



Original Article

Ibn Taimiyyah's View of Al-Tasyabbuh: Analysis of The Book *Iqtida' Al-Sirat Al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafati Ashab Al-Jahim*

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ABSTRACT

The issue of *al-tasyabbuh* (imitating) that had been rooted within the Islamic society in Malaysia nowadays are getting more serious. This issue can weaken the *aqidah* and destroy the personality of a Muslim in a subconscious manner. Excessive toleration on imitating non-Muslims could pose a religious pluralism that is forbidden (in Islam). On uncovering this issue on *al-tasyabbuh*, Ibn Taimiyyah is one of the earliest scholars that had written a specific writing regarding this issue, that is a book by the name *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafati Ashab al-Jahim*. Therefore, this is a research that is discussing about Ibn Taimiyyah's view on this issue of *al-tasyabbuh* in the book *al-Iqtida'*. This research comprises of Ibn Taimiyyah's biography and the simplified content of his book and his method on discussing about *al-tasyabbuh*. On accomplishing this objective, the content analysis method was applied to identify Ibn Taimiyyah's view on *al-tasyabbuh*. Research shows that Ibn Taimiyyah had a serious concern onto this issue, especially when imitating the non-Muslims. He divided this issue into three parts that is, the prohibition of imitating non-Muslim, Satan and the Bedouins and A'jam (non-Arabs). But there are some of his views that is impractical due to current developments and socio-cultural changes currently. There are some cultural aspect that cannot be avoided, such as the way that people dress (non-religious dressing) and technology. This is because majority of the Muslims are consumers and they all use the technologies that had been developed by non-Muslims. Thus, Muslims should be aware of the issue of *al-tasyabbuh* so that the social interaction with the non-Muslims does not deviate from the *Syara'* (Islamic laws).

Keywords: *al-tasyabbuh*; Ibn Taimiyyah; religious pluralism; social interaction

Introduction

It is compulsory for Muslims to follow Rasulullah SAW in every aspect in life, *aqidah*, *sharia* and manners (*akhlaq*). In addition, it is also compulsory for Muslims to abstain themselves on doing things that is deviated from al-Sunnah. Thus, not imitating non-Muslims (*tasyabbuh*) are one of the branch of the Islamic laws. Therefore, it is compulsory for every Muslims to take note of thing issue and follow the guidance of Allah SWT and Rasulullah SAW on abstaining ourselves as Muslims from imitating the non-Muslims in everyday life.

Even if we inspect the history of Islam, this phenomenon of imitating non-Muslims is a disease of the people at the end of time. Therefore, the scholars of Islam had made a purification of grasping to the Sunnah. One of the Islamic scholars that stands out the most on discussing the issue of *al-tasyabbuh* is Ibn Taimiyyah (died 728 Hijri).

Even so, he had written a specific book on discussing this issue, that is a book by the title of *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafati Ashab al-Jahim*. In his preface, he strictly opposes the issue of *tasyabbuh*. In reality, the content of the book had been critically studied thus making the book very significant as a guide for the Islamic ummah¹.

Concept of *Tasyabbuh*

The word *tasyabbuh* in etymological terms comes from the root word (شبه) which means imitation of something, similarity of colours and characters. It can be pronounced as *syibh*, *syabah* and *syabih*². While *tasyabbuh* (تشبيه) means imitating or mimicking something, that is an object that imitates another object³. These words are in the al-Quran:

أَمْ جَعَلُوا لِلَّهِ شُرَكَاءَ خَلَقُوا كَخَلْقِهِ فَتَشَبَّهُوا خَلْقَهُ عَلَيْهِمْ

Translation: "Or do they assign to Allâh partners who created the like of His creation, so that the creation (which they made and His creation) seemed alike to them."

[Surah al-Ra'd (13): 16]

كَذَلِكَ قَالَ الَّذِينَ مِن قَبْلِهِمْ مِّثْلَ قَوْلِهِمْ تَشَبَّهت قُلُوبُهُمْ

Translation: "So said the people before them words of similar import. Their hearts are alike."

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 118]

وَالزَّيْتُونَ وَالرُّمَّانَ مِثْلَهَا وَغَيْرَ مِثْلَيْهَا

Translation: "And olives, and pomegranates, similar (in kind) and different (in taste)."

