Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table
edited by
The Institute for Theology of Religions St. Gabriel

Volume 2

Andreas Bsteh – Tahir Mahmood (Eds.)

Intolerance and Violence

Manifestions – Reasons – Approaches

2nd Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table
Vienna, February 21 to 24, 2002

Table of Contents

Indices

Preface

The ongoing process of globalization, poverty and injustice, intolerance and violence, conflict and dialogue, reconciliation and harmony, meaning of human existence, deterioration of human values, crisis in education, and religious liberty and equality, were the major topics of deliberations at the First Plenary of the "Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table", the VICIRoTa-I, held in October 2000.[1] These various topics had been chosen by the Muslims and Christians, coming from different parts of the world, in answer to the question what seemed to them to be the most important problem facing the humanity on its path to the future.

In June 2001 the VICIRoTa Steering Committee chose, from amongst the afore-stated topics, "Intolerance and Violence" as the theme for the Second Plenary. At issue in the latter were 'manifestations and reasons' of the multi-facetted phenomenon addressed by the terms 'intolerance' and 'violence' and the possible 'approaches' to the resulting problems – all considered from the perspectives of the various Muslim and Christian participants, creating a deeper understanding of the same. The contributions and their discussion led to a distinct perception of implications of the terms 'intolerance' and 'violence' and a comprehensive analysis and assessment of their inter-connection. Freedom of thought and openness of mind characterized the deliberations made on a worldwide horizon of topical issues with a deep concern for the new forms of the old problems.

Can one approach the complex problems of intolerance and violence in the present situation of the world without sufficiently searching for the reasons behind? This was one of the pressing questions permeating the

---

[1] Published in: A. Bsteh – T. Mahmood (eds.), *Reading the Signs of the Time. Contemporary Challenges for Christians and Muslims* (Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table; 1). Mödling, 2003.

deliberations at VICIRoTa-II. Is it religious fundamentalism only that leads to all sorts of violence? Why religion alone is always seen as a source of violence? Do religions not know very well that love of man and love of God are inseparably inter-linked so that cruelty to man always means cruelty to God? Why is religion-related violence on an increase causing unprecedented tensions worldwide? And, are not the cordial Christian-Muslim relations falling into the trap of terrorism? How can, then, violence as a human catastrophe be confronted on the march of humanity to a world increasingly netted and globalized? How can the strength of the liberating love of humans for humans take them out of the narrow prisons that they have created for themselves? To answer these questions and resolve the connected problems an active and informed dialogue, healthy and positive reconciliation, proper education, eradication of poverty, promotion of liberty and equality, social and political justice and international collaboration – as also a new consciousness of religious values and of answerability to the omnipresent God – have to be positively employed.

Such were the thoughts expressed at VICIRoTa-II, both in individual contributions and in mutual discussions. These were thoughts full of serious concern for the pressing problems humanity is facing at the beginning of this third millennium; thoughts of those looking at these problems diligently and searchingly – trusting each other in this search in order to learn from each other, and together, and yet having the courage to ask critical questions where necessary; thoughts of those raising voice also on behalf of the voiceless and the hapless in the human society. Giving priority to search for the reasons behind the present deplorable conditions, the participants made efforts to create greater awareness of the newly arising problems and suggest possibilities for their solution.

The present work is a collection of the deliberations – contributions and discussions – of VICIRoTa-II. Through its simultaneous publication in German, English, Arabic and Urdu, an effort is being made to make our deliberations available to as many readers as possible. We hope they will find this publication useful for initiating or continuing with similar for the promotion of peace and harmony in the global human society.

Andreas Bsteh – Tahir Mahmood

March 2004

Love of Man – Love of God,
Contempt of Man – Contempt of God

Heinrich Ott

I.

Intolerance and violence is the topic of the second meeting of our small circle of Muslims and of Christians. Intolerance itself, this I would like to consider as presupposed by the topic, is violent – this above all in the climactic form of spiritual violence. This applies to the spiritual level. What it needs then for the spiritual level to be transferred to the psychic level, is a subsequent question, about which we will hopefully know more at the end of our dialogue of this year.

