



# The Role of Religions in Education of Ethics of Diversity

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## ABSTRACT

This article explores the role of religions in fostering an ethos of respect for diversity and cultivating the ethics of constructive disagreement. Recognizing that diversity is an inherent trait of human existence, this study highlights the necessity of transcending conflict and cultivating harmony through a moral framework derived from religious principles. Using key religious texts and examples, the paper analyzes the doctrines and practices of Hinduism, Buddhism, Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, demonstrating their contributions to peacebuilding and intercultural understanding. Hinduism and Buddhism emphasize values of self-realization, meditation, and universal love, fostering the ability to transcend individual differences. Judaism advocates ethical principles, such as justice and integrity, while distinguishing between religious teachings and political ideologies. Christianity, particularly through its message of love and forgiveness, offers a model for reconciliation with one's adversaries. Islam's foundational principles, including equality, tolerance, and respect for freedom of belief, provide a legal and moral framework for coexistence and dialogue, epitomized by the Prophet Muhammad's ethical treatment of diverse communities. Through these religious paradigms, the study addresses the challenges of ideological extremism, historical grievances, and structural inequalities that hinder peaceful coexistence. It proposes practical strategies for embedding the ethics of disagreement within educational, legal, and social institutions. The findings underline the urgency of interfaith collaboration and the application of shared values to overcome global crises of conflict and division, advocating for a collective moral responsibility that transcends cultural and theological boundaries. This discourse reaffirms the enduring relevance of religions in shaping a harmonious global society.

## Keywords

diversity management; ethical frameworks; interfaith dialogue; peaceful coexistence; religious ethics

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## INTRODUCTION

The manifestations of life point to diversity and multiplicity, as differences are a universal law and a fixed principle. Diversity is essential for achieving integration and mutual coexistence, ensuring that differences do not escalate into conflict and confrontation due to aggressive tendencies, supremacist attitudes, Machiavellian objectives, or ideological aims. Without this, humanity risks becoming, as Thomas Hobbes (1588–1679) expressed, “a wolf to his fellow man” (Hobbes, 1983), ultimately undermining its humanity and paving the way for its self-destruction before destroying others (Arbatli et al., 2020; King et al., 2009).

Undoubtedly, the contemporary era’s manifestations of terrorism, bloody conflicts, sectarianism, and denominational strife, which threaten human life, compel the call for embracing the ethics of difference. These ethics are regarded as a noble objective that necessitates collective efforts to establish just and comprehensive global peace (Lidén, 2009; MacLean, 1943; Melé & Sánchez-Runde, 2013; Zorrieh et al., 2016).

This reality inspired this study to explore the role of religions in educating individuals on the ethics of difference, seeking to draw lessons that could serve as a guiding beacon to address disputes and contentious issues, transforming them into a way of life and an elevated approach to engaging with others. It must be acknowledged that encompassing the subject across all religious traditions, whether revealed or human-made, is challenging due to their vast number. However, this study humbly attempts to reference select examples aligned with the nature of the topic.

It is worth noting, at the outset, that difference reflects intellectual and rational diversity grounded in objective methodologies. In contrast, disagreement stems from bias, whim, and a desire for division, reflecting an inability to accept others. Differences may arise within a single religion, where disputing parties remain within the bounds of shared principles or foundations. They may also occur outside the framework of one religion, involving followers of different faiths. This study seeks to examine the role of religions in educating followers on the ethics of difference to achieve the desired peaceful coexistence and move beyond confrontations, desecration of sanctities, and transgressions resulting from these differences that have morphed into disputes.

Therefore, the present focus on exploring the ethics of difference among religions—diverse in origin, objectives, and methodologies—has become a necessity. This is particularly relevant given the oppression faced by Muslim minorities, such as the Rohingya in Myanmar (Alia et al., 2020; Mohajan, 2018; Wildan, 2021), the Uyghur in China (Fathil, 2019; Finley, 2021; Lemon et al., 2023), and the enduring plight in occupied Palestine (Hammad & Tribe, 2020; Sayigh, 1987; Veronese et al., 2022), as well as the

destruction witnessed in Baghdad, Syria, and other regions, which collectively threaten the stability of nations.

## **THE IMPORTANCE OF ADDRESSING HUMAN DIFFERENCES**

The discussion of differences among humans and how to manage and address them is both significant and noteworthy. This topic transcends merely observing the phenomena of diversity and the various conflicts and obstacles that hinder effective communication (Fincher & Thornhill, 2008; Marsella, 2009; Norenzayan, 2016). It also aspires to explore ways to foster rapprochement, cooperation, and the consolidation of a culture of diversity, multiplicity, and respectful engagement. Such endeavors extend from theoretical and conceptual dimensions to practical, day-to-day applications. Furthermore, this exploration underscores the importance of the positive outcomes that emerge from building bridges of communication and overcoming issues of discord and confrontation.

Equally critical is the exploration of the role of religions in educating individuals about the ethics of difference and in shaping followers with profound moral foundations. This process enables them to overcome barriers to communication and embrace a culture of difference. The discussion gains further relevance as it clarifies the ultimate purposes of religions in achieving peaceful coexistence (Davie, 2022), outlines the essential ethics required to transcend differences and alienation, and highlights the sound methodologies that contribute to an exemplary human civilization collaboratively built by diverse and aligned individuals alike.

Undoubtedly, transitioning the ethics of engagement within diversity and multiplicity from theoretical frameworks to practical implementation is a challenge that theorists and researchers alike have long lamented. This remains a significant issue that warrants thoughtful reflection and investigation.

The topic attracts considerable attention from researchers, raising numerous interrelated questions that merit careful examination and analysis. Among the most prominent issues are:

- a. How can individuals who have reached profound levels of separation and divergence cooperate, especially when the underlying causes of their division persist, branding them with the label of fragmentation and discord?
- b. How can they coexist in the face of difference, conflict, and disputes?
- c. What mechanisms can empower individuals to rise above their personal particularities and accept those who differ from them in thought, culture, and practice?
- d. Can we speak today of a tangible embodiment of the ethics of difference in reality, or of human values that have transformed the course of history, making

humans love and coexist with one another in a spirit of genuine tolerance—one exemplified by the virtuous free, rather than the reluctant submission of the unwilling?

These questions and challenges remain central to the discourse on the ethics of difference, urging ongoing investigation and practical solutions.