[Surah al-An'am (6): 141]

وَأَتُوا بِهِ مِثْلَهَا وَلَهُمْ فِيهَا أَزْوَاجٌ مُّطَهَّرَةٌ وَهُمْ فِيهَا خَالِدُونَ

Translation: "And they will be given things in resemblance (i.e. in the same form but different in taste) and they shall have therein Azwâjun Mutahharatun (purified mates or wives)."

¹ Ahmad bin 'Abd Halim ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafati Ashab al-Jahim*, (tahqiq) Nasir bin 'Abd al-Karim al-'Aqil, (Saudi Arabia: Dar al-'Alam al-Kutub, 1999), 71.

² Ahmad Faris, *Mu'jam Maqayis al-Lughah*, (tahqiq) 'Abd al-Salam Harun (Beirut: Dar al-Jail, 1990), 3: 243.

³ Ibn Manzur, *Lisan al-Arab*, (Beirut: Dar Ihya' al-Turath al-Arabi, 1999), 7: 24.

[Surah al-Baqarah (2): 25]

Based on the words of the al-Quran above, the meaning of *tasyabbuh* in linguistic terms is copying, imitating or following whether it is in a good or a bad (prohibited) category⁴. While in terminological aspect, Jamil bin Habib al-Luwaihiq⁵ quotes some definitions of *tasyabbuh*. Some of them are as follows:

Muhammad al-Ghazi al-Shafi'i stated:

"Tasyabbuh is an expression that shows the ability of a human being to imitate something that the imitator want to imitate, whether it is a behaviour, fashion or character. It is an expression that is related to the act of the imitator want to imitate so that he can be as who or what the imitator wants to be."

Al-Munawi explained:

"Imitating in terms of embellishment, (the imitator) make an effort to know each other (with the imitatee) to imitate (the imitatee), having the same manners as the imitatee, takes the same journey as the imitatee and some of their acts. Tasyabbuh means the willingness of imitating something whether it is apparent or spiritual⁶."

Therefore it can be concluded that there are no discrete difference between the definition of *tasyabbuh* in linguistic point of view, or in terminological point of view because both of these definitions bring the same meaning. The definition that al-Ghazi and al-Munawi brings in the terminological point of view differs a bit as explained by Jamil bin Habib al-Luwaihiq. Al-Ghazi's definition is quite general but al-Munawi's definition is quite specific into the type of imitation⁷.

Ibn Taimiyyah's background

His full name⁸ is Taqiy al-Din al-'Abbas Ahmad Ibn 'Abd al-Halim Ibn 'Abd al-Salam Ibn 'Abd Allah Ibn Abi al-Qasim Ibn al-Khudri Ibn Muhammad Ibn Taimiyyah al-Harrani al-Hanbali or he is known more as Ibn Taimiyyah. He was born on Monday, 10 Rabi' al-Awwal (there were some tradition that reports that he was born in the date of 11 Rabi' al-Awwal) in the year 661 Hijri year at Harran. Since the Tartars (Mongols) are invading (the Muslim countries), his family moved to Syria and they reside there until 667 Hijri year.

He was born in a very religious family, even his family was well known by their high level of knowledge of Islam. His grandfather, Majd al-Din Abd al-Salam Ibn Abi Muhammad Abd Allah was one of the most prestigious scholars in the Hanbali school of thought (madhab)⁹. Even so,

⁴ Ibn Kathir, *Tafsir al-Quran al-'Azim*, c.2, (Riyadh: Maktabah Dar al-Salam, 1998), 460.

⁵ Jamil bin Habib al-Luwaihiq, "al-Tasyabbuh al-Munhi' Fi al-Fiqh al-Islami" (Bachelor Dissertation, Department of Shari'a and Islamic Studies, University of Ummul Qura, Saudi Arabia, 1988), 16.

⁶ *Ibid.*

⁷ *Ibid*, 17.

⁸ Muhammad Bahjah al-Baithar, *Hayat Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah: Muhadaratuhu wa Maqalatuha wa Dirasatuha*, (Cairo: Maktab al-Islami, 1982), 8.