Let me begin with an unpretentious event, about which I read in "Neue Züricher Zeitung" last summer. During that summer, a meeting took place in Germany, between Palestinian and Israeli writers, which had already been a tradition in the course of recent years. The talks were – of course in that year and under those circumstances – hard and uncompromising. No approach (which one could after all perhaps still rather believe among writers), no agreement. Except in one point: they all agreed that suicide attacks against the civil population were in no way an acceptable method for settling conflicts.

Some weeks later, there was September 11 and it made us raise the question: what must we think of people who believe in God, who know and profess that God has granted us our life, who are capable of throwing away their own life granted to them by God, with the purpose of destroying the life granted to thousands of other people by God, of whom they know nothing else? Thus, as if it were praying in the sight of God, they try in this way to plot against others, believing in this way that they complete a work that pleases Him, the Creator? Is this not the culmination of religious confusion and contempt of man? (Even if a religious believer proceeds from the fact that this ephemeral life in this world is not the genuine and ultimate one; for what remains indeed is after all just the preparation for the latter world.)

The question I am posing is: what should one think of this phenomenon? It is not my intention to give a quick moral answer. There are ques-

tions that demand and make possible a quick answer and others that push us above all towards long and tiresome reflection. Above all we will have to pose questions concerning the fragility of our world civilization altogether. And here, at our small Round Table of two great religions, it will also be necessary to ask what the world religions represented by us – or in any case a great number of their followers – as the case may be, could do together in the shorter term or closer future, so that the shrunken earth may regain some confidence and trust.

As I see it, in the Christian message of salvation and faith, we have a specific spiritual word particularly referring to this situation, and I will present it here knowing that although it is *centrally* Christian, it is by no means *exclusively* Christian. I believe I know that this idea is shared by both our religions, and this not accidentally but based on the core of our faith. Jesus formulates it with the words from the Old Testament, from the Jewish tradition, by putting two words of the Torah one beside the other and joining them most closely and intrinsically (Lk 10:27 parr.): "You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and with all your mind" (Dt 6:5) and like this first word: "And your neighbour as yourself" (Lv 19:18). Whereas the love of God appears as a total, exuberant love, "with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your strength and with all your mind", the love of one's neighbour is shown in a very sober form: "Love your neighbour – as yourself […]", or as *Martin Buber* translated once: "Love your neighbour – he is like you." More than that is not demanded.

I said already: for the Christian faith this is an outstanding aspect, however certainly not an exclusive characteristic of Christian religiosity. In Christian theology one has begun (rather recently) to reflect whether not, looking at this passage of the Bible, love of God and love of man are fundamentally one. Thus *Karl Rahner*, one of the great thinkers of our epoch, spoke of the love of God and the love of man as being one. Thus he asked whether (covertly) love of man is not already a first step on the way towards love of God. Man transcends his own egocentrism if he becomes available for his neighbour, whom the guidance of God has sent particularly to him. He transcends himself and makes a step towards being completely available for God himself, for complete trust and the complete dedication to his will. By opening himself up to his respective neighbour, man moves already, perhaps without knowing this explicitly, with his heart towards the infinite mystery of God himself.

Thus I proceed from the fact that this is a component of faith shared by both our religions, and perhaps here we have the line to guide us in orienting ourselves in these dramatic times on the political level also and to find a way (that is perhaps also a common one).

II.

The malice of our time confronts us with the fragility of our world civilization, which today becomes more and more one. Since through today's technical possibilities thousands of networks extend over the globe, which on their side are again netted a thousand times with one another, this civilization has become vulnerable to a degree that is hard to measure. Threats have arisen that are hard to imagine, with which no form of dissuasion seems able to cope any more, which could provide man at least with relative security. Nevertheless a more robust civilization could be imagined, where not everything is linked so closely with everything else. There were also epochs when such a threat to our security was still endured as a matter of course. I am thinking – just to mention this one example – of the catastrophe of the plague in the Middle Ages, by which, within a short period of time, half the citizens of the towns were carried off. At certain times one lived very differently in the sight of death, and this too was a truly human life. Yet, must we – and are we altogether able – to return there? Or is there a way out?

III.

