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Mu'akhat (Brotherhood) in the era of Prophethood and its effects in the light of the Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ)

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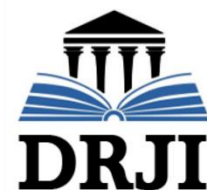
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Mu'akhat (Brotherhood) in the era of Prophethood and its effects in the light of the Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ)

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ABSTRACT

The best practical example of Islamic brotherhood and fraternity is Mu'akhat Madinah. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) established an inter-relationship between the emigrants from Makkah who came to Madinah and the residents of Madinah (انصار). This covenant not only established brotherhood between the emigrants and the Ansar and deepened their mutual relations, Rather, other aspects were also highlighted in its background. By taking a close look at Mu'akhat, one can estimate the deep insight and foresight of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). This Mu'akhat was also established in Makkah between the people of Makkah and the people of other regions who had lost everything after accepting Islam. This covenant was also a sign of improving and stabilizing the economic conditions of the Companions (رضى الله عنهم) and ending the educational differences between the Muhajirin and the Ansar. In that time Muslims were facing economic, training and educational problems. In relation to the solution of which, the process of Mu'akhat was important. By studying the biography of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), one learns three important principles of life. First is to plan first for each task, second is to set priorities by keeping this plan in front and third is to take practical steps organized by your plan and do your best. When the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) migrated to Madinah, he was facing many problems at that time. To defend against internal and external enemies, to end the differences in culture, ritual and lifestyle of the Muhajirin and the Ansar, to create love and brotherhood among the Arabs by ending the mutual family enmities and to secure the economic stability of His fellows. There were other problems like etc. Taking proper planning and practical steps in such situations was a characteristic of Prophethood. In this article, the plan to establish Mu'akhat and its effects are described in the light of Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ).

Key Words: Brotherhood, Covenant, Muwakhat, Muhajirin, Ansar, Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ).

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Mu'akhat (Brotherhood) in the era of Prophethood and its effects in the light of the Sirat-un-Nabi (ﷺ)

The Islamic paradigm posits a singular origin for humanity, tracing back to Hazrat Adam (عليه السلام), thereby establishing an inherent egalitarianism among all individuals. This principle is reinforced by the Quranic emphasis on taqwa (piety) as the paramount criterion for human excellence, underscoring a meritocratic ethos that transcends temporal and spatial boundaries. In terms of rights and responsibilities, Islam promulgates an egalitarian framework, wherein Allah initiates the prophetic tradition to guide humanity toward its essence and optimal existence. The culmination of this prophetic chain is embodied in Islam, presenting a comprehensive and ideal paradigm for human life, prioritizing humanity as the primary locus of divine pleasure and the key to success in both the mundane and eschatological realms. The exemplary conduct of the Khair al-Quron exemplifies Islamic teachings, illustrating the prophetic model of Mu'akhat, which fostered a profound sense of solidarity and fraternity among Muslims. This paradigmatic expression of Islamic brotherhood demonstrates the Prophet's (ﷺ) sagacity, foresight, and intellectual acuity, underscoring the prophetic wisdom and discernment that underpin Islamic teachings. Through a critical examination of Mu'akhat and its consequences, this study reveals the nuanced dynamics of Islamic brotherhood, highlighting the intricate relationships between faith, community, and the human condition, thereby contributing to a deeper understanding of Islamic thought and praxis. During the nascent stages of Islam in Makkah, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) implemented a paradigmatic process of reconciliation among Muslims, which would later become a hallmark of Islamic praxis. As Islam began to gain traction, individuals from diverse backgrounds, including Persia and Abyssinia, embraced the faith, despite facing vehement opposition from their kin and the ruling elite. In this formative period, a mere handful of individuals from prominent Makkan tribes and families accepted Islam, comprising a mix of affluent and indigent, powerful and weaker tribal affiliations. The nascent Muslim community faced intense persecution, ostracism, and boycotts from their own families and tribes, necessitating reliance on tribal patronage for survival. The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) innovative response to this predicament was the action of Mu'akhat, a process of reconciliatory bonding among Muslims. This prophetic initiative aimed to foster a sense of solidarity, comfort, and shared purpose among the beleaguered Muslim community, who were beset on all sides by threats, insecurity, and socio-economic hardships. Through Mu'akhat, the Prophet created a support network, where Muslims could find solace, share their tribulations, and collectively bolster their faith. This pioneering effort not only mitigated the sense of isolation and vulnerability but also empowered the fledgling Muslim community to confront the formidable challenges posed by their environment. The Prophet's (ﷺ) implementation of Mu'akhat demonstrates his profound understanding of human psychology, community building, and conflict resolution, underscoring the significance of empathy, compassion, and unity in the face of adversity. This prophetic model has since become a cornerstone of Islamic communal praxis, inspiring generations of Muslims to cultivate solidarity and support in times of need.

The collective system of Islam is predicated on the principle of brotherhood, which unifies Muslims worldwide into a singular, cohesive entity. This fraternal bond transcends superficial distinctions based on race, ethnicity, nationality, and geographical location, promoting a harmonious and egalitarian community. The Islamic concept of brotherhood unequivocally rejects discriminatory tendencies and prejudices rooted in caste, color,

language, and national differences, instead fostering a culture of compassion, kindness, love, self-sacrifice, cooperation, respect, and forgiveness. This faith-based force cultivates positive sentiments and actions, thereby establishing a robust foundation for Muslim solidarity and collective prosperity. By emphasizing the inherent equality and shared humanity of all Muslims, the Islamic principle of brotherhood serves as a powerful antidote to divisive tendencies, promoting a unified and inclusive global Muslim community.