## THE CULTURE OF DIFFERENCE IN LIVED REALITY

The examination of the role of religions in cultivating the ethics of difference cannot be thorough or firmly grounded unless it also investigates the presence of a culture of difference in lived reality and its impact on thought and behavior. Such an analysis aims to establish the foundations, methodologies, and ethical guidelines necessary for elevating humanity, fostering a culture of acceptance, and engaging positively with others. This approach aligns with the divine words: “O mankind! We created you from a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware” (Qur'an 49:13).

A glance at the course of human history, from its inception to the present, reveals that human interactions—both past and present—have often been marked by conflict, strife, and clashes. These issues frequently stem from disagreements, self-centeredness, a desire for dominance, and miscommunication. They also result from the absence of ethical standards for interaction, communication, and mutual understanding. This reality likely inspired the English naturalist Charles Robert Darwin (1809–1882) to propose the concept of “survival of the fittest,” suggesting that the outcome of war, conflict, and disputes is often determined by the strongest. Similarly, British poet Rudyard Kipling (1865–1936) famously remarked, “East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet” (Al-Ṭayyib, 2018), perhaps in contrast to the perspective of German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe (1749–1832), who asserted, “He who knows himself and others will realize that the East and West are inseparable” (Al-Ṭayyib, 2018).

Goethe also expressed a similar sentiment in his West–Eastern Divan (Goethe, 2010), stating: “To God belongs the East, and to God belongs the West; in His hands are both the North and the South, for all comes from Him and returns to Him.” He further remarked (Goethe, 2010), “It is one of humanity's follies in this world that each of us clings fanatically to what we perceive as truth. And if Islam means submission to God, then we all live and die as Muslims” (Zaqzūq, 2018).

One need only recall the tragedies of historical and modern wars—genocides, the Crusades, colonial wars, and the resurgence of the “clash of civilizations” narrative—and the association of Islam with terrorism as proposed in Samuel Huntington's *Clash*

of *Civilizations* (Huntington, 2011) or Francis Fukuyama's *The End of History* (Fukuyama, 2006). Such notions are compounded by Alvin Toffler's *Future Shock* (Toffler, 1984), the devastating tolls of World War I and II in terms of human casualties among both soldiers and civilians, and the immense material losses amounting to trillions. These events eroded the respect for human values, impacting perceptions, practices, and even beliefs. Furthermore, mistrust between followers of different cultures, civilizations, and religions has created a bleak reality (Zaqzūq, 2018). Positive examples of cooperation, tolerance, and mutual understanding remain rare and almost exceptional.

The collective human effort to enact national and international laws that facilitate communication, understanding, and the protection of human rights—while condemning violence, extremism, and aggression—stands as a testament to the need for progress (Al-Badri, 2022; McWhinney, 2007). Religious scriptures of diverse origins also encourage love, cooperation, and the promotion of tolerance and peace while discouraging the causes of war and conflict (Bayot et al., 2020; Mamat et al., 2020; Shavit, 2010; Singh & Aktor, 2015; Worthington et al., 2019). Religious leaders from varying backgrounds and cultures advocate for coexistence and mutual understanding in response to historical and contemporary injustices, such as the displacement of Palestinians since the establishment of Israel in 1948, the recent violent conflicts in Nigeria resulting in the deaths of thousands of Muslims and Christians, and the atrocities in Guatemala, numerous African nations, and the United States during the September 11 attacks. Similarly, conflicts in Iraq between Sunni and Shia Muslims (The United States Institute of Peace, 2008), the persecution of Rohingya Muslims in Myanmar, and the mistreatment of Uyghur Muslims in China reflect a continuity of historical injustices, akin to the forced displacement and daily oppression documented in the Spanish Inquisition's treatment of the Moriscos (Oumlil, 1993).

These examples provide undeniable evidence of persistent conflict and a lack of coexistence, documented throughout history and witnessed in contemporary reality. This necessitates serious reflection and concerted efforts to avoid the causes of tension, conflict, and fragmentation. Instead, it calls for the cultivation of a new awareness that embraces the principle of diversity and difference, fosters dialogue and coexistence, and affirms the interdependence of humanity. The development of ethical principles that reinforce the culture of difference, mercy, and peace is essential, for, as articulated, *"Progress, the ultimate goal of all governments, can only be achieved through peace. The consequences of a single war can set a nation back by centuries, let alone halting its progress during the years of conflict"* (Shaykhūn, 2004).

## REASONS FOR PROMOTING A CULTURE OF DIFFERENCE

The call of religions, particularly revealed ones, to recognize, engage with, and cooperate with others, and to establish the foundations for coexistence, reflects a profound awareness of the universal principle of diversity. It underscores that overcoming differences is only possible through dialogue among cultures, civilizations, and religions, accompanied by the adoption of ethical approaches to dealing with others (Ahmed, 2018; Gentry, 2016; Howard, 2018; Rane, 2022). Such an adoption highlights the importance of a culture of difference and its necessity at both the individual and societal levels. Among the most compelling reasons for this are the following:

### Religious Acknowledgment of Diversity

Religions acknowledge human diversity in colors, languages, and forms and call for mutual understanding, cooperation, and coexistence. The Old Testament states in Genesis:

“So God created mankind in His own image, in the image of God He created them; male and female He created them. God blessed them and said to them, ‘Be fruitful and increase in number; fill the earth and subdue it. Rule over the fish in the sea and the birds in the sky and over every living creature that moves on the ground’” (Genesis 1:27, 28).

Similarly, in the New Testament (Acts of the Apostles), it is written:

“But when the apostles Barnabas and Paul heard this, they tore their clothes and rushed into the crowd, shouting: ‘Friends, why are you doing this? We too are only human, like you. We are bringing you good news, telling you to turn from these worthless things to the living God, who made the heavens and the earth and the sea and everything in them. In the past, He let all nations go their own way’” (Acts 14:14-16).

The Qur’an also declares:

“And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ, except whom your Lord has given mercy. And for that He created them...” (Qur’an 11:118-119).

“And among His signs is the creation of the heavens and the earth and the diversity of your tongues and colors. Indeed, in that are signs for those of knowledge” (Qur’an 30:22).