Does mankind simply have to live in the sight of the catastrophe, a possible final catastrophe – and with "what is catastrophic" (this also being an expression and central concept of Paul Schütz, a relevant Christian thinker), which is to be found at all times in Christian history, because there is no other choice? Perhaps today will be the ending of the hopeful humanism as the fundamental frame of mind, as it was dominant after the end of the catastrophe of World War II and with the optimism of the period when the United Nations were founded, and finally flaring up at the turning point of the Cold War. From a religious point of view, for example in the perspective of the Bible, where great catastrophes precede the perfection of the world, one could also as it were accept life in a catastrophic environment as something inevitable and it is obvious that absolute security, as it

may be desirable for a certain modern mentality, is not attainable (or, if it were, it would probably be *the* catastrophe as such!). Yet, there is, particularly for the religious perspective, still another way, another option, and on this we should concentrate. It should be possible, from the sources of religious faith, to give a new trust and a new confidence to our era. This of course would be beyond all that is (in the stricter sense) 'feasible', just as everything that is really essential for man transcends 'feasibility'. – A new trust and a new confidence would have to grow from those roots of our way of believing, which we characterized as the union of love of God and love of man. Here we may call to mind what was said about the soberness of the love of one's neighbour: passionate love cannot be required of anyone. Yet, there are imperatives, commandments, which as it were grow from the reality experienced. My neighbour, the other human being, no matter how close he is to me, he is "like me", and I have to acknowledge and esteem him as a human being "like me", as a creature of God (and willed *in this way* by God).

Hence, the spirit of loving one's neighbour in this elementary form, as acknowledgement of man as a human being, can be grounded on religious motives, on a faith that is not only an ideology and that cannot simply be accompanied by an opposing ideology of equal ranking. Only when it has this weight, can it instil trust and confidence. In this way a climate of trust would have to be able to grow, which basically no longer allows a 'reservatio mentis'.

Fundamentalism however is violent, from a certain point onwards it no longer esteems the other human being. The term "fundamentalism" originally stems from Protestant Christianity in the American area, at the beginning of the 20th century. For their own followers the term was something like a trade mark of religious faithfulness. However, the attitude of the fundamental movements in reality tends towards refusing any dialogue, which almost results in an inimical distance from the ecumenical movement. Only much later was the term extended to phenomena in very different religious and political domains, which is justified, because there are many comparable developments.

Yet, trust is destroyed if one can no longer feel to be taken seriously by people as a human partner, if an *opponent* in dialogue not only contradicts my views roughly – which is legitimate and within his rights to do –, but grants me no share whatsoever in the truth and thus is no more my *partner* in dialogue. As an exclusion of the other, fundamentalism is as it were violent in its very roots. In the first place, fighting against violence and intolerance has to be done as a pedagogical fight against this underlying fundamentalist concept. It must be established that in the controversy, in the struggle of opinions, there are limits: namely the dignity of man, the acknowledgement of man as a human being. And this already implies that – without being specifically stated but in fact – even though he is our tough opponent, we do not deny the partner 'participation in the truth', even though he is not ready to acknowledge the truth claimed by us.

To return once more to violence: whoever conceives himself as possessing the truth uncontestedly and altogether completely is, according to his own self-understanding, permitted everything, including violence. *"Cogite intrare …!"* (Force them to enter!) – thus once missionizing Christians, who also had the physical power, justified their actions by referring to a word in the New Testament. Today this kind of argument has been eliminated by Church authority (I am thinking here of the Declaration on Religious Freedom by Vatican II).

IV.

Our deliberations are intended to make clear how closely linked are our search for and finding truth on the one hand and human dignity on the other. Spiritual and physical violence are related inwardly. And now I would like to make three concluding remarks:

1. We have spoken of *contempt of man*. There is, beside contempt of man, which is our focus here, yet another: that of *consumerism*. Here man is now seen as a consumer only – the quality of his life, his longing for the truth, his conscience, are completely disregarded. What is left of him is a figure: the contribution he makes to economic growth and to the profit of others. This contempt of man is not unrelated to what was dealt with before. I cannot but emphasize my agreement with the thesis of Mr. Khidoyatov that the globalized entertainment industry with its glorification of brutal violence also shares the blame for the development of terrorism.[1] In every analysis of the present situation this factor will also have to be taken into consideration.