Literary meaning of Ukhuwat

The concept of brotherhood in Islam, denoted by the term "al-ukh," (الاخ) derived from "الاخية والآخية" originates from the Arabic word for a rope binding animals together.¹

This metaphor extends to describe relationships between individuals sharing commonalities such as family, tribe, nationality, religion, or love.²

The Quran employs "al-ukh" in various contexts, including: **Tribal affiliation**³, **National and international solidarity**⁴, **Emotional connections and compassion**⁵, **Shared characteristics and similarities**^{6, 7}, **Same color, same thought**⁸ and **same nation**⁹.

The Quran contrasts brotherhood with enmity, emphasizing unity and harmony among believers

"اذْكُرُوا نِعْمَتَ اللَّهِ عَلَيْكُمْ إِذْ كُنْتُمْ أَعْدَاءً فَأَلَّفَ بَيْنَ قُلُوبِكُمْ فَأَصْبَحْتُمْ بِنِعْمَتِهِ
إِخْوَانًا."

"And remember the favor of Allah upon you - when you were enemies and He brought your hearts together and you became, by His favor, brothers."

"الْمُؤْمِنُ لِلْمُؤْمِنِ كَالْأُنْيَانِ يَشُدُّ بَعْضُهُ بَعْضًا. وَشَبَكَ بَيْنَ أَصَابِعِهِ"

"A believer to another believer is like a building whose different parts enforce each other. The Prophet then clasped his hands with the fingers interlaced (while saying that.)"

Religious and national solidarity

"إِنَّمَا الْمُؤْمِنُونَ إِخْوَةٌ فَأَصْلَحُوا بَيْنَ أَخَوِيكُمْ وَاتَّقُوا اللَّهَ لَعَلَّكُمْ تُرْحَمُونَ"

"The believers are but brothers, so make settlement between your brothers. And fear Allah that you may receive mercy."

The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) reinforced this unity, encouraging Muslims to consider each other as guardians, friends, partners, and well-wishers. He likened believers to a single body, highlighting their collective bond.¹³

Through these teachings, Islam establishes a comprehensive framework for brotherhood, fostering a sense of belonging and cooperation among Muslims worldwide. The Islamic concept of brotherhood is a paradigmatic example of unity and solidarity among believers, transcending racial and ethnic boundaries. This inclusive approach recognizes the inherent value and dignity of all individuals, regardless of race or nationality, and promotes a relationship built on immense love and mutual respect. In contrast, Western societies have historically perpetuated racial supremacy, evident in the exclusion of people of color from positions of power and the perpetuation of discriminatory practices. The dominance of white

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people in institutions and governance has resulted in the marginalization of people of color, undermining the principles of equality and justice.

The early adoption of Islam often entailed a profound sense of disconnection and isolation, as individuals were severed from their existing social networks, including nation, tribe, and community. This dissociation was frequently accompanied by rejection, harassment, and threats from erstwhile loved ones, leaving the newly converted Muslims in a state of vulnerability and helplessness. The emotional and psychological toll of this experience cannot be overstated, as these individuals were forced to navigate a complex web of social ostracism and personal upheaval. In this context, the institution of Mu'akhat played a pivotal role in mitigating the negative consequences of social ostracism and promoting emotional and psychological well-being. By establishing a sense of community and brotherhood, Mu'akhat helped to bridge the gap created by the dissociation from previous social networks, providing a sense of belonging and connection among the newly converted Muslims. The nine Muslims, in particular, found solace in this fraternal bond, which alleviated their feelings of loneliness and disconnection, and rekindled hope and optimism for the future. Through Mu'akhat, these individuals were able to transcend their experiences of isolation and find a sense of purpose and meaning within their newfound faith. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) envisioned a modern society exemplifying welfare and resilience in the face of adversity, while promoting the call to Allah and the support of God's religion. However, the formation of this society was fraught with challenges, including social, tribal, family, personal, emotional, and ideological differences between the emigrants and Ansar. Additionally, economic and psychological conditions, internal dangers, and external threats from Jews and polytheists posed significant obstacles.

To address these challenges, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) recognized the need for a strong bond among society members, founded on faith and characterized by justice, order, love, and brotherhood. The process of Mu'akhat, or intercession, was instrumental in achieving this goal. Through meticulous planning and careful consideration, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) established a system of mutual relations and assistance, particularly by pairing individuals with similar characteristics. This approach ensured the development and stability of a harmonious society, free from psychological and historical differences that could lead to conflict. The Mu'akhat process played a crucial role in fostering a sense of community and brotherhood, enabling society members to navigate their differences and work towards a common goal. By promoting strong mutual relations and assistance, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) created a robust foundation for the new society, equipped to withstand internal and external challenges while upholding the principles of justice, order, and love. The establishment of a collective ethos is predicated on two fundamental principles. Firstly, the concept of "right" (haq) serves as the foundational element in human relations, governing interactions and transactions across various spheres of life, superseding personal, tribal, and group interests. This emphasis on "right" ensures relationships are established on a foundation of truth, justice, and mutual sympathy, providing a guarantee for the survival and continuation of truth. Conversely, imposing truth through coercion precipitates a precarious existence, potentially leading to animosity, oppression, and rebellion.