⁹ Muhammad bin 'Abd al-Hadi, *Al-'Uqud Ad- Durriyyah Min Manaqib Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah*, (Cairo: Dar al-Faruq al-Hadithiyyah, 2001), 3.

his father, al-Shihab Abd al-Halim Ibn Abd al-Salam is a scholar, a preacher, and a resource of knowledge for the people at his time especially in the knowledge of inheritance¹⁰.

Ibn Taimiyyah's high level of spirit in attaining knowledge shines since he was a little kid. His quest for knowledge does not confined in a single place only, even so, he had made pilgrimage in the quest of searching knowledge to almost everywhere. He memorized the whole al-Quran since he was a child and he learned Musnad Imam Ahmad bin Hanbal, Kuttub al-Sittah and some books of *Mu'jam* regarding the knowledge of Hadith. Moreover, he studied other branches of knowledge, such as calligraphy, mathematics, nahw, tafsir and Islamic jurisprudence (*fiqh*)¹¹.

He replaced his father to teach at a school named by Madrasah al-Sukriyyah by the age of 21 and he get the permission to teach (*tauliyah*) at the following year. He was also given the honour to teach the knowledge of tafsir at the age of 30 at Jami' al-'Umawi¹². He passed away in the night of 20 of Dhu al-Qa'idah, Monday, at the year 728 Hijri year at the age of 67 years old¹³.

Reason Behind The Writing of *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim li Mukhalafati Ashab al-Jahim*

Ibn Taimiyyah explained that the reason that he write this book is because that the (Muslim) community at his time are being influenced by the way of life of the non-Muslims towards the extend that his friends request to him that he write something about this issue¹⁴.

He firmly states that people who are learning the knowledge of Islam should understand that being different from the non-Muslims is one of the principles of Islam. After giving evidences from al-Quran, Sunnah, *athar* of the Companions r.a. and the explanation from the fuqaha', they should accept it except for those who are ill-hearted.

In the preface, Ibn Taimiyyah explained the importance of the Islamic ummah on following the straight path and distance themselves from the path of the people that had been angered (the Jews) and of those who went astray (the Christians). It is compulsory for every Muslims to ask from Allah s.w.t. to guide them on the straight path, that is the path of those that Allah bestowed His Grace that is the path of the Prophets a.s., the *solihin* (righteous) and the defenders of truth¹⁵.

Through Nasir Ibn 'Abd al-Karim al-Aqil's research on Ibn Taimiyyah's book, he commented that Ibn Taimiyyah wrote the book to tell the Muslims about the main method in the Islamic principle that is, the prohibition of imitating the non-Muslims and abstaining from them in general but in more specific, abstaining from their day of celebration. Ibn Taimiyyah explained the virtues of the commandment and he firmly states that this is the basis of Islam and this command is in the al-Quran, Sunnah and the examples of the *Salaf al-Salih*¹⁶.

¹⁰ 'Abd al-Rahman Bin Salih Bin Salih al-Mahmud, *Mawqif Ibn Taimiyyah Min al-Asha'irah*, (Riyadh, Saudi Arabia: Maktabah al-Rushd, 1995), 152-153.

¹¹ al-Baithar, *Hayat Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah*, 21.

¹² Bakr bin 'Abd Allah Abu Zaid, *Al-Madakhil Ila Athar Shaikh al-Islam Ibn Taimiyyah wa Ma Lahikaha Min 'Akmalin*, (Mecca: Dar 'Alim al-Fawa'id, 2001), 19.

¹³ *Ibid*, 15.

¹⁴ Ahmad bin 'Abd al-Halim Ibn Taimiyyah, *Mukhtasar Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, (tahqiq) Nasir bin 'Abd al-Karim al-Aqli, (Saudi Arabia: Dar al-'Asimah, 2001), 7.

¹⁵ Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 76.

¹⁶ *Ibid*, 34.