---

[1] See below p. 139.

2. I permit myself to take up here my basic thesis presented at the first meeting of our Christian-Islamic Round Table in the year 2000: in the small group only, where one knows one another and holds the dialogue face to face, a *real* dialogue, sheltered against anonymous media, man is really taken seriously in his longing for the truth and his human dignity. Here man can be a 'neighbour'. Here 'fundamentalist anonymity' disappears.

3. As a small group that is, however, concerned with a fundamental problem of our time, the subject matter indeed makes us ask what could be done and, as the case may be, what could be our own contribution. Perhaps something like an *Alliance between our Religions* would be possible? Could we (not only we, a small gathering of people, but movements of believers on both sides who think like us) mutually vow that we want to defend each other as well as we can, namely the respective religion of the others, within the circle of our own brothers/sisters in the faith? Thereby an understanding would also grow and deepen, for a concept is known to be really understood only when one can defend it against a third party, although one does not share it oneself.

Should we vow to be true to each other, in public, in the world that has become *one* and that we are both confronted with, to help each other and not to leave uncontradicted anything that is wrong, wicked, which is said against the other? By vowing to be true to each other despite all other differences, we could perhaps strengthen confidence and also make others again more trustful.

Questions and Interventions

KHODR   The question I would like to ask Professor Ott concerns the concept of man in Judaism, in Christianity and in Islam: does not here a concept of man related to the respective religion become the focus of attention, and not so much a general concept of man?

general concept of man also to be found in the perspective of religion?

Thus for instance in Judaism the Jew who is saved confronts the pagan, the "goy". Therefore *Paul* too rejects this confrontation and says that now there can be neither Jew nor Greek (Gal 3:28). Until very recently, there has been in Christianity the well-known axiom "extra ecclesiam nulla salus", thus there were also two categories of people: those whose position was inside the salvific community of the Church and those who were outside, whose position was outside the community of the Church. And when I went to school, still in the colonial period, my teachers were French monks, very pious and good Catholics – in their eyes however I was – as an Orthodox Christian – doomed to go to hell.

Thus the main question we have to deal with is to what extent religions have an intrinsic potential of violence in themselves. When *Joshua* was called to occupy the land to the west of the river Jordan and to kill all the Canaanites who lived there, can this, applied to our times, be understood to mean that all Palestinians should be killed because they are the posterity of the Canaanites?

There is always somebody who has to be killed, because he does not belong to the domain of the truth. Thus, in Orthodox liturgy, I would today have to pray for the victory of the pious emperor, who died in 1453, when the Ottoman army conquered Constantinople. The problem is that behind every army there has to be a god. Hence my question is: can a general concept of man be found in the perspective of religion or only in that of a humanist secularism?

OTT   Religion can be most wide and most narrow. In it both possibilities are intrinsic. It includes the openness of the spirit, the width of the soul that transcends itself towards infinity. Yet religion, particularly because it is concerned with ultimate claims and experiences of faith, can also become very narrow, if one believes to owe it to God to exclude radically all other claims of truth. This is the fundamentalist clod on the foot of religion. A tension and an extension of this kind is present in every religion.

religion – most wide and most narrow

religion and
social
antagonisms

I am very grateful for the reference to the passage in the Letter to the Galatians, where *Paul* says that now there can be neither Jew nor Greek, neither slave nor freeman, neither male nor female, but a solidarity extending across the different groups within mankind. In my view this proves the real breakthrough of religious faith. The opposite concept goes back to primordial group- or clan-patterns: playing off one social group against the other. These are antagonisms, which in a negative case religion can of course intensify. Indeed I see the real religious breakthrough in accepting somebody simply as they are, independent of religious faith.

how to pave the
ways that lead
from violence
towards love?