The second principle is mutual cooperation, which fosters a sense of responsibility, yielding immediate practical effects. This cooperative ethos is exemplified in the Holy Qur'an, where reconciliation between believers is described as a fundamental aspect of faith brotherhood. When brotherhood is characterized by goodwill, its protective and restraining influence becomes enduring. The historic Battle of Badr

وَأِنْ يُرِيدُوا أَنْ يَخْدَعُوكَ فَإِنَّ حَسْبَكَ اللَّهُ هُوَ الَّذِي آتَاكَ بِنَصْرِهِ وَبِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ¹³

"But if they intend to deceive you then sufficient for you is Allah . It is He who supported you with His help and with the believers."

exemplifies the valuable outcomes of this cooperative ethos in the context of Jihad. Through these principles, a robust foundation for collective action and mutual support is established, ensuring the perpetuation of truth and the defense of faith.

Mu'akhat in Makkah

The Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) initiated a series of meetings in Makkah,¹⁵ fostering mutual sympathy and cooperation among his Companions. These meetings, known as Mu'akhat, aimed to establish fraternal bonds between individuals from diverse backgrounds, strengthening the nascent Muslim community.

The pairs involved in these meetings were:

1. Hamza bin Abdul Muttalib and Zayd bin Haritha
2. Abu Bakr and Umar Ibn Al-Khattab
3. Uthman and Abdur-Rahman bin Auf
4. Zubair bin Awam and Abdullah bin Masoud
5. Ubaidah bin al-Harith and Bilal bin Rabah
6. Mus'ab bin Umayr and Sa'd bin Abi Waqqas
7. Abu Ubaidah bin Al-Jarrah and the slave of Salim Abi Hudhayfah
8. Saeed Bin Zayd and Talha Bin Ubaidullah¹⁶

Hazrat Ali (رضي الله عنه), feeling left out, inquired about his own pairing. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) responded by declaring, "I am your brother,"¹⁷ thus establishing a unique fraternal bond with Ali (رضي الله عنه).

This incident highlights the Prophet's (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) emphasis on community building and mutual support. By establishing these fraternal relationships, he fostered a sense of unity and cooperation among his Companions, laying the foundation for the Muslim community's future success.

The Mu'akhat meetings demonstrate the importance of:

1. Community building and social cohesion
2. Mutual sympathy and cooperation
3. Fraternal bonds and brotherhood
4. Diversity and inclusivity within the Muslim community

These principles, exemplified in the Mu'akhat meetings, continue to inspire and guide Muslim communities worldwide.

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In the 12th year of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) mission, a significant event marked the beginning of Islam's spread in Madinah. Twelve individuals from the Aos and Khizrij tribes pledged allegiance at the hands of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), signaling their acceptance of Islam. This initial group of converts was followed by the dispatch of Hazrat Musab bin Umayr and Hazrat Abdullah bin Umm-e - Maktoum to Madinah, tasked with instructing the newly converted Muslims and disseminating Islamic teachings. The efforts of these emissaries yielded remarkable results, as a substantial number of individuals from the Aos and Khizrij tribes embraced Islam. The following year, in the 13th year of the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) mission, a delegation of seventy-five Ansar from Madinah, led by Hazrat Musab bin Umayr, traveled to Makkah to perform the Hajj pilgrimage. This group, comprising seventy-three men and two women, pledged allegiance to the Prophet (ﷺ) in the same location as the previous year, an event known as the Pledge of Uqbah. A subset of this group requested permission to pay homage to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), seeking to kiss his feet and attend his court. This gesture underscored the deep reverence and devotion of the Ansar towards the Prophet (ﷺ), as well as their commitment to the Islamic faith. This pivotal event marked a significant milestone in the propagation of Islam in Madinah, setting the stage for the eventual migration of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions to the city, and the establishment of the first Islamic community. During the gathering, Hazrat Abbas, the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) uncle, who had yet to embrace Islam but acknowledged the Prophet's truthfulness and held him in high esteem, addressed the congregation. He emphasized the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) noble lineage and the significance of their pledge, cautioning them to carefully consider their commitment to protect the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) with their lives.¹⁸ The Ansar of Madinah assured Hazrat Abbas that they had understood his words and were willing to make a solemn promise to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). They requested that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) specify the terms of their pledge, to which he responded by inviting them to Islam and reciting the Quran. He asked for their allegiance, seeking their protection and support, and their commitment to obey him in all circumstances. The Ansar inquired about the rewards for their loyalty, to which the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) replied that they would be granted Jannah, the abode of eternal blessings. Satisfied with this response, the Ansar agreed to pledge their allegiance. However, Hazrat Abu Al-Haytham bin Al-Tihyan raised a concern regarding their pre-existing relations with the Jewish community, seeking assurance that their alliance with the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) would not leave them vulnerable in the event of his departure.¹⁹ The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) alleviated their concerns, stating that their bond was unbreakable, and that he would stand by them in times of peace and war. This assurance delighted the Ansar, who then pledged their allegiance, vowing to sacrifice their lives and wealth in support of the Prophet, and to remain steadfast in their obedience to him. This pivotal event marked the establishment of a sacred covenant between the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the Ansar, cementing their relationship and setting the stage for the eventual migration of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his companions to Madinah. The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) said: "I pledge allegiance to you that you will protect me with all that you protect your women and your children."²⁰

Nuqaba

After pledging allegiance, the Messenger of Allah (ﷺ) said that Hazrat Musa (عليه السلام) had 12 Nuqabas. In the same way, I also choose 12 Naqeeb from among you people by

the command of Allah Almighty. Then he selected 12 persons and said that you are the guardians and guardians of your people like the disciples were the guardians of Jesus (عليه السلام).