Ibn Taimiyyah's Methodology in *al-Iqtida'*

In *al-Iqtida'*, Ibn Taimiyyah divided his discussion into eleven topics:

- i. The importance of understanding the two most important principles in Islam
- ii. Innovations and polytheism that spreads among the Muslim ummah
- iii. The effect of *tasyabbuh* on the Muslim ummah
- iv. The basic method in the problems regarding *tasyabbuh*
- v. The group of people that is forbidden to imitate them
- vi. The general prohibition of imitating with non-Muslims from now and then
- vii. The times and situation that makes it recommended in Islam to imitate the non-Muslims
- viii. Celebrations and innovations that the Islamic society practice
- ix. The concept of al-Ritanah in Islam
- x. The concept of *bid'ah* (innovation) in Islam
- xi. The *bid'ah* of constructing a structure on a grave, extreme exaltation towards the historical sites of the Prophets, the righteous and etc.¹⁷.

On discussing *al-tasyabbuh*, Ibn Taimiyyah uses evidences from al-Quran, Sunnah and *ijma'* in the issue of imitating non-Muslims. He also explains every evidence that he presented to reinforce his stand¹⁸. Before he give out the evidences, he first explains the pros of abstaining from non-Muslims and the cons of imitating them with this statement:

"When we state of this thing specifically, the general method is included. We started with stating the evidences from al-Quran, Sunnah and ijma' regarding the commandment of abstaining from non-Muslims the prohibition of imitating them in every way. It is a compulsory command from Allah and the Sunnah of His Prophet. The command of abstaining from a certain sects will bring goodness or badness depends on the intention. In other words, doing things that resembling or abstaining from a certain sects can sometimes give a good or bad effects. This is the reason that we strictly recommend that we follow the Sunnah of Rasulullah SAW and the practices of Salaf al-Salih in every act. Same goes that we should follow a non-Muslim in their acts, even though their acts does not implies a negative effect, in general they themselves would bring two effects, that is either bad or good. But when we see the evidences, certainly following them would bring a bad effect and abstaining from them would bring goodness. We use the Qiyas approach, that is Qiyas al-'Illah in this issue. This is divided into two things that is the simple virtues from the act of imitating or abstaining them and from putting ourselves with them. Occasionally, there are prohibition of abstaining from them or following them. This thing needs intellect to decipher the real meaning of the Islamic laws, that is the one who knows the meaning of the prohibition of Allah to follow the non-Muslims and to imitate them whether the prohibition is absolute or only applicable in a certain situation."

He then brings the saying of Allah s.w.t. to emphasize the commandment regarding the issue of *tasyabbuh*, for example:

¹⁷ *Ibid*, 37 – 68.

¹⁸ *Ibid*, 95.

وَلَقَدْ آتَيْنَا بَنِي إِسْرَائِيلَ الْكِتَابَ وَالْحُكْمَ وَالنُّبُوَّةَ وَرَزَقْنَاهُمْ مِنَ الطَّيِّبَاتِ وَفَضَّلْنَاهُمْ عَلَى الْعَالَمِينَ ١٦
وَآتَيْنَاهُمْ بَيِّنَاتٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ طَمَا اخْتَلَفُوا إِلَّا مِنْ بَعْدِ مَا جَاءَهُمُ الْعِلْمُ بَعِيًا بَيْنَهُمْ ١٧ إِنَّ رَبَّكَ يَقْضِي بَيْنَهُمْ
يَوْمَ الْقِيَامَةِ فِيمَا كَانُوا فِيهِ يَخْتَلِفُونَ ١٧ ثُمَّ جَعَلْنَاكَ عَلَىٰ شَرِيعَةٍ مِنَ الْأَمْرِ فَاتَّبِعْهَا وَلَا تَتَّبِعْ أَهْوَاءَ الَّذِينَ
لَا يَعْلَمُونَ ١٨ إِنَّهُمْ لَنْ يُغْنُوا عَنْكَ مِنَ اللَّهِ شَيْئًا ١٩ وَإِنَّ الظَّالِمِينَ بَعْضُهُمْ أَوْلِيَاءُ بَعْضٍ ط وَاللَّهُ وَلِيُّ
الْمُتَّقِينَ ١٩

Translation: "And indeed We gave the Children of Israel the Scripture, and the understanding of the Scripture and its laws, and the Prophet hood; and provided them with good things, and preferred them above the 'Alamîn (mankind and jinn of their time, during that period), (16) And gave them clear proofs in matters [by revealing to them the Taurât (Torah)]. And they differed not until after the knowledge came to them, through envy among themselves. Verily, Your Lord will judge between them on the Day of Resurrection about that wherein they used to differ. (17) Then We have put you (O Muhammad SAW) on a (plain) way of (Our) commandment [like the one which We commanded Our Messengers before you (i.e. legal ways and laws of the Islâmic Monotheism)]. So follow you that (Islâmic Monotheism and its laws), and follow not the desires of those who know not. (18) Verily, they can avail you nothing against Allâh (if He wants to punish you). Verily, the Zâlimûn (polytheists, wrong-doers) are Auliyâ' (protectors, helpers) of one another, but Allâh is the Walî (Helper, Protector) of the Muttaqûn (19)."