### Shared Values Across Religions and Cultures

The commonalities between religious and cultural communities often outweigh their differences, especially regarding shared values, human rights, and ethics. For example, the Mediterranean Sea geographically links Europe and the Islamic countries of the

East, fostering mutual interests in stability and security. Additionally, both regions share a rich history of cultural exchange. Christianity and Islam, foundational to their respective civilizations, share key principles, such as belief in Jesus Christ and the Gospel, which forms an essential element of Islamic faith (Zaqzūq, 2018).

### **Historical and Contemporary Conflicts**

Humanity's history, as well as present-day experiences, demonstrates conflicts between cultures, religions, and civilizations. From ancient wars to modern disputes, these examples underscore the urgent need to establish a culture of difference and embed its ethics in reality.

### **Benefits of Coexistence**

A culture of mutual coexistence and acceptance yields positive outcomes, fostering communication and collaboration among peoples, irrespective of their differences. Such efforts contribute to the construction of human civilization as a whole. All individuals, despite their diverse backgrounds, complement one another, and human life loses its meaning when individual rights are violated, or innocent lives are taken without justification. As the Qur'an states:

“Whoever kills a soul unless for a soul or for corruption [done] in the land—it is as if he had slain mankind entirely. And whoever saves one—it is as if he had saved mankind entirely.” (Qur'an 5:32).

### **Constructive Diversity**

Differences in cultures, civilizations, and religions should not lead to conflict but rather to creative interactions that open horizons for cooperation and the advancement of human civilization. The Qur'an advises:

“And do not let the hatred of a people prevent you from being just. Cooperate in righteousness and piety, but do not cooperate in sin and aggression. And fear Allah; indeed, Allah is severe in penalty.” (Qur'an 5:2).

### **Diversity in Thought and Perspective**

Religions recognize differences not only in colors and languages but also in intellects, thoughts, cultures, and perspectives. Such diversity often stems from varying intellectual approaches and methodologies, which in turn foster scientific progress, the growth of intellectual schools, and philosophical traditions. Without these differences, societies stagnate. As Taha Jaber Al-Alwani observed, the benefits of constructive disagreement include (Al-Alwani, 1987):

- a. Expanding understanding by exploring all possible interpretations of evidence.
- b. Sharpening intellects through the exchange of ideas and hypotheses.



- c. Offering multiple solutions to various situations, allowing individuals to find the most appropriate course of action in alignment with their circumstances and religious principles.

However, when disagreement crosses its ethical boundaries, it devolves into destructive conflict, undermining unity and shifting from a constructive phenomenon to a divisive force.

In conclusion, human differences in thought, appearance, and language are natural and should be embraced. The true anomaly lies in forcing people into uniformity of opinion, thought, methodology, and lifestyle, as this stifles creativity and intellectual endeavor, leading to monotony. To move beyond misunderstanding and self-centeredness, societies must adopt a culture of difference, acceptance, and coexistence. This requires refined ethics in thought and behavior, selflessness, and a spirit that transcends material constraints. As one scholar aptly noted:

“Dialogue is fundamental to humanity. Language, an essential part of our identity, is learned from others, and no one can say ‘I’ without addressing ‘you.’ The ‘I’ and ‘you’ meet in the collective ‘we,’ distinguishing themselves while uniting in a shared human experience” (Dupré, 2002).

## **RELIGIOUS CALLS FOR DIALOGUE AND THE ETHICS OF DIFFERENCE**

The awareness of religions about the importance of diversity, multiplicity, and difference—and the necessity of positively leveraging them to bring people closer, encourage mutual understanding, and foster cooperation—underscores their aim of opening horizons and constructing human civilization. This perspective explains the abundance of texts and traditions that advocate for dialogue, love, tolerance, coexistence, and a conscious embrace of the ethics and culture of difference (Ahmad, 2020; Bhat & Haq, 2023; Gentry, 2016; Howard, 2018; Kondratieva, 2020; Masood et al., 2022). Such an approach reflects profound understanding and knowledge, facilitating an appreciation of others and rejecting the claim of possessing absolute truth, which often leads to dismissing others' perspectives and excluding them from historical and existential legitimacy.

### **Hinduism: Principles of Universal Morality and Cross-Cultural Dialogue**

For instance, Hinduism, one of the world's oldest living religions (dating back to approximately the 15th century BCE), contains directives in its sacred texts, such as the *Vedas*, promoting moral conduct, peace, and love (Al-Faqīr, 2004). The *Bhagavad Gita* quotes the deity Brahma as saying, “*Whatever is offered to me with love—a loaf of bread, a flower, or a fruit—is accepted by me as purity of mind and joy for my fellow human*” (Al-Rukābī, 2007). Hinduism emphasizes universal morality, virtuous values,



and the rejection of vices and evil. The *Manusmriti* (Laws of Manu) outlines values that advocate eradicating corruption and organizing human relationships. It also encourages thought, contemplation, and freedom in worship, encompassing a broad spectrum of beliefs, rituals, and practices.

Hinduism's core tenet is the unity of religion and life, as expressed in the *Rigveda*: "Truth is one; the wise call it by different names." The concept of *karma* represents union with the benevolent universal spirit achieved through self-purification, reincarnation, and practices like yoga, which integrates divine contemplation into behavior and relationships. The *Bhagavad Gita* emphasizes, "Blessed are those with pure hearts, for they see God" (Al-Faqīr, 2004). Philosopher Ramakrishna added, "Acquire spiritual values first and do not criticize others, for every doctrine contains some goodness" (Al-Rukābī, 2007). This universal human love, a cosmic virtue, contributed to Hinduism's evolution through cultural exchanges with other civilizations and religions.

This dynamic contributed to the evolution of Hinduism throughout history, influenced by the intermingling of diverse civilizations and religions. Dr. Asaad Al-Sahmarani, in his book *Interpreter of Religions*, notes: "The Indian constitution recognizes the presence of Hindus, Buddhists, Muslims, Sikhs, Christians, and others, while Hindus regard themselves as the original inhabitants of India" (Al-Saḥmarānī, 2012).

As ties between the East and the West grew stronger, Asian traditions gained global prominence. Following Britain's occupation of India in 1850, opportunities for cultural, civilizational, and religious exchange expanded. Yoga, for instance, was introduced to Europe during this period. This cultural diffusion was further bolstered by the Ramakrishna Movement, which advocated for tolerance and the inclusion of other religions. Ramakrishna's disciple, Swami Vivekananda (1863–1902), succeeded him and established the Ramakrishna Mission to spread Indian philosophies worldwide. Vivekananda represented Hinduism at the Parliament of the World's Religions held in Chicago in 1893, serving as a prominent voice for its teachings.