These are the names of these nobles:

Asad bin Zurarah, Abdullah bin Rawaha, Saad bin Ar-Rabi, Rafi'h bin Malik, Abu Jabir Abdullah bin Amar, Bara' bin Maarur, Sa'd bin Ubada, Munzir bin Amar, Ubada bin Samit, usayd bin Hudhair, Saad bin Khaytamah, Rufaah bin Abdul Munzir (May Allah be pleased with them).²¹

Following the initial Pledge of Allegiance and the subsequent Pledge of Uqba, Prophet Muhammad's (ﷺ) strategic efforts fostered a conducive environment in Madinah, facilitating the widespread adoption of Islam among the Aos and Khizrij tribes. This was largely attributed to the tireless efforts of Hazrat Musab bin Umayr and the Nuqabas appointed by the Prophet (ﷺ), who effectively disseminated Islamic teachings and values. As the Muslim community in Madinah grew, the Prophet (ﷺ) issued a directive to the Muslims residing in Makkah, instructing them to migrate to Madinah. In response, Muslims from Makkah began to relocate to Madinah, undertaking the journey individually and in groups, while evading detection by the Makkah infidels. Subsequently, Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) and Hazrat Abu Bakr Siddiq migrated from Makkah to Madinah, marking a significant milestone in Islamic history. This event, known as the Hijrah, not only signaled the transfer of the Islamic capital but also underscored the Prophet's (ﷺ) strategic vision and leadership in establishing a stronghold for the nascent Muslim community. The successful migration and consolidation of Muslims in Madinah paved the way for the establishment of the first Islamic state, with the Prophet (ﷺ) as its leader. This marked the beginning of a new era in Islamic history, characterized by the implementation of Islamic principles, values, and governance. Upon their arrival in Madinah, many of the emigrants, who had previously enjoyed a comfortable economic status in Makkah, found themselves in a state of destitution due to their clandestine departure. This sudden influx of impoverished migrants placed a significant burden on the economy of the Ansar in Madinah, leading to emerging economic difficulties and exacerbating political and social tensions. As a result, a sense of alienation began to manifest among the emigrant community, who were eager to engage in productive labor and contribute to their new society. Their strong work ethic and aversion to dependency on others for sustenance are notable, as they sought to maintain their dignity and self-sufficiency despite their challenging circumstances. The clandestine departure of emigrants from Makkah, despite their previous affluence, resulted in their arrival in Madinah in a state of economic destitution, thereby placing a significant strain on the Ansar's economy and precipitating economic difficulties, political tensions, and social confusions. This led to a sense of alienation among the emigrants, who, possessing a strong work ethic, preferred to engage in manual labor rather than rely on gratuitous support, thus underscoring their aversion to dependency and desire for self-sufficiency. This complex situation highlights the challenges of integrating a large influx of migrants into a new community, necessitating innovative solutions to ensure the well-being and cohesion of both the emigrant and Ansar communities in Madinah.

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The Migration Order: A Paradigm of Unity and Resilience

The migration of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and his Companions from Makkah to Madinah marked a pivotal moment in Islamic history. This caravan of emigrants comprised individuals from diverse socio-economic backgrounds, including the poor and the wealthy, who had been forced to abandon their properties and businesses in Makkah. Upon arrival in Yathrab (later known as Madinah), the Prophet (ﷺ) encountered a region plagued by tribal conflicts and economic disparities. The Arab tribes of Aos and Khizrij were embroiled in internecine warfare, while the Jewish tribes of Banu Nazir, Banu Quraiza, and Banu Qainqa dominated the markets, perpetuating a soulless economic structure. In response to these challenges, the Prophet (ﷺ) prioritized the construction of a mosque, ensuring a sacred space for Muslims to perform their prayers without hindrance. This act of prophetic wisdom fostered a sense of community and unity among the believers. The resettlement of Makkah refugees presented a significant challenge. Rather than establishing a separate refugee colony, the Prophet (ﷺ) employed his humanitarian vision to integrate the refugees into the existing community. This decision exemplified the Islamic values of compassion, solidarity, and brotherhood. Through his prophetic wisdom, the Prophet (ﷺ) transformed the fragmented society of Yathrab into a unified and resilient community, laying the foundation for a thriving Islamic civilization. This paradigm of unity and resilience continues to inspire and guide Muslims to this day. The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) innovative establishment of the Mu'akhat contract, supplanting the traditional mawalat system, exemplifies his vision for a harmonious and inclusive society. By pairing Muhajirun (emigrants) with Ansar (helpers) of Madinah as brothers, he fostered a sense of unity and solidarity, recognizing natural compatibility and transcending tribal affiliations. The Ansar enthusiastically participated in this initiative, generously offering their homes and properties to their Muhajir brothers, exemplifying the Islamic principle of takaful (mutual support).

Subsequent to the Hijrah, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) implemented a strategic initiative to address the socio-economic challenges faced by the Muhajirun (emigrants from Makkah) in Madinah.²² Five months after their arrival, he established Mu'akhat Madinah, a fraternal bonding program between the Muhajirun and Ansar (helpers from Madinah) Companions, aimed at fostering a sense of community and shared responsibility. The inaugural Mu'akhat gathering took place in the residence of Hazrat Anas bin Malik, where the Prophet facilitated the establishment of brotherhood (Mu'akhat) between the emigrants and Ansar Companions present.²³ This marked the beginning of Mu'akhat Madinah, a program that would subsequently pair each newly arrived Muhajir with an Ansari Sahabi, thereby promoting social cohesion and mutual support. Historical accounts suggest that the Prophet (ﷺ) established fraternal bonds between approximately forty-five to fifty Muhajirun and an equal number of Ansar Companions, although some sources indicate a higher number. This discrepancy may be attributed to the fact that some accounts include later migrants who continued to arrive in Madinah, whereas others only reference the initial group present at the inaugural Mu'akhat gathering.