[Surah al-Jathiyah (45): 16-19]

وأهواؤهم: هو ما يهوونه، وما عليه المشركون من هديهم الظاهر، الذي هو من موجبات دينهم الباطل، وتوابع ذلك، فهم يهوونه، وموافقتهم فيه اتباع لما يهوونه، ولهذا: يفرح الكافرون بموافقة المسلمين في بعض أمورهم ويسرون به، ويودون أن لو بذلوا عظيمًا ليحصل ذلك، ولو فرض أن ليس الفعل من اتباع أهوائهم فلا ريب أن مخالفتهم في ذلك أحسم لمادة متابعتهم، وأعون على حصول مرضاة الله في تركها، وأن موافقتهم في ذلك قد تكون ذريعة إلى موافقتهم في غيره، فإن من حام حول الحمى أوشك أن يواقعه

Translation: "The desires of the polytheists are based on what they want and based on the things that are with them that is their outer appearances that is the result of their deviant religion and the things that are related to it. This is the reason why those non-Muslims are so happy when the Muslims imitate them and when the Muslims had a really strong desire to achieve it. Even though that the Muslims does not imitate them in terms of desire, but no doubt that abstaining from them in every apparent ways would result in an avoidance with everything and this would help in a very good way to be closer to the blessings of Allah. Imitating them in one aspect can result in an imitation in a different

aspect too. The one who approaches a restricted area is almost equivalent to the one who did trespasses the area.”¹⁹

Ibn Taimiyyah states that Allah gave the Israelites the privilege of religion and the world. But they still avoid (upon practicing the religion) even though the guidance had reached them due to jealousy among them. In avoiding the Israelites, the Muslim ummah is commanded to follow each and every teachings of Rasulullah SAW Allah s.w.t. also prohibits to blindly follow the desires (of the wrong doers).

Then, Ibn Taimiyyah also presented the evidence of the prohibition of *tasyabbuh* from the collection of hadith (traditions) of Prophet Muhammad SAW. He explains every hadith with reference from other Islamic scholars and then he made a conclusion from it. One of the hadith presented is as follows²⁰:

لَتَأْخُذَنَّ كَمَا أَخَذَتِ الْأُمَمُ قَبْلَكُمْ ذِرَاعًا بِذِرَاعٍ وَشِبْرًا بِشِبْرٍ وَبَاعًا بِبَاعٍ حَتَّىٰ لَوْ أَنَّ أَحَدًا مِنْ
أَوْلِيَّكَ دَخَلَ جُحْرَ ضَبٍّ لَدَخَلْتُمُوهُ

Translation: “Indeed that you will most certainly follow the ways of those who came before you, arm’s length by arm’s length, forearm’s length by forearm’s length, hand span by hand span, until even if they entered a hole of a mastigure (lizard) you will enter it too.”

[Reported by Muslim]

Then Ibn Taimiyyah quoted the *ijma’* of the Islamic scholars regarding the prohibition of imitating non-Muslims. He also referred to the agreed terms that had been imposed to the *kafir dhimmi* that they are commanded to obey:

1. It is compulsory to respect Muslims
2. It is compulsory for them to stand up and give his seat when a Muslim want to seat
3. They are not allowed to imitate Muslims in terms of fashion such as wearing the Muslim’s head cap, turbans and others
4. They are not allowed to speak the languages that the Muslim speaks
5. They are not allowed to use the same title as the Muslims use
6. They are not allowed to have swords with them
7. They are not allowed to sell alcohol or any other intoxicating drinks
8. They are not allowed to wear any special clothing where ever they are

Ibn Taimiyyah also quoted some other aspects with respect of the commanded rulings:

1. The rulings are imposed in order to differentiate between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in every way. For example, difference in terms of hair style, fashion, transportation, language and others.
2. To get rid of the deviance that their religion (non-Muslims) had and a general prohibition within a Muslim-centred society
3. To hide the identity of their religion such as the prohibition of reading their texts out loud

¹⁹ *Ibid*, 98.