### **Buddhism: Ethical Foundations, Evolution, and Cross-Cultural Exchanges**

Buddhism, which emerged in the 6th century BCE, aligned with this humanistic trajectory, aspiring toward *nirvana*, a state of cosmic unity and liberation. Attaining *nirvana* requires adherence to the Ten Precepts of Buddha (the Enlightened One, born in 560 BCE), following a path of goodness across life's cycles to achieve lasting peace and sacredness. Buddha advocated for universal well-being and renunciation of evil through self-illumination, fostering profound inner awareness (Al-Faqīr, 2004). His teachings emphasized meditation and genuine love for both friends and foes alike.

Buddha's philosophy centered on ethical behavior and the welfare of humanity. His teachings encouraged detachment from worldly pleasures and desires in pursuit of tranquility and complete knowledge, defining *nirvana* as *"the water of life that quenches the thirst of aspirations and the healing that cures all suffering"* (Mīghūlīfskī, 2009). It represents freedom from the bondage of suffering and desire, the attainment of spiritual and religious clarity, and liberation from the chains of materialism and indulgence. This ultimate goal of Buddhism is achieved through effort, meditation, and intellectual and spiritual focus.

Buddha strongly emphasized self-restraint, universal compassion, justice, moderation, human dignity, freedom of action, and self-determination, while avoiding vices. His Ten Precepts include:

"Do not take a life, do not steal or violate others, do not lie, abstain from intoxicants, do not engage in sexual misconduct, avoid consuming food at inappropriate times, do not use luxurious bedding, and do not possess gold or silver. The ascetic is one who overcomes worldly desires and pleasures, despising material existence" (Al-Saḥmarānī, 1998).

These principles reflect Buddhism's ethical foundation, which seeks to elevate humanity through self-discipline, universal love, and spiritual liberation.

"Good intentions and sound thought are pathways to righteous deeds" (Al-Saḥmarānī, 1998)

"The wise person is the one who walks the paved road with sincerity" (Al-Saḥmarānī, 1998)

"Everything that is composite is destined for decay; therefore, strive earnestly with genuine effort" (Durant, 1988).

It can thus be concluded that Buddhism was not the product of a cumulative cultural and civilizational process, as was the case with Brahmanism. Instead, it originated from intellectual contemplation and psychological discipline, which later manifested in behavioral practices aimed at achieving the liberation of humanity. This foundational aspect explains the spread of Buddhism, whether through missionaries and monks inspired by Buddha's teachings, or via trade exchanges, scholarly journeys, and Islamic conquests. These interactions facilitated cross-cultural and interreligious exchange, including the translation of numerous Buddhist texts into Arabic and Persian starting in the second century AH.

Over time, Buddhism evolved, reaching a stage where certain developments diverged from its original teachings. This divergence resulted from sectarian disputes over complex ancient texts, which allowed room for interpretation, as well as the absence of definitive answers to specific events. Furthermore, Buddhism's need to

adapt to its global context contributed to its transformation. The teachings themselves became a source of division, leading to two primary groups of Buddhists: Religious Buddhists: Those who adhere strictly to all of Buddha's teachings and precepts; and Secular Buddhists: Those who follow only some of Buddha's teachings and precepts.

As a result, Buddhist values shifted, deviating from the ethical foundations of the original faith. Violence became more prevalent, the principle of peace was abandoned, and continuous wars erupted. Monks acquired a status distinct from others, leading to division and inequality. Additionally, immoral behaviors such as adultery and indecency became widespread, alongside practices like sorcery, spirit invocation, and divination. New behavioral precepts were introduced, and monks began participating in commercial activities, including lending money to local communities at high-interest rates, in direct violation of Buddha's original teachings.

### **Judaism: Ethical Teachings, Sectarian Diversity, and Modern Challenges**

When examining the revealed religions, Judaism emerges as a faith encompassing numerous ethical precepts and values that merit exploration despite the doctrinal deviations that have affected it over time. It is important to distinguish between Judaism as a religion and Zionism (ציונות) as a Jewish political movement.<sup>1</sup>

This study draws on the sacred texts of Judaism to extract principles of ethics and interpersonal conduct, such as those found in the Ten Commandments of Moses:

"No murder. No adultery. No stealing. No lies about your neighbor. No lusting after your neighbor's house—or wife or servant or maid or ox or donkey. Don't set your heart on anything that is your neighbor's" (Exodus 20:13-17).

Similarly, the Book of Exodus warns against behaviors that harm horizontal relationships, stating:

"Don't link up with a wicked person and give corrupt testimony. Don't go along with the crowd in doing evil and don't mess up your testimony in a case just to please the crowd" (Exodus 23:2-3).

Further instructions include:

"When there is a dispute concerning your poor, don't tamper with the justice due them. Stay clear of false accusations. Don't contribute to the death of innocent and good people. I don't let the wicked off the hook. Don't take bribes. Bribes blind perfectly good eyes and twist the speech of good people. Don't take advantage of

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<sup>1</sup> Zionist tendencies began to emerge among Jews themselves in the late 19th century as the "Jewish Question" intensified. Initially, these tendencies manifested through financial support provided by wealthy Western Jews to various settlement organizations. These organizations aimed to resettle Eastern European Jews in any country (including Palestine) to prevent their migration to the West, which was seen as a potential threat to the social status and class positions of Western Jews

a stranger. You know what it's like to be a stranger; you were strangers in Egypt" (Exodus 23:6-9).

The ethical emphasis extends to respecting others and preserving their rights, as articulated in Leviticus:

"When a foreigner lives with you in your land, don't take advantage of him. Treat the foreigner the same as a native. Love him like one of your own. Remember that you were once foreigners in Egypt. I am God, your God" (Leviticus 19:33-34).

Such texts reflect an education in ethics aimed at fostering peace and justice. Deuteronomy underscores these principles by instructing judges:

"At the same time I gave orders to your judges: "Listen carefully to complaints and accusations between your fellow Israelites. Judge fairly between each person and his fellow or foreigner. Don't play favorites; treat the little and the big alike; listen carefully to each. Don't be impressed by big names. This is God's judgment you're dealing with. Hard cases you can bring to me; I'll deal with them" (Deuteronomy 1:16-17).

