



INTERFAITH DIALOGUE IN 20TH CENTURY; A CASE STUDY OF DR. ATAULLĀH SIDDIQUI (1954-2020)

Muhammad Mubashir Saleem

M.Phil. Scholar Islamic Studies, KFUEIT, Pakistan

Email: fmsaleem558@gmail.com

Dr. Muhammad Shahid Habib

Assistant Professor of Islamic Studies/Comparative Religions, Institute of Humanities and Arts, KFUEIT, Pakistan

Email: shahidhbeeb@gmail.com

Dr. Syed Hamid Farooq Bukhari

Head, Department of Islamic Studies

University of Gujrat.

Email: hamid.farooq@uog.edu.pk

Abstract:

The importance of interfaith dialogue has largely increased in this era of globalization. Interfaith dialogue is the way forward to achieve a better world to prosper. Consequently, many Muslims became involved in the dialogue with monotheistic religions especially with Christianity. In modern era, numerous prominent Muslim scholars have devoted their services for conducting Interfaith Dialogue with West. So, this paper aims to explore works of Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui (1954-2020) for interfaith dialogue with respect to methodological, thematic, and theological perspectives. To explore the contributions of Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui, these basic research questions will be addressed in this study; which methodological approach did he follow in the interpretation and evaluation of Interfaith Dialogue in modern era? Which are the salient features of his approach as Muslim scholar on this area of research? and what is the theological aspect of his works? As far as the methodology of this paper is concerned, this research work will try to address these research questions through case study method. Qualitative and analytical approaches will be utilized. Findings reveal that Dr. Ataullāh emphasized the principle of mutual understanding for mutual benefits. Predominantly, this dialogue is more beneficial for Muslims in this contemporary era than other religious communities. He focused on the centrality of God and Prophet (SAW). He emphasized on commonalities among religions especially with Christianity for mutual benefits. The issue of implementation of Shari'ah is very crucial to discuss in relations with Christians.

Key words: *Inter-faith Dialogue, Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui, Christian-Muslim Relations, Islam, and Church*

1.1 Introduction:

The importance of dialogue cannot be denied for peace, religious freedom, mutual co-existence, and harmony. The Holy Qurān commands all people of the book to come together on commonalities. (al-Qurān, 3:64) For Muslims, this dialogue is more significant due to several reasons.

First, Islam calls for Interfaith dialogue from very beginning. The Qurān emphasizes the need for dialogue with Ahl-i-Kitāb in an appropriate way. Holy Prophet (SAW) sent letters to all non-Muslim Kings and sent messages for Interfaith dialogue. He himself asked his companions to learn foreign languages to convey the message of Islam.

Moreover, it is essential to eradicate the misconceptions raised by West against Islam. For instance, West has concerns about the concept of Jihad in Islam believing Islam is the religion



of sword only. So, this dialogue within the prescribed guidelines set by Qurān and Sunnah is more beneficial for Muslims.

Consequently, many Muslims became involved in the dialogue with monotheistic religions especially with Christianity. In 20th century, among these notable Muslim thinkers, Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui was an eminent scholar of this field. Therefore, an attempt has been made through this research work to explore their works for interfaith dialogue with respect to their methodological, thematic, and theological aspects.

1.1.1 Research Questions:

To explore the contributions of Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui, these basic research questions will be addressed in this study; which methodological he followed in his book and in the interpretation and evaluation of Interfaith Dialogue in modern era? Which are the salient features of his approach as Muslim scholar on this area of research? and what is the theological aspect of his thought?

1.1.2 Methodology:

This research work will try to address these research questions through a case study method. Qualitative and analytical approaches will be adopted. This work will utilize available written published sources on Dr. Ataullāh's approach on Interfaith dialogue.

1.2 Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui (1954-2020)

An overview of the life and times of Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui is presented here.

1.2.1.1 Life and Family

Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui was born in 1954 in India. In 1982 he decided to come to United Kingdom for further studies and here he joined the Islamic Foundation which is based in Markfield Leicestershire. In this institution, he became a research fellow in the field of interfaith dialogue.¹

He died at the age of 66 on Sunday November 8, 2020. He left his family including his wife, Alia Siddiqui, two daughters and four Granddaughters. His family remembered him as "an inspiration father to two daughters, a loving husband and a doting grandfather to four granddaughters." Furthermore, they said "his wisdom and humor will be greatly missed in our homes."

