

SOLUTIONS TO MODERN REFUGEE AND ECONOMIC CRISES IN THE LIGHT OF MUWAKHAT-E-MADINAH

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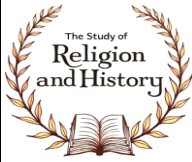
Abstract

The modern world faces two major challenges: refugee crises and economic instability. Refugees often struggle with displacement, lack of resources, and social acceptance, while host communities face economic and social pressures. A historical model that offers guidance is *Muwakhat-e-Madinah*—the brotherhood established by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) between the migrants (Muhajirun) and the hosts (Ansar) in Madinah. This system was based on compassion, resource-sharing, and social integration. Applying its principles today means encouraging solidarity between nations, fair distribution of wealth, and community-based support for refugees. Economically, it promotes cooperation, reduces inequality, and builds trust among diverse groups. By reviving the spirit of Muwakhat-e-Madinah, societies can create sustainable solutions that combine humanitarian values with economic stability, ensuring dignity and opportunity for all. The study found that Muwakhat-e-Madinah offers a practical model for refugee integration and economic solidarity. It demonstrates that refugees can be absorbed when treated as equals, highlights the importance of resource-sharing, and emphasizes reducing inequality by ensuring access to education, healthcare, and employment. The principles of Muwakhat-e-Madinah remain relevant today. Governments and communities should adopt policies that encourage refugee integration, promote cooperative economic programs, and ensure fair distribution of resources. International organizations can use this model to design sustainable strategies, balancing humanitarian duty with economic stability.

Keywords: Economic, brotherhood, compassion, resource-sharing, and social integration.

Introduction

The modern world faces unprecedented challenges in the form of refugee crises and economic instability. Refugees displaced by war, persecution, and poverty often struggle to find security and dignity, while host nations face resource pressures and



social tensions. Traditional humanitarian approaches, though valuable, often fail to ensure long-term integration and economic stability.

In this context, the historical model of Muwakhath-e-Madinah provides timeless lessons. When the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) and his followers migrated from Mecca to Medina in 622 CE, they arrived destitute and vulnerable. The Prophet established a system of brotherhood between the migrants (Muhajirun) and the hosts (Ansar), where resources, homes, and livelihoods were shared. This arrangement not only solved immediate refugee needs but also created economic stability, social harmony, and political unity.

Modern scholars argue that this model can be adapted to contemporary crises. For example, Saima Shehzadi (2024) emphasizes that *Muwakhath-e-Madinah* fostered economic stability by reducing inequality and promoting cooperation between diverse groups.¹ Similarly, Nasser Ul Islam (2022) highlights that Islam's historical treatment of refugees demonstrates inclusivity and citizenship-like rights, offering a contrast to restrictive modern policies.² Usama Alani (2021) further explains that the Prophet's crisis management strategies in Medina transformed hardship into opportunity, laying the foundation for sustainable community development.³

Causes and Consequences of The Hijrah: Establishment of The First Muslim Community (Ummah):

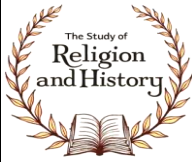
The Hijrah of Madinah is a landmark event in Islamic history that transformed a weak and oppressed group into a dignified, organized, and independent Ummah. The Hijrah was not merely a geographical migration; rather, it was a comprehensive religious, social, economic, and political revolution led by the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ. In this event, while the causes and consequences of migration are clearly evident, the practical model of "brotherhood" (Muwakhath) also emerges, offering a complete Islamic framework for addressing the challenges of modern refugees and global economic crises.

After arriving in Madinah, the first challenge was to transform a diverse and scattered population into a united Ummah. For this purpose, the great system of "Muwakhath-e-Madinah" (brotherhood of Madinah) was established, in which the

1. Shehzadi, S. (2024). *Economic Stability in the Context of the Muwakhath-e-Madina: Importance and Uses in the Modern Era*. Government Graduate College for Women, Lahore.

2. Islam, N. U. (2022). *Refugee Crises in the Contemporary World: An Islamic Perspective*. Research Gate.

3. Alani, U. A. (2021). *Economic and Social Crisis Management Strategies by Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) in Medina*. Munich Personal RePEc Archive.



Muhajirun (emigrants) and Ansar (helpers) were paired as brothers⁴. This brotherhood was not merely emotional or symbolic; rather, it was based on practical, economic, and social responsibilities.