Additionally, the Torah advocates love and condemns hatred, asserting that: "*Hatred starts fights, but love pulls a quilt over the bickering*" (Proverbs 10:12). The Torah also enshrines prohibitions against bloodshed and the killing of innocents, as highlighted in Exodus:

"If someone hits another and death results, the penalty is death. But if there was no intent to kill—if it was an accident, an 'act of God'—I'll set aside a place to which the killer can flee for refuge. But if the murder was premeditated, cunningly plotted, then drag the killer away, even if it's from my Altar, to be put to death" (Exodus 21: 12-14).

These foundational texts demonstrate that authentic, uncorrupted Judaism promotes noble values, virtuous ethics, and an education in the ethics of difference and humane interaction with others, often referred to as the *goyim* (non-Jews). Proverbs echoes this ethos: "*Well-spoken words bring satisfaction; well-done work has its own reward*" (Proverbs 12:14)

However, the misconduct observed within certain circles stems from the distortions of Mosaic Judaism and internal divisions among its followers. Jewish sectarianism has

resulted in various groups, including Sadducees<sup>2</sup>, Samaritans<sup>3</sup>, Sanhedrin<sup>4</sup>, Pharisees<sup>5</sup>, Zealots<sup>6</sup>, Essenes<sup>7</sup>, Karaites<sup>8</sup>, Builders<sup>9</sup>, Therapeutae<sup>10</sup>, Maggariyah<sup>11</sup>, Scribes<sup>12</sup>,

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<sup>2</sup> Sadducees (2nd century BCE) were a Jewish sect that rejected the Talmud and did not hold the Torah in absolute sanctity. Their followers denied the resurrection, the afterlife, and the concepts of reward and punishment. They believed in complete human free will and did not anticipate the coming of a Messiah. The Sadducees upheld the notion of full human autonomy and viewed Yahweh as the God of the Israelites alone—a national deity—whereas the Pharisees saw Yahweh as the God of all nations. Additionally, the Sadducees claimed that Ezra was the son of God. This sect disappeared entirely following the destruction of the Second Temple in 70 CE due to its intrinsic connection to the Temple.

<sup>3</sup> Samaritans or Kutim or strangers or keepers of the law, whose final schism with Jews occurred in 432 BCE following the return of Ezra and Nehemiah from Babylon.

<sup>4</sup> Sanhedrin (2nd century BCE–1st century CE) was the highest judicial and legislative council in ancient Israel, comprising Pharisees, Sadducees, and elders, responsible for interpreting Jewish law, settling disputes, and overseeing religious and political matters

<sup>5</sup> Pharisees believed that Yahweh is the God of all humanity, not limited to a specific nation. They held that worshiping Yahweh was not confined to the Temple in Jerusalem but could be achieved by adhering to the Torah. This perspective made the Pharisees an open and inclusive sect, advocating for spreading Judaism beyond the geographical boundaries of the Promised Land. In contrast to other insular and nationalistic Jewish sects, the Pharisees promoted a more universal approach to their faith.

<sup>6</sup> Zealots was a radical faction of Pharisees, at 6th century BCE.

<sup>7</sup> Essenes (ascetics, 1st–2nd centuries BCE) were a Jewish sect that rejected racial discrimination and prohibited the practice of slavery. They were committed to the pursuit of lasting peace and sought communion with God through meditation and prayer.

<sup>8</sup> Karaites was established in 8th century CE and rejected the Oral Torah. The emergence of the Karaite sect can be attributed to several internal and external factors within the Jewish religious framework. Among the most significant influences was the spread of Islam in the Near East, which introduced new religious concepts and intellectual frameworks that posed a genuine challenge to Jewish religious thought, particularly given the dominant immanence-oriented tendencies within Judaism at the time. The Karaites were influenced by Islamic ‘ilm al-kalam (theology) and Islamic rationalism more broadly.

The founder of the sect, Anan ben David, was notably influenced by Islamic jurisprudence, particularly the principles of Islamic law according to the Hanafi school. It is said that the Karaites represent the protest of the individual and free conscience against the burdens of centralized authority and rigid traditions. The Karaites also adopted certain beliefs from the Isawites, such as the recognition of Jesus (peace be upon him) and Muhammad (peace be upon him) as messengers of God. Additionally, they incorporated ascetic practices from the followers of Yudghan.

There is a theory that the Jews of the Arabian Peninsula, who were relocated to Basra and other regions of the Islamic world during the era of Umar ibn al-Khattab, played a significant role in the spread of Karaite thought, particularly because they were unfamiliar with the Talmud. Benjamin al-Nahawandi, who was the first to use the term “Karaite,” became one of the notable figures of this sect.

The Karaites' religious identity remains strong, often leading to enduring conflicts with Rabbinic Jews. These tensions are evident even in shared settlements, reflecting the significant doctrinal and cultural divide between the two groups

<sup>9</sup> Builders were established in 2nd century CE and focused on purity.

<sup>10</sup> Therapeutae was extreme asceticism and spiritual meditation.

<sup>11</sup> Maggariyah was established in 1st century CE and store books in caves.

<sup>12</sup> The term scribes refers to a group whose primary role was to transcribe the law, gaining extensive knowledge from the sacred texts they recorded. They adopted preaching and guidance as their means of livelihood and were often referred to as sages and patriarchs. The scribes represented religious leadership during the Persian, Greek, and Roman periods of rule. Their religious role evolved to include establishing private schools dedicated to disseminating religious education. They were responsible for interpreting the law for the people, and their formal organization began under Ezra, who served as their leader. The scribes were the first to teach the Torah and were instrumental in the creation of the Oral Law, known as the Talmud

Kabbalists<sup>13</sup>, Isawites, Yudghanites, Mushkanites, Hasidim<sup>14</sup>, Reformists<sup>15</sup>, Conservative Judaism, Orthodox Judaism, Liberal Judaism, Neolog Judaism, and Ethnics (those born to Jewish mothers).