The Mu'akhat Madinah initiative exemplifies the Prophet's visionary leadership and commitment to fostering a unified and resilient Muslim community in Madinah, demonstrating his profound understanding of social dynamics and community building. In his

seminal work, Ansab-ul-Ashraf, the historian provides a comprehensive list of twenty-two Muhajirin and Ansar Companions who participated in the Mu'akhat program.²⁴ This account is corroborated by various historians and Companions who attest that virtually all Companions, regardless of their affiliation with the Ansar or Muhajirun, were involved in this practice. A critical examination of scholarly opinions suggests that the most plausible view is that all Muhajir Companions present at the time were incorporated into the Mu'akhat process. This inclusivity was essential to achieving the program's objectives, which aimed to foster a sense of community and shared identity among the early Muslim believers.

Ibn Habib's work documents the names of fifty-six Ansar and fifty-six Muhajirin who participated in Mu'akhat, while Ibn Sayyedin-Nas lists forty-five Companions from each group²⁵ and Ibn Hisham Sixteen.²⁶ Although some discrepancies exist in the names mentioned by historians and Companions, a comprehensive compilation of these accounts yields a total of sixty-five Companions, or one hundred and thirty individuals, who were part of the Mu'akhat Madinah program. The list of Companions included in Mu'akhat Madinah is a testament to the Prophet's vision of creating a unified and harmonious community, where social bonds and mutual support were paramount. This scholarly reconstruction of the Mu'akhat program provides valuable insights into the social dynamics of early Islam and the Prophet's leadership in fostering a sense of belonging among his Companions.

The Mu'akhat Pairings between Muhajirun and Ansar Companions

The following list documents the fraternal pairings established by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) between the Muhajirun and Ansar Companions, as recorded by various historical sources. These pairings, totaling thirty-two in number, exemplify the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) initiative to foster a sense of brotherhood and solidarity between the Muhajirun and Ansar Companions. By establishing these fraternal bonds, the Holy Prophet aimed to promote social cohesion and mutual support within the early Muslim community. It is noteworthy that these pairings were not limited to individuals of similar social status or background, but rather reflected a deliberate effort to bring together Companions from diverse walks of life. This inclusivity was a hallmark of the Prophet's leadership and a testament to his vision of creating a unified and harmonious community. May Allah be pleased with these noble Companions, who embodied the values of faith, loyalty, and brotherhood that are central to the Islamic tradition. An examination of the Prophet's (ﷺ) exemplary leadership and foresight reveals a meticulous approach to addressing collective problems faced by the Muslim community. His methodology can be distilled into three key principles: regular planning, prioritization, and persistent practical effort. During the early days of Islam, the Muslim community faced numerous challenges, including destitution, disorganization, and the need for settlement. In response, the Prophet implemented the process of Mu'akhat, or intercession, to foster unity, maintain mutual solidarity, and address the problem of settlement. This initiative was particularly crucial in Yathrab (Madinah), where civil wars had previously plagued the region. Prior to the Prophet's (ﷺ) migration to Madinah, Yathrab was characterized by tribal fragmentation, with various villages and tribes frequently engaging in conflict over trivial matters. Abdullah bin Ubay bin Salul, a prominent figure, had maintained neutrality during these conflicts, seeking to position himself as a potential leader who could bring peace and stability to the region. However, the arrival of the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the subsequent

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migration of Muslims to Madinah altered the political landscape. Inspired by Islamic ideals of brotherhood, some Yathrabi tribesmen sought out the Prophet, embracing Islam and offering to provide refuge in Yathrab. This development, coupled with divine guidance, prompted the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to migrate to Madinah, setting the stage for the establishment of a unified Muslim community. Through his wise leadership and the implementation of Mu'akhat, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) effectively addressed the collective problems faced by the Muslim community, laying the foundation for a harmonious and thriving society in Madinah. Upon the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) arrival in Medina, Ibn Ubey Salul's long-held ambition to become the leader of Yathrab was thwarted. He attributed this failure to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) and the Muslim community, fostering a deep-seated resentment towards them. Although he dared not openly oppose the Holy Prophet (ﷺ), he secretly sought opportunities to undermine the Muslims. Ibn Ubey Salul exploited the cultural differences between the Makkans and the Madinans to further his agenda. The Makkans, descendants of Adnan, were accustomed to a nomadic lifestyle, with a strong affinity for the desert and its values. Their culture was shaped by the harsh desert environment, with a focus on trade and hunting. In contrast, the Madinans had a more sedentary lifestyle, with a distinct cultural identity. Ibn Ubey Salul sought to capitalize on these differences, inciting the Medinan Muslims against the Makkans who had migrated to Medina. However, his efforts were consistently thwarted by the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) wise leadership and the strong bonds of brotherhood among the Muslims. The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) teachings had brought about a revolutionary transformation, restoring human dignity and promoting a sense of equality among all believers. The pre-Islamic era had been marked by ignorance, oppression, and social stratification, but Islam's message of unity and compassion had created a new social order, where masters and slaves stood together as equals. Through his actions, Ibn Ubey Salul exemplified the challenges faced by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) in uniting the diverse communities of Madinah. Nevertheless, the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) unwavering commitment to his vision ultimately prevailed, laying the foundation for a harmonious and inclusive society.