The Holy Qur'an praises this sacrifice and altruism as follows:

وَالَّذِينَ تَبَوَّءُوا الدَّارَ وَالْإِيمَانَ مِنْ قَبْلِهِمْ يُحِبُّونَ مَنْ هَاجَرَ إِلَيْهِمْ وَلَا يَجِدُونَ فِي صُدُورِهِمْ حَاجَةً مِّمَّا أُوتُوا وَيُؤْثِرُونَ عَلَىٰ أَنْفُسِهِمْ وَلَوْ كَانَ بِهِمْ خَصَاصَةٌ ۚ وَمَنْ يُوقِ شَحْحَ نَفْسِهِ فَأُولَٰئِكَ هُمُ الْمُفْلِحُونَ⁵

Translation: “And [also for] those who settled in the home (i.e., Madinah) and [embraced] faith before them. They love those who migrated to them and find in their hearts no desire for what they were given, but give them preference over themselves, even though they are in privation. And whoever is protected from the greed of his own soul— it is they who are the successful.”

These are the very principles that can play a key role in solving today's economic and social problems. Brotherhood does not merely mean sympathy; it means practical partnership, equitable distribution of resources, and shared responsibility.

With the establishment of the State of Madinah, a constitutional framework was formed, which is known as the “Mithaq-e-Madinah” (Constitution of Madinah). This agreement defined the rights and duties of Muslims, Jews, and other tribes. It was one of the world's first welfare and multi-religious states, where religious freedom, justice, and mutual respect were ensured⁶. This model teaches us that a strong society is not built merely on religious harmony but on a system of justice and fairness.

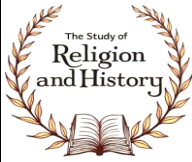
If we apply these principles to the present age, it becomes clear that the world is currently going through a major humanitarian crisis. Millions of people have been displaced due to war, poverty, and political instability. In such circumstances, Islamic teachings offer a comprehensive and holistic solution.

1. **The first and fundamental principle is “Human Dignity,”** which forms the very essence of the Islamic social system. Islam regards human beings not merely as social individuals but as honored creations of Allah Almighty. For this reason, in

4 . Safi-ur-Rahman al-Mubarakpuri (2000). *The Sealed Nectar (Al-Raheeq Al-Makhtum)*, p: 256. Maktaba Salafiyah, Lahore.

5 . Surah Al-Hashr, Verse 09

6. Hamidullah, Muhammad, Dr (1941). *The First Written Constitution of The World*, p: 07.



Islam, a person's worth is not determined by race, color, language, nationality, or geography, but solely by their humanity.

In the Madinan State, the treatment of the Muhajirun was a practical embodiment of this principle. They were integrated into society with honor, with no sense of inferiority or segregation. Instead, they were made part of collective life, their opinions were valued, and efforts were made to empower them socially and economically.

A practical example of this is the long-term hosting of Afghan refugees in Pakistan. Pakistan has provided shelter to millions of Afghan refugees for decades, which is a significant humanitarian contribution. However, Islamic principles also require that refugees should not remain limited to temporary shelter; rather, they should be integrated with dignity into education, employment, and social systems so that they can become self-reliant and active contributors to society instead of being a burden.

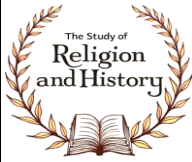
2. **The second principle, "Economic Justice,"** is a crucial pillar of Islamic society. It is not limited merely to the distribution of wealth but emphasizes creating opportunities through which every individual can sustain their livelihood with dignity. After the Hijrah to Madinah, this principle was practically implemented, where Prophet Muhammad ﷺ established an economic system that promoted self-reliance instead of dependency.

In Madinah, the goal was not merely to provide temporary assistance to the Muhajirun but to empower them on a sustainable basis. A prominent example of this is Hazrat Abdul Rahman bin Awf. When the Ansar offered him wealth and assistance, he replied with remarkable self-respect, asking to be shown the marketplace instead.

'Abdur Rahman bin 'Auf said, "When we came to Medina as emigrants, Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) established a bond of brotherhood between me and Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi'. Sa'd bin Ar-Rabi' said (to me), 'I am the richest among the Ansar, so I will give you half of my wealth and you may look at my two wives and whichever of the two you may choose I will divorce her, and when she has completed the prescribed period (before marriage) you may marry her.' 'Abdur-Rahman replied, "I am not in need of all that. Is there any marketplace where trade is practiced?"⁷

This incident clearly demonstrates that Islam encourages individuals toward hard work, trade, and self-sufficiency rather than long-term dependence on others.

7 . Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail. *Sahih Al-Bukhari*, Hadith 2048.



In today's context, the application of this principle is extremely important, especially in relation to refugees. If they are kept dependent on aid alone, they may become a long-term burden. However, if they are provided with skills, education, and employment opportunities, they can become self-reliant and even strengthen the economy. Microfinance (interest-free loans), technical training, and support for small businesses are effective tools in this regard.