The diversity of ethnicities and identities has contributed to the emergence of *Rabbinic Judaism* and *Normative Judaism*, as well as the influence of Zionism with its expansionist ambitions. Zionism asserts Jewish superiority, considering other peoples as servants, and has fostered isolationism within ghettos. Consequently, some reformist movements advocate eliminating negative national traits that hinder relationships with non-Jews, promoting integration and assimilation in line with modern demands under the slogan: “*Be a Jew at home and a human being outside.*” The phrase is commonly attributed to Yehuda Leib Gordon (1830–1892), a prominent Hebrew poet and essayist of the 19th century. Gordon was a leading figure in the Haskalah, or Jewish Enlightenment, which advocated for Jewish integration into European society while maintaining Jewish identity. This maxim encapsulates the assimilationist approach of

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<sup>13</sup> The Kabbalists were a mystical Jewish group who awaited the coming of the Messiah to establish a kingdom where equality would prevail among people. Some Kabbalists criticized the Talmud, and belief in the authenticity of Kabbalah as divine revelation gained widespread acceptance among European Jews.

<sup>14</sup> The Hasidic movement is a messianic movement that seeks to escape the complexities of historical reality through a state of mystical ecstasy. It often manifests as ideological illusions surrounding the Promised Land, which awaits the Jewish people. The Nietzschean-Zionist thinker Martin Buber believed that Judaism could not be revived without the fervor of Hasidism. He further argued that Zionist pioneers rekindled this fervor to inspire their cause.

<sup>15</sup> The Reformist movement within Judaism divided into two main factions. One faction championed the cause of enlightenment (Haskalah), while the other adhered strictly to the literal teachings of ancient Jewish Torah traditions. Moses Mendelssohn (1729–1786) in Germany spearheaded a movement he called Haskalah, or Enlightenment, which became a form of religious reform that significantly influenced many Jews in the Western world.

Reform Judaism established reform temples across approximately 29 countries under the World Union for Progressive Judaism. Among its prominent leaders was Abraham Geiger (1810–1874), the head of the moderate wing, often referred to as “progressive.” Geiger was a renowned preacher and orator who served as chief rabbi in Wiesbaden and later in Breslau. His contributions included founding a journal in 1832 titled *The Scientific Journal of Jewish Theology*, which articulated the intellectual and theological perspectives of the Reformist movement.

In 1838, Geiger was elected chief rabbi in Breslau, creating significant tension with the incumbent rabbi, Tiktin. Geiger advocated for abandoning the concept of “God’s chosen people,” arguing that this idea deepened Jewish isolation. He urged caution in the reform process to avoid alienating the Jewish community and its religious sentiments. Geiger also worked to educate his followers through his extensive writings, in which he denied the divine origin of the Pentateuch, rejected the idea of fixed divine laws, and promoted the abolition of circumcision. He envisioned a universal Judaism free from nationalistic connotations, asserting that emphasizing nationalism contradicted divine intentions. He maintained that his reforms aligned with Talmudic traditions, which emphasize adapting practices to changing times.

Another key figure was David Friedländer (1750–1834), leader of the revolutionary wing, sometimes labeled “liberal.” A devoted disciple of Mendelssohn, Friedländer is regarded as the true founder of the Reformist movement. He believed that the “Jewish Question” in Eastern Europe could only be resolved through reforms that led to integration. His primary goal was to align Judaism with the demands of modernity, promote assimilation into Western society, and eliminate nationalistic traits that could harm relations with non-Jews.

Israel Jacobson, another Reformist leader, established the first Reform synagogue in his home in Seesen, Germany, and later built another in Berlin in 1815. His efforts symbolized the broader Reformist aim to modernize Jewish religious practices and integrate them into the sociocultural fabric of contemporary society.

the Haskalah movement, encouraging Jews to practice their faith privately and publicly adopt the broader society's cultural norms.

### **Christianity: Ethical Teachings and the Call for Interfaith Dialogue**

Christianity emphasizes humanitarian and ethical values, underscoring that Jesus came not to abolish the law but to fulfill it by nurturing a culture of tolerance, love, and kindness—extending even to one's enemies. This represents the epitome of religious tolerance. The Gospel of Matthew states:

"You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy.' But I tell you, love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you, that you may be children of your Father in heaven. He causes his sun to rise on the evil and the good, and sends rain on the righteous and the unrighteous. If you love those who love you, what reward will you get? Are not even the tax collectors doing that? And if you greet only your own people, what are you doing more than others? Do not even pagans do that? Be perfect, therefore, as your heavenly Father is perfect." (Matthew 5:43-48).

This foundational teaching completes the law with a vision of mutual respect and reconciliation. To realize these principles and establish peace, it is essential to avoid behaviors that cause division and extremism, especially those stemming from claims of exclusive possession of absolute truth. Protestant theologian Seevaratham Wesley Ariarajah warns:

"Some will claim ultimate truth based on the interpretations of their chosen authors. Such assertions often lead to arrogance, intolerance, and, consequently, the condemnation of the faith of others" (Ariarajah, 1995).

He elaborates further on the Christian Protestant position toward others, emphasizing the importance of dialogue and openness:

"The belief that followers of other religions are outside God's salvific work reflects not only on people but also on God. The God of the Bible, whom Christ called Father, is the Lord of all creation. This universality invites dialogue as a cornerstone of biblical teaching. It is regrettable when our positions toward followers of other faiths are based on isolated scriptural passages rather than the overarching message of the Bible. We engage in dialogue because our God, proclaimed by Jesus Christ, is the God of love who encompasses all humanity. God is our freedom, enabling us to meet our neighbors, not judge them, for acceptance and understanding are the foundation of the Gospel message" (Ariarajah, 1995).

This inclusive stance toward the "other" is rooted in several passages from the New Testament that reflect progressive and positive attitudes. For instance, in 1 John:

"If anyone boasts, 'I love God,' and goes right on hating his brother or sister, thinking nothing of it, he is a liar. If he won't love the person he can see, how can he love the



God he can't see? The command we have from Christ is blunt: Loving God includes loving people. You've got to love both" (1 John 4:20-21).

Similarly, the Gospel of Luke teaches:

"To you who are ready for the truth, I say this: Love your enemies. Let them bring out the best in you, not the worst. When someone gives you a hard time, respond with the supple moves of prayer for that person. If someone slaps you in the face, stand there and take it. If someone grabs your shirt, giftwrap your best coat and make a present of it. If someone takes unfair advantage of you, use the occasion to practice the servant life. No more payback. Live generously. Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for them! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back? Run-of-the-mill sinners do that. If you only help those who help you, do you expect a medal? Garden-variety sinners do that. If you only give for what you hope to get out of it, do you think that's charity? The stingiest of pawnbrokers does that. I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You'll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we're at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind" (Luke 6:27-36).