In 4 Hijri, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) foiled a plot by the Banu Nazir tribe to assassinate Him, and subsequently, their land came under Islamic control without resistance. Instead of distributing the land among the Mujahideen, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) sought the counsel of the Ansar, considering whether to allocate it to both Ansar and Muhajireen or exclusively to the Muhajireen, allowing them to compensate the Ansar for their hospitality. The chiefs of the Aos and Khizrij tribes, Sa'd bin Mu'adh and Sa'd bin Ubada, advised the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to distribute the land among the Muhajireen. In response, the Prophet (ﷺ) prayed for divine mercy upon the Ansar and their descendants, ultimately allocating a portion of the land to the Muhajireen, while gifting a small portion to two needy Ansar, Hazrat Abu Dujana and Sahl bin Hanif. The remaining land was retained by the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) to support the widows of deceased Muslims. Later, when Bahrain became part of the Islamic Empire, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) intended to allocate a share to the Ansar but was met with their selfless request to instead distribute it among the Muhajireen.²⁷ This exemplifies the Ansar's unwavering commitment to unity, selflessness, and brotherhood, despite being excluded from political power. Although certain aspects of this event have been abrogated by later Islamic rulings, the underlying principles of social and economic

integration, mutual unity, compassion, and equality remain essential components of Islamic teachings, offering valuable lessons for fostering a harmonious and cohesive community.

The Mu'akhat: A Fraternal Bonding System in Medina

In the nascent Islamic community of Medina, the enlightened leadership, cognizant of the Ansar's generosity in hosting refugees beyond their capacity, sought to empower the emigrants to become self-sufficient, thereby restoring their self-respect and alleviating the burden on the Ansar. The economic disparities between the agrarian Ansar and the mercantile emigrants, coupled with the lack of employment opportunities and familial ties, necessitated an innovative solution. Upon completing the Prophet's Mosque, the Prophet (ﷺ) convened the Ansar at Hazrat Anas bin Malik's residence, where they offered to divide their oasis and gardens equally with the emigrants. However, the Prophet (ﷺ) proposed an alternative solution, establishing a fraternal bonding system between the emigrants and Ansar. This innovative approach, known as the Mu'akhat-e- Muhammadi, paired Muslims from both groups, proclaiming them brothers, and fostering a sense of unity and solidarity. Through this fraternal bonding system, the Prophet (ﷺ) addressed the socio-economic challenges faced by the emigrants, restored their self-respect, and integrated them into the Medina community. This process continued, ensuring that each migrant to Medina was paired with an Ansar, promoting a sense of belonging and shared identity.

The Self-Sacrificing Spirit of the Ansar: A Paradigm of Islamic Brotherhood

The exemplary self-sacrificing spirit of the Ansar, demonstrated through their unwavering support for the Muhajireen, serves as a testament to the transformative power of Islamic brotherhood. When the Prophet (ﷺ) established a fraternal bond between the Ansar and Muhajireen, it transcended mere camaraderie, becoming a profound and enduring relationship. The Ansar's unreserved generosity and altruism towards their Muhajir brothers, prioritizing their needs above their own, exemplified the Islamic ideals of compassion and solidarity. They willingly shared their movable and immovable properties, businesses, and resources, ensuring the Muhajireen's well-being and integration into the Medina community. The Ansar's magnanimity was so pronounced that they expressed concern to the Prophet (ﷺ) that their Muhajir brothers might receive all the rewards and blessings, leaving none for themselves. The Prophet's response, emphasizing the importance of continued praise and supplication for their brothers, underscored the reciprocal nature of this fraternal bond. This remarkable display of selflessness and brotherhood, as exhibited by the Ansar, serves as a paradigm for Islamic communal relationships, highlighting the importance of empathy, generosity, and mutual support in fostering a harmonious and thriving community.

The migration of the Muhajireen from Makkah to Madinah presented a significant socio-economic challenge, as most arrived devoid of material possessions, having relinquished their wealth and belongings. Despite their lack of agricultural expertise, the Ansar, who were predominantly farmers, selflessly provided the Muhajireen with essential resources, including land and gardens, to facilitate their economic integration, exemplifying the Islamic principle of takaful (mutual support). Through innovative arrangements, such as sharing half of the produce in exchange for labor, and temporary land donations, the Ansar ensured the Muhajireen's economic survival and fostered a sense of community and

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cooperation, demonstrating a paradigmatic example of Islamic brotherhood, solidarity, and economic cooperation, which offers valuable insights into the importance of mutual support and generosity in building a harmonious and prosperous society. The Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) restitution of the trees and gardens to the Ansar, following the conquest of Banu Quraizah and Banu Nazir, exemplifies his commitment to justice and fairness. This act underscores the Ansar's extraordinary generosity, as they had willingly donated their properties to the Holy Prophet (ﷺ). The Ansar's selflessness is further highlighted by their request to divide their gardens between themselves and the emigrants, demonstrating their unwavering dedication to the well-being of their brothers in faith.²⁸

"It never happened that Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) was asked anything for the sake of Islam and he did not give that. There came to him a person and he gave him a large flock (of sheep and goats) and he went back to his people and said: My people, embrace Islam, for Muhammad gives so much charity as if he has no fear of want."²⁹

Is there any form other than this?" emphasizes the Ansar's unparalleled generosity. The narrative of the Ansari man who hosted a hungry guest, despite having only food for his children, illustrates the extraordinary lengths to which the Ansar went to ensure the comfort and well-being of others, even at the expense of their own needs.³⁰ This exemplary behavior is a testament to the Ansar's embodiment of Islamic values, including hospitality, generosity, and selflessness.