3. **The third principle, "Collective Responsibility,"** is a fundamental and highly effective pillar of the Islamic social and economic system. Its core objective is to ensure that no individual in society is left in a state of hunger, poverty, or helplessness. The foundation of the welfare society established by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in Madinah was based on making collective responsibility not merely a moral recommendation, but a practical and functioning system.

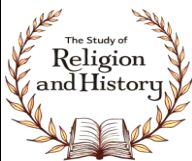
In Madinah, this principle was practically implemented by not only providing immediate assistance to the Muhajirun (emigrants) but also enabling their economic stability. The Ansar shared their land, wealth, and resources, while the Muhajirun were encouraged to engage in trade and labor to become self-sufficient. In this way, a balanced system was established in which no one remained permanently dependent, and resources were not concentrated in a few hands.

In today's world, the importance of this principle has increased even more, especially in the context of economic inequality, unemployment, and refugee crises. If Muslim societies make the Zakat system efficient and transparent—through centralized Zakat funds, digital identification of beneficiaries, and fair distribution of resources—poverty can be significantly reduced.

Similarly, Waqf institutions can be modernized to include educational scholarships, free medical services, and housing and employment programs for refugees. Through microfinance (interest-free loans), poor individuals and refugees can be supported in starting small businesses, enabling them to become self-reliant.

4. **The fourth principle, "Social Integration,"** is a highly important and practical aspect of Islamic society, best demonstrated in Madinah after the Hijrah. Prophet Muhammad ﷺ did not isolate the Muhajirun as a separate class; rather, he integrated them into society in such a way that they could live with dignity, independence, and cooperation.

Muwakhat transformed the Muhajirun and Ansar into one unified society, rather than two separate classes. Hazrat Abu Ayyub al-Ansari hosted the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ in his home and reserved the most honored place for him. He and his family blended so closely with the Muhajirun that any sense of alienation completely disappeared.



Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) had alighted in his house (viz. of Abu Ayyub Ansari at the time of his emigration to Medina) and he occupied the lower storey, whereas Abu Ayyub Ansari lived in the upper storey. One night, Abu Ayyub Ansari got up and said (to himself): (How unfortunate it is) that we walk above the head of Allah's Messenger (ﷺ), so they went aside and spent the night in a nook and then told Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) about it whereupon Allah's Apostle (ﷺ) said: The lower storey is more comfortable (for me). but he (Abu Ayyub Ansari) said: We (would not live) over the roof under which you live. So Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) shifted to the upper storey, whereas Abu Ayyub Ansari shifted to the lower storey.⁸

In the modern world, many countries isolate refugees in camps or segregated areas, causing them to become disconnected from society. This isolation leads to feelings of deprivation, unemployment, and sometimes crime or extremism. In contrast, adopting the Madinan model would involve integrating refugees into local communities, allowing them to live, work, and study alongside others.

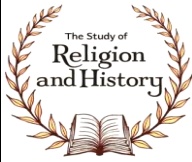
5. **The fifth principle, “Justice and Fairness,”** is the very soul and foundation of Islamic society. In the State of Madinah, justice was equal for all, and Muwakhat further strengthened this principle. When a financial dispute arose between an Ansari and a Muhajir, the Prophet Muhammad ﷺ gave a completely fair judgment without any bias.

In the State of Madinah, the system established by Prophet Muhammad ﷺ was based on one central pillar: equality before the law, without discrimination based on race, tribe, religion, or economic status. This is why both Muslims and non-Muslims enjoyed full legal protection and equal access to justice.

In Madinah, practical examples of this principle were evident. The Prophet ﷺ declared that even if his own daughter committed a crime, she would be held accountable under the law. This clearly demonstrates that no one is above justice in an Islamic system.

In today's context, this principle is especially important for refugees. In many countries, refugees are treated as second-class individuals, with limited legal protection and discriminatory policies. Islamic teachings reject such treatment. Refugees must be guaranteed protection of life, property, dignity, and equal access to education, healthcare, employment, and justice.

8 . Muslim, Ibn e Hajjaj , Abul Husain, *Sahih Muslim*, Hadith 2053c.



6. **The sixth principle, “Spiritual and Moral Development,”** is the foundational element without which no social or economic system can remain sustainable. After the Hijrah, the state established in Madinah was not merely a political structure but a comprehensive moral and spiritual environment in which Prophet Muhammad ﷺ placed character-building at the center of society.