Education and career

After coming to the UK for higher education, he completed his BA Honors and Ph.D. from the University of Birmingham. Moreover, he also received an honorary Ph.D. from University of Gloucestershire in 2008 in recognition of his contribution to interfaith studies and education. He was declared as a brilliant scholar of Islamic Studies.

He started his academic career as a research fellow in the early 1980s in the field of interreligious relations at Markfield Institute of Higher Education. For Islamic Foundation and its sister institution, MIHE, he served for some 40 years.

1.2.1.2 Research fields.

Dr. Ataullāh was highly appreciated and recognized due to his contributions in different spheres of education. His research interests included religious pluralism, interfaith understanding, Islam and West, Islam in South Asia, Muslim education, Muslim chaplaincy, Training of Imams and Ulema and Christian Muslim relations in the UK.



1.2.1.3 Interest in Interfaith studies

Yusri Mohamad Ramli explains how Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui moved towards the study of Christian-Muslim relations and Interfaith dialogue. During 1980's, the works of Dr. Ataullāh showed a traditional view on Christianity and its goals. Most probably, he had this standing due to his background and influences from his home state, India. It happened to most of Muslim families who moved in the world for education, and they intended to be firm with the faith of Islam. During this initial period, he did not engage in dialogue. But later in the mid-1990s, he started to engage with Christians, and he was ready to offer dialogue. It was the first time in moving towards interfaith relations in Britain and to some extent in the world. His book "Christian Muslim Dialogue in the 20th Century" was a breakthrough in this field. It was published in 1997. Apart from this masterpiece, he also left some of the best documents on Interfaith relations, Contemporary Islam, Islamic education, and chaplaincy.

1.3 Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui and Interfaith Dialogue: Methodological Aspects

1.3.1 Methodology of Dr. Ataullāh for his major work:

His methodology can be analyzed with the points given below.

1.3.1.1 Historical research with less focus on theological debates

Primarily, the major representative work "Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century" of Dr. Ataullāh Siddiqui is based on providing historical perspective of Christian-Muslims relations. It starts from the mid-19th century. However, it is principally about the 20th century. Hence, the theological discussions about Christians and dealing of Christianity in the Qurān and Hadith are not the chief concern. Moreover, the development of Christian-Muslim relations in the medieval era in Spain, for example, is not discussed as there are numerous books and articles available multiple languages such as English and these are sufficient to deal these aspects.

Furthermore, this work does not cover the question of Jihad although it is one the important subjects. Here, an updated and detailed study is required to explain this concept in the present international scenario. Siddiqui, Attaullah. (1997)

1.3.1.2 Objectives of his book

Dr. Ataullāh himself highlights the major objectives of his study. According to him.

- The first aim of this work is to inspect the theological as well as social progresses between Muslims and Christians from initiation of the planned dialogues in very brief manner.
- Secondly, it is meant to highlight the reasons for Muslims' involvement, their hopes as well as concerns.
- He also aims to evaluate to what extent; Muslims are ready to consider numerous complex matters raised by Christians for Muslims and to analyze the possibility of broader debate between the two societies.

1.3.1.3 Library research and field work

This work is limited to only English sources. He consulted other sources in French, Arabic and Urdu only when it was necessary.

As far as the tools of research are concerned, this work was based on a mixture of documentary research, questionnaires, and interviews.

For this reason, chapter No. 1 and 2 of this work are based entirely on published documents and the remaining chapters draw on questionnaires, his personal communication, and interviews. He conducted twenty-four interviews, including five with Christians. He also received 22 replies from 134 questionnaires which were sent to numerous Muslims.



1.3.2 Why did he focus on 1970 onwards dialogue?

There are numerous reasons for his focus on dialogue efforts after 1970 particularly in his work and generally in his writings and discussions.

1. Since Muslim involvement began with the establishment of a combined front in 1954 against socialism and atheism at Lebanon steadily. But after 1970, particularly, the sociological and theological questions became the focus of the dialogue between the two communities of Muslims and Christians.
2. Moreover, 1970 is a decisive point in the relations of Christian-Muslim. In 1970, a dialogue was initiated by the World Council of Churches with numerous faiths and People of Living Faiths. A new unit merged in 1990. It is now known as the Office on Inter-Religious Relations. It was an official acknowledgement by the Protestant and Orthodox Churches for a new connection with Muslims and other religions.
3. When the Second Vatican Council (1962-5) acknowledged *Nostra Aetate* as part of the authorized instruction of the Roman Catholic Church. Its secretariat prepared Church members to engage in dialogue through publications and teaching. Its first guidelines were published in 1969.
4. Furthermore, the very first advanced level Muslim delegation from Cairo, Egypt was also accommodated by this Secretariat in 1970. It was the first official encounter between Christian and Muslims after the declaration of *Nostra Aetate*.