The establishment of the Mu'akhat by the Prophet (ﷺ) demonstrates his visionary leadership and commitment to addressing the economic challenges faced by the emigrants, while preventing them from feeling burdensome to their Ansari brothers. Allah Almighty's praise for the Ansar, as stated in the Quran (Surah Al-Hashr, Verse 9), serves as a testament to their remarkable character and selflessness, which continues to inspire and guide the Muslim community. Through their exemplary behavior, the Ansar established a paradigmatic model of Islamic hospitality, generosity, and brotherhood, demonstrating the profound impact of selflessness and compassion on building a harmonious and prosperous society. The selflessness of the Ansar reached an extraordinary extent, as they requested the Prophet Muhammad (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to take them to their homes if he so desired. However, the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) declined their offer, instead establishing a system where the emigrants would work in the Ansar's gardens and share the produce.

When the Ansar asked the Prophet (peace and blessings of Allah be upon him) to divide their gardens between themselves and the emigrants, he responded, "No, they will work in your gardens and share the produce with you." The Ansar agreed, saying, "As you wish, your decree is upon our heads and eyes." The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) emphasized the emigrants' sacrifices, stating, "Your migrant brothers have left their property and children and come to you." The Ansar replied, "We give them a share from our property." The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) asked, "Is there any form other than this?" highlighting the Ansar's unparalleled generosity.

Imam Bukhari narrates that the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) called the Ansar to give them the land of Bahrain, but they refused, saying, "Except that you share the same amount of land

with our emigrant brothers." Allah Almighty praised the Ansar, saying, "And they prefer [others] to themselves even when they are in dire need"³¹

Despite their self-sacrifice, the Prophet (ﷺ) established an arrangement to address the economic challenges faced by the emigrants, preventing them from feeling burdensome to their Ansari brothers.

The incident of Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf and Hazrat Saad bin Rabi, may Allah be pleased with them, exemplifies extraordinary self-sacrifice and restraint. Hazrat Saad offered half his wealth and one of his wives to Hazrat Abd al-Rahman, who declined, instead seeking directions to the local market.³² Through his entrepreneurial endeavors, Hazrat Abd al-Rahman achieved financial stability and eventually married an Ansari woman, demonstrating his self-sufficiency.³³ The Holy Prophet (ﷺ) established muakhats among the Companions to foster a sense of community and alleviate feelings of alienation. As Islam grew stronger, the need for muakhats diminished, and Allah ultimately abolished the practice, while maintaining the bonds of brotherhood among believers. The Quranic verses (Al-Anfal 8:75 and Al-Ahzab 33:6) highlight the importance of mercy, kinship, and mutual support among believers, emphasizing that blood relatives have inherent rights, but also encouraging kindness and generosity towards others. This narrative showcases the Holy Prophet's (ﷺ) wisdom in addressing the economic and social challenges faced by the early Muslim community, while promoting a spirit of unity, cooperation, and self-reliance. The concept of Mu'akhat, as exemplified in the incident of Hazrat Abdur Rahman bin Auf and Hazrat Saad bin Rabi, demonstrates the power of self-sacrifice, self-restraint, and mutual support in achieving collective goals. This practice, encouraged by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ), fostered a sense of community and cooperation among the early Muslim community, enabling them to overcome challenges and thrive.

The Holy Qur'an bears witness to the exemplary sacrifice and selflessness of the Ansar, who, despite facing hunger and poverty themselves, ensured the well-being of their emigrant brothers. This characteristic of believers is extolled in Al-Anfal (8:74), declaring them true believers.³⁴

The fraternal bond between the Ansar and Muhajireen was so profound that upon the death of an Ansari, their legacy was inherited by their Muhajir brother, exemplifying the depth of their relationship. The Qur'an emphasizes the crucial role of economic stability in the formation of a harmonious society, as evident in Surah Al-Anfal (8:26),

"وَإِذْ كُنْتُمْ قَلِيلٌ مُّسْتَضْعَفُونَ فِي الْأَرْضِ تَخَافُونَ أَنْ يَتَخَطَّفَكُمُ النَّاسُ فَآوَاكُمْ
وَآيَدَكُمْ بِنَصْرِهِ وَرَزَقَكُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ لَعَلَّكُمْ تَشْكُرُونَ"³⁵

which contrasts the Makki and Madani eras of the Mustafa revolution. This collective philosophy of life underscores the necessity of economic stability for a nation to enjoy political freedom, social cohesion, and religious security. The Qur'an posits that economic instability precipitates chaos, undermining religious freedom and hindering a nation's ability to provide religious, moral, spiritual, social, and political service. Therefore, concrete steps towards economic revolution and stability are essential for political independence and guaranteed religious freedom. The Prophet's (ﷺ) prompt establishment of the Mu'akhat

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system in Madinah marked a pivotal moment in achieving economic stability. By integrating the Muhajireen into the Ansar's resources, he fostered economic development through collaborative efforts in agriculture and trade. This synergy of manpower and resources yielded profitable outcomes, leading to the opening of doors to resources and means, and ultimately, a strong and economically stable society. The Prophet's (peace be upon him) emphasis on supporting the most vulnerable members of society, including the poor, unemployed, and resource-poor individuals, ensured the provision of basic needs and diminished the distinction between the rich and poor. This economic revolution formed the foundation of the welfare Islamic state, guided by the principle of protecting oneself from selfishness and miserliness, "whoever is protected from the stinginess of his soul."³⁶