The Church affirmed this inclusive and humane approach in its declaration on October 15, 1965, approved by 2,226 bishops against 88 dissenters. The declaration stated:

"The Church regards with esteem the Muslims, who worship the one true God, living and subsisting in Himself, merciful and almighty, the Creator of heaven and earth, who has spoken to humanity. They strive to submit wholeheartedly to His decrees, as did Abraham, with whom the Islamic faith is pleased to associate itself. Although over the centuries many quarrels and hostilities have arisen between Christians and Muslims, this sacred council urges all to forget the past and to work sincerely for mutual understanding and to preserve, as well as to promote together, social justice, moral welfare, peace, and freedom for the benefit of all mankind" ([Pope Paul VI, 1965](#)).

This statement underscores the necessity of mutual respect, understanding, and cooperation between Christians and Muslims, fostering a foundation for peace and justice that transcends historical conflicts.

### **Islam: Foundations of Dialogue, Coexistence, and Ethical Engagement**

When examining Islam, numerous foundational texts advocate for positive engagement with differences, adherence to the ethics of dialogue, and respectful discourse with others. Among these are the verses:

"Say: O People of the Book! Come to common terms as between us and you: That we worship none but Allah; that we associate no partners with Him; that we erect

not, from among ourselves, Lords and patrons other than Allah. If then they turn back, say ye: ‘Bear witness that we (at least) are Muslims (bowing to Allah’s will)’” (Qur’an 3:64).

Similarly, Allah the Almighty says:

“And do not argue with the People of the Book except in a way that is best, unless it is with those who commit injustice among them, and say, ‘We believe in that which has been revealed to us and revealed to you. Our God and your God is one, and we are Muslims [in submission] to Him’” (Qur’an 29:46).

Another verse emphasizes the method of dialogue:

“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best. Indeed, your Lord is most knowing of who has strayed from His way, and He is most knowing of who is [rightly] guided” (Qur’an 16:125).

These verses underline submission to Allah, mutual understanding, compassion, and respectful dialogue using wisdom and sound counsel. They advocate for fostering a culture of dialogue and appreciation of differences while transcending divisions and conflicts.

Islam further enshrines belief in all prophets and revealed scriptures as a pillar of faith, as emphasized in the verse:

“The Messenger has believed in what was revealed to him from his Lord, and [so have] the believers. All of them have believed in Allah and His angels and His books and His messengers, [saying], ‘We make no distinction between any of His messengers.’ And they say, ‘We hear and we obey. [We seek] Your forgiveness, our Lord, and to You is the [final] destination’” (Qur’an 2:285).

The prophetic traditions further reinforce this principle. The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) stated: “I am the closest of people to Jesus, the son of Mary, in this world and the Hereafter. The prophets are paternal brothers; their mothers are different, but their religion is one” (Al-Bukhārī No. 3187). Moreover, during the conquest of Mecca, when addressing those who opposed him and expelled him from his homeland, he declared, “O people of Quraysh, what do you think I will do to you?” They replied, “Good; you are a noble brother and the son of a noble brother.” He then said, “Go, for you are free” (Al-Bayhaqī, No. 18,648).

Islam guarantees freedom of belief and human fraternity, laying the foundation for achieving just peace and harmonious coexistence. These principles remain essential today for implementation in thought, practice, and tangible application.

Islam also established a legal framework for non-Muslims, recognizing them as *Ahl al-Dhimmah* (protected people), including Jews, Christians, Sabians, and Zoroastrians.

They were granted the right to practice their religious rituals and were safeguarded under Islamic authority, supported by treaties and agreements.

A notable example is the Constitution of Medina, a practical model for coexistence among various ethnicities, religions, and sects. It resolved a significant challenge: how to unify diverse groups under a constitution that ensured justice, peace, freedom of belief, sanctity of places, comprehensive social solidarity, and what is now recognized as the right to asylum and protection. The constitution exemplified ethical and humane values consistent with Islamic objectives and aligned with universal human rights. As stated in the constitution:

“Virtue is distinct from sin. No one gains but for himself. Allah is on the side of what is truest in this document, and no wrongdoer or sinner will escape accountability. Whoever leaves is safe, and whoever remains in Medina is safe, except for those who commit injustice or sin. Allah is the Protector of the righteous and pious, and Muhammad is the Messenger of Allah” (Ibn Hishām, 1955).

The Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) was a model of excellence, embodying the capacity to navigate complexities and contradictions while teaching the ethics of respectful and humane interaction with those of differing beliefs. His character was a living example of moral and intellectual greatness, inspiring emulation. Described as a “socio-political and intellectual debater of the highest caliber in Arab history,” he understood contradictions and skillfully transformed them into dynamic, cohesive unity that embraced change without negating it (Khalīl, 1994).

This exemplary tradition continued with the Companions, the righteous predecessors, and those who followed their guidance. One of the fruits of this high ethical standard was the emergence of disciplines such as the art of debate and dialogue (Oumlil, 1993). It enriched Islamic culture with writings about diverse sects, creeds, and historical narratives by travelers and historians.

## **EDUCATING ON THE CULTURE OF DIFFERENCE AND THE ETHICS OF HUMAN INTERACTION**

It may seem simple to discuss the culture of difference, its application, and the ethics of human interaction within its framework. However, a closer examination reveals the significant challenges posed by various psychological and intellectual barriers that individuals grow up with. These barriers, deeply rooted in upbringing, are not easily overcome or ignored. They often surface in interactions and decisions, influencing even perceptions and thought processes. In addition to these individual factors, societal and cultural dimensions leave residues that profoundly affect human thinking, relationships, and the upbringing of future generations.

Against this backdrop, the task of cultivating a culture of difference and promoting refined human interaction becomes a formidable endeavor. It requires profound intellectual preparation and conscious psychological training, enabling individuals to move beyond self-isolation, illusions of possessing absolute truth, and seeing others as adversaries. This shift counters the sentiment expressed by the French philosopher Jean-Paul Sartre (1905–1980) in his famous assertion, *“Hell is other people.”*

Instead, this education must transition relationships from fear, suspicion, hatred, and prejudice to love for others, recognition of their significance, and acknowledgment of their right to exist and express themselves. This perspective views others as partners in the collective process of building humanity, affirming that human value diminishes in their absence. This coexistence, grounded in the ethics of interaction and the culture of difference, builds on Ibn Khaldun’s assertion that *“Man is social by nature”* (Ibn Khaldūn, 1992). It also aligns with the Qur’anic principle of freedom of belief: *“There is no compulsion in religion; the right course has become clear from the wrong.”* (Qur’an 2:256).