All these factors are significant in the history of interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Christians in modern era. Therefore, Dr. Ataullāh deals with this research field considering these factors.

1.3.3 Role of Perception in Study of Religions

He started to deal with interreligious matters, Dr. Ataullāh emphasized on the considering the past perception both communities of Muslims and Christians. According to him, “religions do not meet in a vacuum”. The believers of different religions always counter each other, and numerous events shape their perceptions and apprehensions. Thus, they try understanding each other. For example, he recalls that understanding of Christianity by Muslims is learned by their faithfulness to Jesus Christ. But they are understood with a tradition of Christianity during the past two centuries.

Same is the case with Muslims who also shape 'images and perceptions of others' religions. Although Jesus and his mother Mary are given distinct status in Islam and however, Muslims still assess Christians and build perceptions about them from a different aspect in this regard. So, both communities assess each other with the help of self-made images. Siddiqui, Attaullah (1997).

1.3.3.1 Emphasis on Muslims for Changing their Perceptions.

He emphasized the changing perception towards other communities especially in Britain. He was of the view that Muslims, particularly in Britain, should rethink about their relationship with other communities being part of a multicultural society. He thought that the Muslim attitude towards all non-Muslims should be rebuilt. Perceiving all people other than Muslims as antagonistic to Islamic beliefs and conspirators against Muslims should be reassessed. Muslim society is one of many other societies by natural design and this diversity would exist till end of human existence. So this demands to build multicultural society on the basis of promoting commonly known good deeds and thoughts (*mar ūf*) and rejection of commonly known evils (*munkar*).



It is a matter of fact that the Muslims and non-Muslims in Britain are sharing their classrooms, hospital words and workplaces but despite all these commonalities, Muslim discourse is focusing on "our demands" and "our needs". Thus, it is totally about "us".

Dr. Ataullah himself interpreted his mission of Christian-Muslim understanding saying that communities should not only work together for their benefits but also for the broader society. He elaborated that these two communities held several commonalities, a common heritage and in most of the cities of Britain they were living side by side. Unfortunately, this society in which people are living was a masked society. They were not ready and reluctant to know about each other due to their misconceptions. He also stated that people should respect and celebrate their differences. So, he believed that working together would lead to developing understanding between these two communities.

He intended to clarify for other religions that the life of holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW) was based on compassion for human beings, and he was a well-wisher of humanity. This was a real challenge for Muslims of the modern era to present the life of the last Prophet in this proposed way.

1.4 Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui and Interfaith Dialogue: A Thematic Perspective

1.4.1 Meaning and Purpose of Dialogue

As an eminent Muslim scholar of interfaith dialogue, Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui presents a deep insight on the real intention and nature of dialogue between Muslims and Christians. He clearly explains that all human beings are common by God in respect of their relation to Adam. All are the children of Adam (17:70). He believed that this honor must be maintained for all human beings without any discrimination. It is plan of God, not an accident.

Another important element in interfaith dialogue is faith itself. According to him, there is no interfaith without faith. So, one must participate in dialogue in meaningful manner along with his values. With own faith, one would come to the dialogue table. In this way, Muslims should participate in dialogue taking inspiration from Islamic tradition.

He mentions the purpose of dialogue in a very comprehensive way and declares.

"Our whole purpose in dialogue is how to find a way to negotiate the differences and to negotiate what is involved in the whole idea of pluralism. How are you going to define it and act it? That is a responsibility derived from our common humanity." (London, 2023)

Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui was an amazing ambassador of Islam on interfaith platforms and respectful of other faiths. He understood the value of mutual respect that comes from mutual understanding. He supported the idea that through understanding of the commonalities of the religions, it is possible build trustworthy and friendly communities.

1.4.2 Why do Muslims mistrust dialogue with Christians?

One of the major areas of research for Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui is to address the concerns and apprehensions of both Muslims and Christians in dialogue. Here Muslims' concerns are presented.