²⁰ *Ibid*, 99.

4. Not celebrating their celebrations. This is because when the Muslims celebrate it, they will feel happy and they will take it as an honour from the Muslims towards their religion

In addition, Ibn Taimiyyah also presented the views of the Imams from the four madhabs (Hanafi, Maliki, Syafie, and Hanbali) regarding the prohibition on imitating the non-Muslims and the obligations of abstaining from them. Thus, this had completed the discussion of the issue of *tasyabbuh* while referring to the guidance of al-Quran, Sunnah, the views of the Sahaba r.a. and the Islamic scholars regarding the obligations on *mukhalafah* (differentiating one-self from the non-Muslims).

Ibn Taimiyyah's View on *al-Tasyabbuh*

On defining the meaning of *tasyabbuh*, he uses the method same as al-Munawi does by starting by the hadith of Rasulullah SAW²¹:

مَنْ تَشَبَّهَ بِقَوْمٍ فَهُوَ مِنْهُمْ

Translation: "He who imitates any people (in their actions) is considered to be one of them."

[Reported by Abu Dawud]

Then Ibn Taimiyyah states:

والتشبهه يعم من فعل الشيء لأجل أنهم فعلوه وهو نادر ومن تبع غيره في فعل لغرض له في ذلك إذا كان أصل الفعل مأخوذاً عن ذلك الغير، فأما من فعل الشيء واتفق أن الغير فعله أيضاً ولم يأخذه أحدهما عن صاحبه، ففي كون هذا تشبهها نظر لكن قد ينهى عن هذا لئلا يكون ذريعة إلى التشبه، ولما فيه من المخالفة، كما أمر بصبغ اللحي وإحفاء الشوارب

Translation: "In general, *tasyabbuh* comprises of anyone who does something because somebody else had done it, and this rarely happens. They follow somebody else because of some reasons if that act was taken from others. For saying that when someone is doing the same this as the others but there are no intention of imitating each other as a *tasyabbuh*, this judgement need to be refined. But, this can also be considered as not permissible so that it would not lead to the real *tasyabbuh* and because the act itself is a mistake, for example colouring the beard with henna and trimming the moustache²²."

Ibn Taimiyyah also introduces two *usul* regarding this issue and he firmly states the importance of understanding both of it:

- i. Rasulullah SAW had prophesised that the Muslim ummah would imitate the predeceasing ummah from the Jews and the Christians. Same goes to the other predeceasing ummah such as the Persians and Romans to the extent that if they

²¹ Abu Dawud Sulaiman b. al-Ash'ath al-Sajistani, *Sunan Abi Dawud*, (Amman: Bait al-Afkar al-Duwaliyah, t.t.), 441.

²² Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 222.

entered a lizard hole, the Muslims would do as same. Therefore, the problem of the issue of *tasyabbuh* is a thing that is really going to happen.

- ii. Rasulallah SAW had also clearly prophesised that Allah s.w.t. would protect Islam and certainty there will be a small sect of Muslims that would defend the religion until the Day of Judgement (the Day of *Qiyamah*) and they will unite to fight the deviant.

Based on our research of Ibn Taimiyyah's view on the specific discussion regarding the issue of *tasyabbuh*, these are the conclusions:

1. Ibn Taimiyyah had a strict view regarding the issue of *tasyabbuh* towards the non-Muslims.

This is based on his statement:

وقد بعث الله محمدا بالحكمة التي هي سنته، وهي الشرعة والمنهاج الذي شرعه له، فكان من هذه الحكمة أن شرع له من الأعمال والأقوال ما يبين سبيل المغضوب عليهم والضالين، فأمر بمخالفتهم في الهدى الظاهر وإن لم يظهر لكثير من الخلق في ذلك مفسدة لأمر:

منها: أن المشاركة في الهدى الظاهر تورث تناسبا وتشاكلا بين المتشابهين، يقود إلى موافقة ما في الأخلاق والأعمال، وهذا أمر محسوس؛ فإن اللابس ثياب أهل العلم يجد من نفسه نوع انضمام إليهم، واللابس لثياب الجند المقاتلة - مثلا - يجد من نفسه نوع تخلق بأخلاقهم، ويصير طبعه متقاضيا لذلك، إلا أن يمنعه مانع.