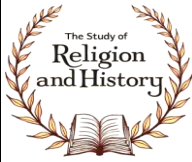
Hazrat Abu Talha donated his garden “Bairuha” in the path of Allah, and Hazrat Abu al-Dahdah gave away his best garden in charity. These sacrifices represent the highest level of moral and spiritual development.

Narrated 'Is-haq bin `Abdullah bin Al Talha: I heard Anas bin Malik saying, "Abu Talha had more property of date-palm trees gardens than any other amongst the Ansar in Medina and the most beloved of them to him was Bairuha garden, and it was in front of the Mosque of the Prophet (ﷺ). Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) used to go there and used to drink its nice water." Anas added, "When these verses were revealed:--'By no means shall you Attain righteousness unless You spend (in charity) of that Which you love. ' (3.92) Abu Talha said to Allah's Messenger (ﷺ) 'O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! Allah, the Blessed, the Superior says: By no means shall you attain righteousness, unless you spend (in charity) of that which you love. And no doubt, Bairuha' garden is the most beloved of all my property to me. So I want to give it in charity in Allah's Cause. I expect its reward from Allah. O Allah's Messenger (ﷺ)! Spend it where Allah makes you think it feasible.' On that Allah's Apostle said, 'Bravo! It is useful property. I have heard what you have said (O Abu Talha), and I think it would be proper if you gave it to your Kith and kin.' Abu Talha said, I will do so, O Allah's Apostle.' Then Abu Talha distributed that garden amongst his relatives and his cousins." ⁹

In Madinah, brotherhood was not just a social bond but a spiritual relationship based on faith, sincerity, and sacrifice. Values such as patience, gratitude, selflessness, humility, and tolerance were actively cultivated in daily life. These moral foundations transformed a fragmented society into a strong and united Ummah.

Moreover, in today’s global context, brotherhood is not limited to a nation or region but extends to all humanity. Millions have been displaced in regions such as Palestine, Syria, and Yemen, making collective moral responsibility even more essential.

9 . Bukhari, Muhammad bin Ismail. *Sahih al-Bukhari*, Hadith 1461



Islam teaches that helping the oppressed, feeding the hungry, and supporting the vulnerable are not just social acts but religious duties. If Muslim societies adopt shared humanitarian policies and coordinated support systems, refugee crises can be addressed more effectively.

Ultimately, spiritual and moral development is the pillar that strengthens all other principles—human dignity, economic justice, social integration, justice, and collective responsibility. With this foundation, society becomes not only stable but also a model of peace and compassion for all humanity.

Conclusion:

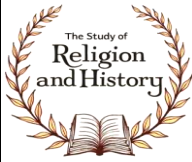
The principles of brotherhood (Muwakhat) established after the Hijrah in Madinah present a complete and practical framework for addressing contemporary refugee and economic crises. The Madinan model transformed displaced and vulnerable individuals into empowered and dignified members of society through human dignity, economic justice, collective responsibility, social integration, justice, and spiritual development. These principles were not theoretical ideals but were implemented as a lived reality under the leadership of Prophet Muhammad ﷺ, creating a balanced and inclusive society where every individual was valued and supported.

In the modern world, where millions of people face displacement due to war, poverty, and instability, these principles offer a timeless solution. The Madinan approach emphasizes that refugees should not be seen as a burden but as human beings with rights, potential, and dignity. Through fair economic systems, inclusive social policies, and shared moral responsibility, societies can transform refugees into productive contributors rather than dependent populations. This requires moving beyond temporary aid toward long-term integration, empowerment, and justice-based systems.

Ultimately, the Madinan model teaches that sustainable peace and development can only be achieved when societies are built on compassion, equity, and moral responsibility. By applying these principles in modern governance and humanitarian policies, the global community can not only resolve refugee and economic challenges but also establish a more just, humane, and stable world order inspired by the teachings of Islam.

Recommendations:

1. Governments and international organizations should incorporate the principles of Muwakhat-e-Madinah into modern refugee policies, treating refugees as active participants in social and economic systems rather than temporary burdens.



2. Host countries should avoid isolating refugees in camps and instead promote full social integration through shared education, healthcare, housing, and employment opportunities within local communities.
3. Zakat and Waqf systems should be modernized through transparent and digital mechanisms to ensure efficient and fair distribution of resources to refugees and vulnerable populations.
4. International cooperation should be strengthened so that refugee responsibilities are shared fairly among nations, reducing pressure on individual host countries and ensuring global humanitarian balance.
5. Legal frameworks should guarantee refugees equal rights to safety, education, healthcare, employment, and justice, while actively preventing discrimination and social exclusion.
6. Educational, religious, and media institutions should promote values of compassion, brotherhood, and moral responsibility to build public awareness and support for refugee integration and humanitarian solidarity.

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