According to Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui, some Muslims prefer not to involve in dialogue as the Qurān declares that the Jews and Christians cannot become 'friends' of Muslims. These Muslims present historical evidence to support such concerns. On the other hand, some others suggest that the real standard is this Qurānic verse which declares, 'to you your Way and to me mine'. Siddique, Ataullah. (2003).

There are other certain reasons for mistrust of Muslims regarding dialogue.



1.4.2.1 The West is secular.

Some Muslims believe that dialogue by the West is continuation of the Western secular tradition. They claim that Muslims' dealing with Christianity is indeed dealing with secularism. It seems correct by the Muslims to question an apparently religious dialogue which has all the secular elements.

1.4.2.2 Political and Intellectual Disparity

Another area of mistrust between Muslims and Christians is political and intellectual disparity. The Christians can involve in dialogue as they are intellectually prepared and politically influential, and they have nothing to lose. On the other hand, the Muslims do not have 'anything' on economical and intellectual level. Christians have dominance on many fields in the modern era, so they are enjoying same domination in dialogue as well. Muslims have deficiency of required intellectual apparatuses to respond to a situation. They join a dialogue whose plan they have not established. When Muslim children are sent to west universities to get 'Western intellectual tools', it is observed that most of these students become 'Westerners' in respect of mindset and attitude and prefer not to come back to their home country.

1.4.2.3 Attitude of Western Powers to Muslims in history

With reference to dialogue, Muslims classify the six elements of 'historical reckoning of colonialism and Christianity'. The elements include conversion, commerce, conquest, colonization, crusade, and curiosity. The Indian historians claim that the Christian Church was working here from the very first century of the Christian arrival.

The British East India Company came to India and started trade treaty. The EIC, which not only provided arms and textiles, but also supported missionaries. In this way, it gradually moved from trade to the conversion of the locals to Christianity. Such aspects have played a significant role in developing and strengthening Muslims' distrust of dialogue.

1.4.2.4 Factor of Orientalism

The fifth and one of the most influential areas of mistrust is the factor of Orientalism. Orientalism is defined as the attempts to convey the knowledge of the East to the Western languages. However, the purpose was not just this decent intention. This 'knowledge' was delivered by the Western colonial powers for profitmaking, diplomatic and missionary objectives. The Muslim perception regarding the West is that it intended to 'collapse' Islam. Moreover, it is also assumed that Muslim nations will never be permitted to exist freely of the West. Thus, the religious conflict with the Muslims is also attributed to the Western powers and the role of Orientalists.

Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui also quotes the words of Baron Carra de Vaux of France who declared colonialization as a gradual deliberate development of alteration in the Muslim world and the threat of native response. Siddique, Attaullah. (2003).

1.4.3 Church and Dialogue

Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui provided a detailed survey of the Church's involvement in dialogue. This overview would help to understand Church's initiatives, documents, and its encounter with Muslims.

1.4.3.1 Protestant Church:

The Christian churches' initiative in dialogue with other religions has a lot to do with its first explanatory mission at the beginning of this century. The first missionary conference, which was held in 1910 AD in Edinburgh, took the initiative to reconsider the missionary activities in the world, and in the same conference in which about 1,200 people participated representatives of 160 Christian organizations, and eight study committees were established.



However, the First World War and the devastation that accompanied it somewhat undermined the certainty of Westerners in their abilities and their self-confidence, to the extent that some of their thinkers began to see that “the decline of the West has become something to be repulsed from. The other factor that shook the confidence of Westerners in their self-confidence was the success of the Bolshevik revolution in 1917 AD and the effects that resulted from that in the capitalist West. These effects left their imprint on the Christian churches themselves, while the prevailing position in Christian missionary circles before World War I was that other religions have no value, and this position changed with the second conference of missionaries held in Jerusalem 1928 A.D. The position of the missionaries shifted from a position of strategic planning to include non-Christians in the Christian religion to a position of an “introspective” evaluation of Christianity itself, as the participants in this conference acknowledged and acknowledged the values found in other religions. The conference called on all believers in God to join the Christians to confront the growing socialism and the spread of atheism and secular culture.

The third factor that contributed to advancing the dialogue process was the participation of Handrik Kraemer in the missionary conference held in Tambram (India) in 1938 AD. The participation of this figure in this conference had a great impact, and his book “Christian Discourse in a Non-Christian World” became the subject of the conference’s deliberations.

