, the image and identity of Islam is very concerned about the welfare of the people as an indication of the goodness of one's religion, in this case Islam (Al-Turabi, 2003). Establishing inter-religious communication by saying greetings as part of social interaction is prohibited just because of different religions, so such a view is wrong. Islam, which is synonymous with a religion that is fond of fighting for humanity, justice and peace, even strongly recommends greeting each other as part of the evidence of brotherhood among humans that must always be nurtured and maintained from time to time (Azra, 2001).

In addition to the texts of the Qur'anic verses that indicate greetings, there are also some Hadith texts that indicate greetings to non-Muslims as narrated by Imam Bukhari which means: 'Amru ibn Khalid reported: Al Laits reported: Yazid reported: Abu Al Khair reported: "Abdullah ibn 'Amru reported: A man asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him): 'Which is the best Islam?' The Prophet (peace and blessings of Allaah be upon him) replied: 'You give food, greet those you know and those you do not know.

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the explanation above, it can be concluded that inter-religious communication through the interaction of the Prophet PBUH, with non-Muslims in his time, especially in his life in the city of Medina when viewed from a sociological approach, especially in the theory of social interaction both associative and dissociative, is not related to the law of halal and haram or whether or not it is permissible to give greetings with certainty, but depending on the situation and conditions. The understanding of the traditions of answering and greeting non-Muslims was carried out by the Prophet based on the situation and conditions when and where he was.

When the Prophet had just moved from the city of Mecca to the city of Medina where at that time he tried to establish cooperation with all the residents of Medina including non-Muslims. Therefore, including in answering and greeting non-Muslims he tried to do his best by establishing communication through social interaction in the form of associative (cooperation, accommodation and assimilation). Then further along with the development of time where non-Muslims, especially Jews, are increasingly showing bad signs until several wars occur, the Prophet Muhammad saw. Also of course need to take a stand to defend and defend themselves including in establishing communication with them. This is evidenced by the prohibition of giving greetings to them and even ordered to push them to the side of the road. This kind of attitude in the sociological view is known as social interaction in the form of dissociative (competition, contravention and opposition / dispute).

The results and conclusions of this study still have limitations because they only limit the understanding of hadith with a sociological approach. Future studies can be conducted with multiple approaches so as to produce a more universal conclusion.

The practical and important implication of this research is that it is expected to contribute ideas for the Indonesian people in general that Islam is a peaceful religion and is very polite in communicating through interactions with fellow human beings, so that it can be an example for the entire Indonesian nation which is pluralistic in religion to tolerate each other in religion.

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