Within this framework, the need for education in the ethics of difference and engagement with differing opinions becomes crucial, especially in the domains of thought, religion, society, and ethics.

### **On the Intellectual and Religious Levels:**

To foster a culture of difference, all parties should adhere to the following principles:

#### **1. Acknowledging Others**

Recognizing that divine will has created diversity among people: *“If your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ.”* (Qur’an 11:118). This requires understanding others as they are, not as one wishes them to be, respecting their identities, and safeguarding their freedom of expression.

#### **2. Avoiding Prejudgment**

Ensuring the accuracy of information and avoiding preconceived judgments: *“O you who have believed, if there comes to you a disobedient one with information, investigate, lest you harm a people out of ignorance and become, over what you have done, regretful.”* (Qur’an 49:6). This principle extends to embodying the Qur’anic guidance: *“Invite to the way of your Lord with wisdom and good instruction, and argue with them in a way that is best.”* (Qur’an 16:125).

#### **3. Healing Historical Narratives**

Addressing historical grievances and moving past depictions of perpetual enmity, inspired by the Prophet Muhammad’s ﷺ example of forgiveness and reconciliation.

#### 4. **Careful Deliberation**

Studying issues thoroughly before forming judgments, consulting knowledgeable individuals to avoid errors. Allah says in the Qur'an: "Say, 'Who provides for you from the heavens and the earth?' Say, 'Allah. And indeed, we or you are either upon guidance or in clear error.' Say, 'You will not be asked about what we committed, and we will not be asked about what you do.' Say, 'Our Lord will bring us together; then He will judge between us in truth. And He is the Knowing Judge.'" (Surah Saba: 24–26). The approach of Imam Al-Ghazali exemplifies this principle; he first studied philosophers' views in *Maqāṣid al-Falāsifah* (*The Aims of the Philosophers*) before responding to their arguments in *Tahāfut Al-Falāsifah* (*The Incoherence of the Philosophers*).

#### 5. **Equipping for Dialogue**

Developing the necessary skills and knowledge for constructive debate and decision-making, promoting tolerance, freedom of thought, and shared universal values.

#### 6. **Objectivity and Justice**

Maintaining fairness in assessing differing views and building dialogue on common ground, focusing on shared human values and mutual understanding. The Prophet ﷺ stated, "Wisdom is the lost property of the believer; wherever he finds it, he is most deserving of it" (Ibn Mājah, No. 4169).

#### 7. **Fostering Dialogue Skills**

Promoting a culture of difference in families, schools, places of worship, media institutions, and digital platforms.

#### 8. **Creating a Safe Environment for Dialogue**

Ensuring discussions occur without coercion or bias, and managing personal convictions to avoid imposing authority over others' perspectives.

### **On the Ethical and Social Levels:**

To support the ethics of difference, the following practices should be embraced:

#### 1. **Respecting Others**

Avoiding ridicule or belittlement of others, as emphasized in the Qur'an: "O you who have believed, let not a people ridicule [another] people; perhaps they may be better than them." (Qur'an 49:11).

#### 2. **Assuming Positive Intent**

Avoiding suspicion and prejudgment: "O you who have believed, avoid much suspicion. Indeed, some suspicion is sin. And do not spy or backbite each other." (Qur'an 49:12).

#### 3. **Adapting to Difference**

Accepting diversity as a divinely ordained reality: “And if your Lord had willed, He could have made mankind one community; but they will not cease to differ, except whom your Lord has given mercy.” (Qur’an 11:118–119).

#### 4. **Encouraging Openness**

Raising new generations to embrace the legitimacy of difference, viewing diversity as a source of enrichment rather than conflict. The Prophet Muhammad ﷺ exemplified this in his interactions.

#### 5. **Avoiding Monopolization of Truth**

Resisting the temptation to equate personal beliefs with absolute truth and rejecting authoritarian approaches to religion and thought. Instead, pluralism and the right to difference must be upheld.

These principles highlight the necessity of cultivating a refined understanding of difference, promoting dialogue, and fostering an inclusive, ethical framework for human interaction.

## **CONCLUSION**

The discussion of the role of religions in fostering the ethics of difference is an urgent necessity in our contemporary reality, marked by various challenges and conflicts. This is not only to improve conditions and enhance horizontal relationships but also to establish a new culture rooted in human brotherhood. Its ultimate goals are to cultivate love, communication, cooperation, harmony, peace, and shared living, aiming to achieve global unity and affirm humanity’s stewardship responsibilities on Earth. This sentiment aligns with the German poet Johann Wolfgang von Goethe’s (2010) statement: *“He who knows himself and others will realize that the East and West are inseparable.”*

In this context, it is essential to emphasize that global unity for the sake of humanity cannot be achieved without self-transformation toward betterment, as highlighted in the Qur’anic verse: *“Indeed, Allah will not change the condition of a people until they change what is in themselves.”* (Qur’an 13:11).

Additionally, dialogue with those who are different must always be conducted with wisdom and good counsel. This approach mirrors the methodology of Imam Al-Shafi’i, who famously stated: *“My opinion is correct but could be mistaken, and the opinion of others is mistaken but could be correct.”*

Through this perspective, divergence, difference, fragmentation, and even fear and suspicion of the “other” can transform into factors of enrichment, complementarity, and creativity. Truth then ceases to be monopolized by any one group. Instead, under the culture of plurality and diversity, humanity flourishes, with individuals genuinely loving,

coexisting, cooperating, and showing forgiveness—not the reluctant tolerance of necessity but the noble, free tolerance of virtue.

In this way, the right to difference becomes a fundamental principle of human rights. Perhaps the most fitting conclusion to this discussion is the profound verse by Ibn Arabi (560 AH–638 AH / 1165–1240 CE):

“My heart has become capable of every form:  
It is a pasture for gazelles and a monastery for monks,  
A temple for idols and the Kaaba of pilgrims...  
I follow the religion of love, wherever its caravans turn.  
Love is my religion and my faith” (Ibn al-‘Arabī, 1966).

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### Data Availability Statement

The data presented in this study are available upon request from the corresponding author. The data are not publicly available because of the institution’s policies.

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