Kraemer sought to clarify the importance of the concept of "values" implicit in non-Christian religions. He explained that the evangelist must express himself in a way that non-Christians can understand, and this will not be possible unless this victory is able to understand the terms used initially and exploit them in a different context.

These three missionary conferences - the Edinburgh Conference in 1910 AD, the Jerusalem Conference in 1928 AD and the Tambram Conference in 1938 AD - changed the direction of dialogue among the Protestant churches. Ten years after the date of the third conference, the World Council of Churches was established, and deliberations continued within the church on how to deal with followers of other religions until 1971 AD when the World Sweeping Council established the "Dialogue with the Peoples of Living Religions" unit.

As a result, a series of dialogue meetings took place between Muslims and Christians, but the participation of Muslims in these meetings was based on political change and cooperation on the social and ethnic level. This political change resulted in the birth of several independent countries that either adopted the Marxist-Socialist system of government or the method of capitalist rule. In both cases, kings and the army played important roles. The Islamic masses and the Islamic revival movements considered the regimes that adopted the socialist or capitalist system as a threat to Islamic values and beliefs, and even to the social structure of the Muslim community itself.

Under these circumstances, the invitation of the churches to dialogue, especially the invitation of the Western churches, was an attractive opportunity for Muslims, as they considered the churches as allies in war against materialism and all kinds of grievances. Thus, we see that while the churches were looking at their theological sources to try to find a way out for religious pluralism and to deal with other religions, the priority of Muslims was to cooperate with churches to achieve social justice and perhaps to form a front against the secular-socialist trend, which is a front for atheism. The Muslims were expecting the sweeper to support them in claiming their political rights and helping them to cleanse the moral chaos caused by the infiltration of Western materialism in Islamic countries.



1.4.3.2 The Roman Catholic Church:

The Second Council of the Vatican was initiated by the Pope John XXIII. The purpose of this conference was to reform "the Church's method of teaching and organization" to conform to the requirements of the stage. As for the general consideration of this council, it was the unification of the Church and all Christians across the world. This council took place on October 11, 1962, and included four sessions that extended over different periods until it ended on December 8, 1965. During these sessions the issue of Jews and Judaism was discussed several times. It was said that we discuss the conference's statement on Islam.

Perhaps the most important statement issued by the Second Vatican Council is the document "Nostra Aetate" (in our time), this document stated that Muslims worship one God and try their best to surrender all their affairs to God, as Abraham himself did. With reference to the Muslims' vision of Christ, this document stated that Muslims venerate Christ as a messenger. They also venerate poor mother Mary and believe in the last day of Judgment. Siddique, Attaullah. (2005). But the most important paragraph in the document is the following paragraph "Over the centuries there have been several conflicts between Muslims and Christians, but the Holy Council today invites everyone to forget the past, and empty the effort to reach mutual understanding." between the two parties for the benefit of all people, and for the two parties to work together to preserve peace, social justice, moral values and inviting others. Siddique, Attaullah. (2005).

It can be noted that the Christian position on the beliefs of the Muslims has shifted in this document from a position of accusation to a position of acknowledgment of the legitimacy of these Islamic beliefs.

As far as the reaction of Muslims to this document is concerned, many Muslims would agree with the motive behind such an appeal, but "forgetting the past" is very painful. Dr. Muhammad Hamidullah mentions that when the council was discussing this issue, the Muslims of France wrote a letter to the Pope in which he said: - "In order for Muslims to forget the past) the Church must officially declare the nullity of all decisions. Siddique, Attaullah. (1997).

1.5 Evaluation of the theological perspective of Dr. Ataullah's approach

1.5.1 Muslims and Ahl-i-Kitab

For believers of Islam, to believe in Christianity and Judaism are necessary as Islam declares their revelations as an important part of Islamic theology. Relation with these two faiths is strengthened in Islam by family lineage of the Holy Prophet Muhammad'(SAW) s through Isma'il, Ishaq and Ibrahim. The Qurān regularly mentions Hazrat Ibrahim as a role model for all Muslims to follow. Thus, this proves a strong connection among these monotheistic religions. Moreover, the status of Jews and Christians is well-defined in the primary sources of Islam, and they are clearly acknowledged as Ahl-i-Kitab (People of the Book), (al-Qurān, 29:46 and 3:64).