ومنها: أن المحالفة في الهدى الظاهر توجب مباينة ومفارقة توجب الانقطاع عن موجبات الغضب وأسباب الضلال، والانعطاف على أهل الهدى والرضوان.

ومنها: أن مشاركتهم في الهدى الظاهر، توجب الاختلاط الظاهر، حتى يرتفع التميز ظاهرا، بين المهديين المرضيين، وبين المغضوب عليهم والضالين

Translation: "Allah SWT sent Rasulallah SAW upon us with the virtues of *Ittiba' al-Sunnah*. Even so, it is a ruling and a methodology that had been commanded by Allah to His Prophet. There are many virtues and reasons why the Muslims are commanded to abstain themselves from the abhorred (the Jews) and the deviated (the Christians) or in general, with the non-Muslims. Some of the reasons are as follows:

"The apparent similarity would rise a sense of belonging towards each other and this would finally bring towards a similarity in terms of manner and acts. These things really do happen. If someone who wear the same type of clothing that the scholars wore, it would make that someone prone to imitate that scholar. While if someone wears a military clothing, then that someone would likely to be as a military. These things will happen except when there are things that restricted it."

"To make the differentiation apparent by not imitating others would inflict a difference (among the imitator and imitatee). Thus, the Muslims would be different comparing to the non-Muslims and this would distance the Muslims on

doing something that would induce the Wrath of Allah and this would make Muslims closer to His Mercy."

"Imitating a sect would make it hard to differentiate between those who are within the Guidance or those who deviates. Still there are lot more virtues and reasons on why Islam prohibits imitating the deviant sect that invoked Allah's anger."

Muhammad bin Salih al-'Uthaimin on his commentary of Ibn Taimiyyah's statement firmly states²³:

*"Even the effect of tasyabbuh has not been apparent during his time, but his statement is way ahead of his time. The negative effect of tasyabbuh had shown its effect in the next generation."*²⁴

However, Ibn Taimiyyah does not consider the act of *tasyabbuh* with the non-Muslims to be *haram* especially in *mubah* aspect, except for things that are related to their disbelieves. This is because this is one of the branch of *kufr*. Imitating the non-Muslims are considered as the same as agreeing with their acts.

2. Ibn Taimiyyah divides the problems regarding *tasyabbuh* into the prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with non-Muslims, Satan, the Bedouins and non-Arabs.

This is Ibn Taimiyyah's analysis after studying many hadiths regarding the prohibition on imitating the non-Muslims. Then, Ibn Taimiyyah also made a statement about the prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with the non-Arabs (*A'jam*), his statement:

"فقد كره موافقة الأعراب في اسم المغرب والعشاء، بالعشاء والعتمة، وهذه الكراهة عند بعض علمائنا تقتضي كراهة هذا الاسم مطلقا، وعند بعضهم إنما تقتضي كراهة الإكثار منه، حتى يغلب على الاسم الآخر، وهو المشهور عندنا. وعلى التقديرين: ففي الحديث النهي عن موافقة الأعراب في ذلك، كما نهي عن موافقة الأعاجم."

Translation: *"There are evidences of prohibition regarding imitating the non-Arabs from the hadith of Rasulullah SAW referring to the naming of the times of prayer that is Maghrib and Isya. The Bedouins named the prayer of Maghrib as Isya and the prayer of Isya as "Atmah" which means the time to milk the camels. Therefore, it is an absolute prohibition from our scholars regarding imitating the naming of the Bedouins on the name of the prayer times. There are some scholars that prohibit the general public on using that naming scheme, and this is a well-known view. It is clear that the prohibition (of imitating the Bedouins) are as the same as the (rulings) regarding imitating the non-Arabs."*²⁵

Based on Ibn Taimiyyah's analysis, the Muslim ummah must differentiate themselves from the non-Arabs. He states that the non-Arabs at that time were the Persians and Romans. The Bedouins are also included in this category. But this is different from making *tasyabbuh* with non-Muslims and Satan, and this need a more in-depth interpretation and research. This is based on what Ibn Taimiyyah's statement:

²³ Al-'Uthaimin, *Sharh Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 33- 36

²⁴ Ibn Taimiyyah, *Iqtida' al-Sirat al-Mustaqim*, 65.