The Mu'akhat-e- Muhammadi, a fraternal bonding system, played a crucial role in achieving economic stability by establishing brotherhood between the poor and rich. This innovative approach granted the poor and needy the privilege of brotherhood with the rich, ensuring equal sharing of wealth, property, and businesses. The success of this project can be attributed to the Prophet's (ﷺ) visionary leadership and the collective efforts of the Muhajireen and Ansar, who worked together to establish a robust economic framework, laying the groundwork for a comprehensive welfare state. The Islamic teachings emphasize the importance of liberating oneself from selfishness and narrow-mindedness, as these traits can lead to a destructive race for personal gain, where individuals prioritize their own interests over the well-being of others. This self-centered approach can result in harm to oneself and others, yielding no meaningful benefits. In contrast, the Holy Prophet (ﷺ) imparted valuable education and training to the Ansar and Muhajireen, fostering economic, social, and political stability, as well as the triumph of the true religion. These believers, who safeguarded their souls from selfishness and miserliness, were promised prosperity, success, and the pleasure of Allah. The concept of Mu'akhat prioritizes the upliftment of the downtrodden, rather than competing with others for resources. This altruistic approach is considered a fundamental duty of religion, superseding other acts of worship. The fulfillment of the rights of the poor and deprived is paramount, as emphasized in the Mu'akhat-e- Muhammadi.

Purposes of Mu'akhat

The establishment of Mu'akhat among the Companions served several purposes:

1. Mitigated the feeling of alienation and separation from family and friends
2. Encouraged mutual support and cooperation
3. Facilitated economic empowerment and self-sufficiency
4. Demonstrated the principles of Islam in social life

As Islam grew stronger, the need for Mu'akhat diminished, and Allah ultimately abolished the practice, while maintaining the bonds of brotherhood among believers. The Quranic verses (Al-Anfal 8:75 and Al-Ahzab 33:6)

وَالَّذِينَ آمَنُوا مِنْ بَعْدُ وَهَاجَرُوا وَجَاهَدُوا مَعَكُمْ فَأُولَٰئِكَ مِنْكُمْ ۖ وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ
بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ ۚ إِنَّ اللَّهَ بِكُلِّ شَيْءٍ عَلِيمٌ ۝³⁷

النَّبِيِّ أَوْلَىٰ بِالْمُؤْمِنِينَ مِنْ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَأَزْوَاجُهُ أُمَّهَاتُهُمْ وَأُولُوا الْأَرْحَامِ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلَىٰ
بِبَعْضٍ فِي كِتَابِ اللَّهِ مِنَ الْمُؤْمِنِينَ وَالْمُهَاجِرِينَ إِلَّا أَنْ تَفْعَلُوا إِلَىٰ أَوْلِيَائِكُمْ مَعْرُوفًا كَانَ
ذَلِكَ فِي الْكِتَابِ مَسْطُورًا^{٣٨}

emphasize the importance of mercy, kinship, and mutual support among believers, highlighting the significance of faith-based relationships in achieving collective success. This narrative underscores the importance of establishing relationships based on mutual respect, cooperation, and goodwill, and determining special rights and duties within the context of brotherhood. By emulating the example of the early Muslim community, Muslims can foster a sense of unity and cooperation, leading to collective success and the implementation of Islamic principles in their social lives.

Impacts of Mu'akhat

The action of Mu'akhat, or brotherhood, between the Muhajirin (emigrants) and Ansar (helpers) in Madinah, had far-reaching consequences that profoundly impacted the development of Islamic society. This intercession fostered:

1. Robust social ties, promoting unity and solidarity among Muslims, thereby establishing a strong foundation for the Islamic community.
2. Financial and economic support, alleviating the hardships faced by the emigrants and facilitating their integration into Madinah's society.
3. Enhanced defense capabilities, as the collective efforts of Muhajirin and Ansar strengthened the protection of their nascent Islamic state.
4. Cultural and knowledge exchange, facilitating the dissemination of Islamic knowledge and wisdom among Muslims from diverse tribal and regional backgrounds.
5. Strengthened moral and spiritual values, including brotherhood, generosity, and sacrifice, which became hallmarks of the Islamic community.
6. Political stability, as Mu'akhat encouraged collective action and cooperation towards common goals, thereby consolidating the Islamic state.

These effects not only benefited the Islamic society of the time but continue to serve as a paradigmatic example of Islamic brotherhood and unity, offering valuable lessons for contemporary Muslim communities.

Conclusion

The Islamic concept of brotherhood transcends barriers of race, nationality, and color, promoting shared humanity, equality, and collective responsibility. First implemented by the Prophet Muhammad (ﷺ) in Madinah through the Mu'akhat-e-Muhammadi between the Ansar and Muhajirin, it replaced tribalism and selfishness with sincere love, unity, and compassion. This brotherhood allowed people of diverse backgrounds to hold equal status and leadership roles, creating a just and inclusive society. In contrast, Western civilizations have historically struggled with racial discrimination and exclusion, often privileging white populations despite advocating equality. The Islamic model, rooted in justice and empathy,

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provides a powerful framework for fostering global harmony, inspiring Muslims to build an equitable welfare state that safeguards the rights of the vulnerable and upholds the true spirit of unity and compassion.

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