1.5.2 Centrality of God and Prophet

Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui established the base of his theories on interfaith dialogue on Qurān and Sunnah. According to him, both God and Prophet are principal figures for Muslim standpoint in relation with other religions. For this purpose, he mentions two important verses. Then he concludes that these two verses have a common relation between Islam and other faiths. This commonality is the supremacy of God. Conceptually, this thing is declared as the foundation of dialogue with Christians and Jews.

This central position of God has two other important aspects with reference to dialogue. One of these is the way God joins with people, (the Revelation of the Qurān), and the other aspect



is the means of the communication, (The Holy Prophet Muhammad (SAW). The Qurān is the major source of knowledge. It clarifies what is the Will of God and what was the purpose of creation. On the other hand, the Prophet is the first receiver of that revelation and thus he is the first person who acted according to this revelation. So, Muslims believe that both are most significant parts of Islam and equally significant areas in dialogue with Christians as well.

Another common factor between the two religions is revelation. However, it is assumed in completely different ways. In contrast to Islam, it is referred to incarnation of God in Jesus in Christianity. But in Islam, it refers to the Qurān revealed through the way of Prophet. Islam advocates that the necessity of human dependence on Revelation is a commonality in dialogue between Muslims and Ahl-i-Kitab. So, it needs to be followed. Siddique, Attaullah. (1997).

1.5.3 The image of the Prophet is crucial for relations.

Muslims believe that Prophet Muhammad has been insulted in the past. Orientalists carried forward this tradition and strengthened this point of view. In the modern era, the role of religion has been ignored and rejected in the society in the West. But the image of the Prophet has been discussed widely by other faiths as well. However, a change can be noticed in the last two decades by some Christian theologians. The shift regarding the Holy Prophet, as an 'impostor' has been witnessed to that of a 'respectable' by some notable Western writers such as Karen Armstrong. Dr. Ataullah quoted the words of Ahmad von Denter who rightly points out that fundamental issue of Christian-Muslim dialogue is the real nature of the Prophet Muhammad (SAW) as Muhammad is a true Prophet who delivered his message faithfully. Siddique, Attaullah. (1997).

1.6 Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui and his Impact:

Daw Samantak Das was of the view that Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui himself was a devoted Muslim who was not an enemy of other religions. Dr. Siddiqui also believed in discussion, reason, compassion, logic, and dialogue to develop harmony among different faiths.

His work will always be recognized in Britain and across the world for interreligious harmony. Rabiha Hannan, the co-founder of an Islamic organization named the New Horizons, acknowledged that he was such a visionary person who helped to change perspective of British Muslims towards other religions, and he remained part of organizing the Leicester Council of Faiths, the national Christian-Muslim forum and helped to flourish Interfaith network UK.

He was such a humble person that he did not wish any recognition and award for his services during his life from the government and praise from the public. But people from different institutions, religions and academic fields acknowledged his services for the state and appreciated his professional achievements for inter-religious relations particularly in Britain.

1.7 Conclusion

Here are the concluding remarks on the thoughts of Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui on interfaith dialogue. According to him.

Dialogue is not merely a talk with members of other beliefs. But it is also a firm belief that our spiritual values should be shared with the whole society. Dialogue is beneficial only when it proves fruitful and successful in bringing people together.

Dr. Ataullah emphasized on the considering the past perception, both communities of Muslims and Christians. According to him, "religions do not meet in a vacuum". The followers of different religions always counter each other, and numerous events shaped their perceptions and apprehensions.

According to him, both God and the Prophet (SAW) have the central position in interfaith dialogue with other religions.



He also believed that, for a meaningful dialogue, there must be an "intra-faith" dialogue about its dialogue with other faiths. Unfortunately, scholars especially in Islam, never discuss amongst themselves in their own community about how they should conduct and involve in the issues of dialogue. Consequently, when scholars turn up for a dialogue, they do not even identify the purpose of dialogue.

Demarcation of the thoughts of Dr. Ataullah Siddiqui can be presented in his own words that there would be.

"No inter faith without faith".

1.8 Recommendations

At the end of this research work, it is also suggested that there are still many areas related to this topic which require the attention of researchers. These are the following recommendations and suggestions.