²⁵ *Ibid*, 244.

"واعلم أن بين التشبه بالكفار والشياطين، وبين التشبه بالأعراب والأعاجم فرقا يجب اعتباره، وإجمالا يحتاج إلى تفسير، وذلك: أن نفس الكفر والتشيطان مذموم في حكم الله ورسوله وعباده المؤمنين، ونفس الأعرابية والأعجمية ليست مذمومة في نفسها عند الله تعالى وعند رسوله وعند عباده المؤمنين"

Translation: "Verily there are differences between the prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with the non-Muslims and Satan and making *tasyabbuh* with the Bedouins and non-Arabs that need a more in-depth research. The disbelieves of the non-Muslims and Satan by itself are wicked. Nevertheless the reality of the Bedouins and the non-Arabs is that they are not originally a loathe in the views of Allah s.w.t., His Messenger and the believers."²⁶

Ibn Taimiyyah's view are relevant during his era, his surrounding and his way of thinking based on how he interprets the evidences. The issue of the prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with the Bedouins and the non-Arabs, he gave a general view and he lets the next generation to extend the discussion regarding this issue.

Views of Ibn Taimiyyah that are irrelevant due to time growth

Even though Ibn Taimiyyah created a monumental work regarding this issue, there are some of his views that is currently irrelevant. He just gave an opinion that is relevant at his era and the living style of his era. Some of his impractical views nowadays include:

1. The prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* that involves appearances such as language, transportation, fashion and others.

Ibn Taimiyyah stated:

"التمييز عن المسلمين، في الشعور واللباس والأسماء والمراكب والكلام، ونحوها؛ لتمييز المسلم عن الكافر، ولا يتشبه أحدهما بالآخر في الظاهر، ولم يرض عمر والمسلمون بأصل التمييز، بل بالتمييز في عامة الهدى، على تفاصيل معروفة في غير هذا الموضوع. وذلك يقتضي: إجماع المسلمين على التمييز عن الكفار ظاهرا، وترك التشبه بهم ولقد كان أمراء الهدى.

Translation: "The rulings that had been assigned by the previous scholars of *fiqh* referring to the *hukm* regarding the non-Muslims that lived under the Islamic government is that to differentiate between the Muslims and the non-Muslims in terms of appearances such as hair style, fashion, languages and others. This means that the Muslim scholars agreed that there must be a distinction between the Muslims and the others and there should not be any resemblances between them."²⁷

Time evolution diversify all races either from the Arabs or the non-Arabs. This diversity would make Muslims came from many type of language background. Same goes to fashion and

²⁶ *Ibid*, 243.

²⁷ *Ibid*, 218

transportation, it differs from the previous generation. But in terms of fashion that clearly expresses other religions and the beliefs of non-Muslims, Islam strictly prohibits this.

2. The prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with the Bedouins and the non-Arabs.

In this case, Ibn Taimiyyah classifies Arabs into two categories, that is Arabs and the Bedouins. The *A'jam* (non-Arabs) are specifically classified into the non-Muslim society such as the Persians and Romans. Ibn Taimiyyah specified that the prohibition of making *tasyabbuh* with the Bedouins are in the cultural aspect where some of their cultures is not accepted in Islam.²⁸

Conclusion

This phenomenon of *al-tasyabbuh* are getting more apparent in these days of globalization era. This is because of the cultural flow from the developed countries to the developing countries especially via media. Thus, Muslims would imitate the Western worlds in terms of fashion, lifestyle and others. Therefore, Ibn Taimiyyah was way ahead of his time on discussing this matter, specifically with the non-Muslims. In his views, there are some relevant views that should be taken into consideration. But there are some of his views that is not applicable on current situation which the cultural interactions are broader and the cultural exchange are more intense due to the development of science and technology.

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²⁸ Ibid.

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