- Dr. Ataullah has addressed many issues regarding interfaith dialogue, apart from books and articles, in numerous conferences and live sessions which can be covered in a Ph.D. thesis to provide broader perspective on his thoughts.
- Another significant area is to address, separately, his debates on some very crucial issues in detail. These include preaching religion in non-Muslims countries, status of non-Muslims in Muslim states and concerns of minorities in Muslim states.
- He lives in Britain and his practical involvement was also in the interfaith dialogue in Britain. So, a dedicated effort should be made to evaluate his efforts for the promotion of interfaith dialogue and their results in Britain.
- He, on numerous occasions, refers to the religious and constitutional issues regarding Christian-Muslim relations in Pakistan. It would also be a significant and relevant research to evaluate Christian-Muslim relations in Pakistan from his perspective.

References

- BBC, UK. "Christian-Muslim Forum Launched."
http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/4641066.stm.
- Berkley Center, George Town. "Ataullah Siddiqui."
<https://berkleycenter.georgetown.edu/people/ataullah-siddiqui>.
- Das, Samantak. "Professor Ataullah Siddiqui of Kalimpong "
<https://www.newageislam.com/islamic-personalities/samantak-das/professor-ataullah-siddiqui-of-kalimpong-demonstrated-that-a-devout-muslim-was-not-an-enemy-of-other-faiths/d/123532>.
- Don, Abdul Ghafar, Razaleigh Muhamat, Salasiah Hanin Hamjah, Fariza Md Sham, Badlihasham Mohd Nasir, Muhammad Faisal Ashaari, Siti Rugayah Tibek, *et al*. "Da'wah in the West: An Analysis of the Role of the Islamic Foundation (If) in Promoting the True Image of Islam." *Advances in Natural and Applied Sciences* 6, no. 4 (2012): 541-45.
- Dr. Qadir Bakhsh, and Maqsood Ahmed. "Interfaith Dialogue: An Islamic Perspective." (2014).
- Gilliat-Ray, Sophie. "In Memoriam: Ataullah Siddiqui – a Personal Reflection."
<http://blogs.cardiff.ac.uk/islamukcentre/sophie-gilliat-ray-in-memoriam-ataullah-siddiqui-a-personal-reflection/>.



- Imam, Manzar. "Majlis-E-Muzakarah (08-01-2016) Maghribi Mumalik Main Islam Aur Musalmanon Kay Tain Pai Janay Wali Nafrat-Asbaab Aur Hal." <http://www.deoband.net/blogs/archives/01-2016>.
- Jan, Aziz Ullah, and Ashfaq U Rehman. "Assessment of Interfaith Harmony between Muslims and Hindus in Socio-Cultural Activities in Swat." *Burjis* 6 (2019): 75-84.
- MIHE, UK. "Professor of Christian-Muslim Relations, and Interfaith Understanding." <https://www.mihe.ac.uk/academic-staff/professor-ataullah-siddiqui>.
- Patel, Asha. "Tributes Made to 'Brilliant' and 'Humble' Professor Who Died Last Week." <https://www.leicestermercury.co.uk/news/leicester-news/tributes-made-brilliant-humble-professor-4704619>.
- Ramli, Ahmad Faizuddin, and Jaffary Awang. "The Practices and Approaches of Interfaith Dialogue at Leicester, Uk." *Journal of Techno-Social* 7, no. 1 (2015).
- Ramli, Yusri Mohamad. "Obituary: Ataullah Siddiqui (1954-2020)." *International Journal of Islamic Thought* 18 (2020): 145-45.
- Sener, Omer, Frances Sleaf, and Paul Weller. *Dialogue Theories II*. London: Dialogue Society, 2016.
- Shafiq, Muhammad, and Mohammed Abu-Nimer. *Interfaith Dialogue: A Guide for Muslims*. International Institute of Islamic Thought (IIIT), 2007.
- Shah, Dr. Mahboob Ali. "Comparative Study of Islamic and Western Ideologies on Interfaith Dialogue." *Ma'arif-e-Awliya* 14, no. 2 (2017): 139-66.
- Siddiqui, Ataullah. "Believing and Belonging in a Pluralistic Society: Exploring Resources in Islamic Traditions." *Current Dialogue Issue* (2009).
- . "The Changing Perception of Islam Christian Theology and Theologians." *INTERRELIGIOUS INSIGHT* 3, no. 4 (2005): 12.
- . *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century*. Macmillan Press Ltd., 1997. doi:10.1057/978023038230.
- . "Christian-Muslim Dialogue: Problems and Challenges." *ENCOUNTERS-LEICESTER*- 2 (1996): 123-36.
- . "Ethics in Islam: Key Concepts and Contemporary Challenges." *Journal of moral education* 26, no. 4 (1997): 423-31.
- . "Fifty Years of Christian-Muslim Relations: Exploring and Engaging in a New Relationship." *Bradley Lecture on the occasion of Pontificio Istituto Di Studi Arabi ED 'Islamistica's (PISAI) 50th anniversary* (2000).
- . "The Henry Martyn Institute of Islamic Studies: An Attempt to Christianise Muslims in India." *Study paper* (1984).
- . "Here We Are Reproducing Executive Summary of the Report Submitted to Mr Bill Rammell, Mp, Minister of State for Lifelong Learning, Further and Higher Education, Uk, on 10th April 2007 by Dr Ataullah Siddiqui, Director, Markfield Institute of Higher Education, Leicester, Uk." *Islamic Studies* 46, no. 4 (2007): 559-70.
- . "Inter-Faith Relations in Britain since 1970—an Assessment." *Exchange* 39, no. 3 (2010): 236-50.
- . *Islam and Other Faiths: Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi*. USA: The International Institute of Islamic Thought. 1998.
- . "Islam at Universities in England." *Mweeting the Needs and Investing in the Future* (2007).
- . "„Islamic Witnesses in a Pluralistic World “." *Concilium* 1 (2011): 51-60.



- . "Ismail Raji Al-Faruqi: From "Urubah" to Ummatic Concerns." *American Journal of Islamic Social Sciences* 16, no. 3 (1999): 1.
- . "Issues in Co-Existence and Dialogue: Muslims and Christians in Britain." *Muslim-Christian perceptions of dialogue today* (2000): 183-200.
- . "Markfield Institute of Higher Education." *Islamic Studies* 42, no. 3 (2003): 509-16.
- . "Muslim Perceptions of Asian Christianity." In *The Oxford Handbook of Christianity in Asia*. 378-91: Oxford University Press Oxford, 2014.
- . "A Muslim View of Christianity." *Islam and Inter-Faith Relations: The Gerald Weisfeld Lectures 2006* (2006): 121-36.
- . *Muslim Youth in Britain: Cultural and Religious Conflict in Perspective*. na, 2004.
- . "Muslims' Concern in Dialogue." The University of Birmingham, 1994.
- . "Muslims and Christians Face to Face." JSTOR, 2001.
- . "Muslims and Interfaith Dialogue in Britain—an Overview." *World Faiths Encounter*, no. 15 (1996): 14-19.
- . "Muslims in Britain: Past and Present." *The Bulletin* (1995): 40-49.
- . "Muslims in Dialogue with Christians: Context and Concerns." *CSIC papers/Christian-Muslim reflections* (1995).
- . "Muslims in Dialogue with Christians: Expositions and Explanations." *CSIC papers/Christian-Muslim reflections* (1996).
- . "Muslims in the Contemporary World: Dialogue in Perspective." *World Faiths Encounter* 20 (1998): 26-7.
- . "Muslims of Tibet." *The Tibet Journal* 16, no. 4 (1991): 71-85.
- . "Pope Francis, Islam, and Dialogue." In *Pope Francis and Interreligious Dialogue*. 169-82: Springer, 2018.
- . "Portrayal of Christianity and Use of Christian Sources in the Tafsir-I Sanai of Sanauallah Amritsari (D. 1948)." [In English]. *International Journal of Asian Christianity* 2, no. 1 (29 Mar. 2019 2019): 89-100.
- . "The Purpose of Interfaith Dialogue." *The Markfield Institute of Higher Education* (2016).
- . "Seyyed Hossein Nasr (1933—)." In *Christian-Muslim Dialogue in the Twentieth Century*. 149-62: Springer, 1997.
- . "Teaching Islam Via" in-Built" Syllabi: Engaging Plurality within a Muslim Higher Education Institution in England." *Pluralisation of Theologies at European Universities* (2020): 287-300.
- . "Text and Context: Making Sense of Islam in the Modern World." *Liberating Texts* (2008).
- Siddiqui, Ataullah, Earle H Waugh, Abdullahi Hassan Zaroug, and Ahmed Nezar Kobeisy. "Symposium on Islamic Epistemology." (
- Siddiqui, Dr. Ataullah. "Our Interconnected Future." (<http://www.mihe.org.uk>)
- Home > Our Interconnected Future.
- UK, The Inter Faith Network for the. "Time to Time: Faiths at the Table of Dialogue in Today's Uk." London, 2003.