KHOURY   In the lecture it was said that what is humanly essential lies beyond what is humanly feasible. Yet, how can one then pave ways that lead from violence towards love and walk them together? How can we find something that takes us closer to each other and lets us walk the path of peace together? Do we not have to develop a differentiated concept of the dialogue, by not only exchanging arguments but also by trying on both sides to persuade the respective partner and to obtain their assent about a common path, about a path of peace and of reconciliation?

trusting in
trustfulness

OTT   When I said that what is humanly essential is strictly speaking beyond what is feasible, I was thinking of human relations. Of course we can and have to decide and to act freely and responsibly, also and particularly in this field. Yet, whenever we are concerned with the mutual relations of people in various constellations of common possible activities, then we can in this case understand *more closely* that we cannot plan anything 'feasible'. The same applies to us as Christians in our relations with other believers from other religious communities or with partners who do not have any religious faith as yet. What is needed here is reliance on the trustfulness of the other. Thus, among ourselves we must inspire mutual trustfulness, not simply acting in view of reactions to be anticipated, but trusting in trustfulness. (By the way this also applies to political life.)

building bridges
also towards
militant groups?

KHOURY   In our discussion about violence and intolerance I am above all concerned with the question how I can approach militant terrorists. We have to try to contact them, to hold a dialogue with them, so that this situation changes. What would a pedagogical concept have to be like, which takes this into account?

mutual trust –
the path towards
togetherness

OTT   I do not know whether one can talk to a terrorist determined on extremist measures. Yet I think it is certainly possible, in the individual case, that he may perhaps be a good partner in dialogue. Here however I think even more of a collective process and of the question as to whether certain groups facing each other as enemies could after all instill so much trustfulness in their actions that later a *mutual* relationhip of trustfulness could perhaps come about. Trust can never be unilaterally causal. It is only always possible reciprocally. Here this is the basis of every 'pedagogical conception'.

where is
true Islam and
where is true
Christianity?

KHIDOYATOV   If, as Mr. Ott said, religious faith is at issue, in the case of Islamic faith one has to take about 90 different religious movements into account. As to Christianity, similarly the question arises, where does one encounter the 'true faith' of the Christian religion in the diversity of the different traditions.

A second question is related to the concept 'fundamentalism', which is so often used today. Is it good or is it bad? If one thinks here for instance in particular of the Wahhābī movement, is fundamentalism not, *as to its contents,* very close to the truth, whereas *in the forms* it takes this is not at all the case? And what about fundamentalism in Christianity?

everywhere
also tendencies
to exclude the
others

OTT   Which Christians *really* represent Christianity? Which Muslims *really* represent Islam? In all religions we find diversity and in all religions we find different groupings, which then may in fact tend also towards establishing sects or towards a rigid fundamentalism. Beside this exclusivist attitude in the individual groupings, there are of course everywhere also movements which try to realize an inclusivist attitude in one or other form. No matter which religion we are looking at, amongst all there is the dividing line of those who exclude the others and of those who are open to the others and in some way positively integrate them into their own religious self-understanding.

the ethical com-
ponent of the
question con-
cerning violence
and intolerance

GABRIEL   If one does not want to see the catastrophic component in history, which was mentioned in the lecture [see above pp. 13 f.], as apocalyptic, it is not anonymous, but has something to do with human actions. Hence, beside the theological aspect, there is also an ethical aspect to it. In view of the past burdened with

violence, despite the postulate demanding the love of one's neighbour, the question arises: how do people, under the impression of certain structures, react to experiences of humiliation and injustice? In my view this should not simply be comprised in the catchword intolerance. There is an intolerance that denies life to the other, sometimes unfortunately also on religious grounds. However, besides there are also social structures, which, although they do not justify violence, still make it understandable in many ways. Thus *Pope Paul VI* (1963–1978) says about the question of revolution, in accordance with Catholic social teaching: in cases of long-lasting injustices, violence, although always still the responsible decision of the individual's conscience, is understandable in certain cases.[1] In this sense, what is catastrophic is the background for asking once again, in a differentiated way, the ethical questions concerning an approach to violence.

a universal claim implies a particular potential of danger

POTZ   Asking for an explanation: is the passage quoted from the Letter to the Galatians really to be understood as meaning that all – Jews and Greeks, slaves and freemen, etc. – can understand themselves as addressees of salvation "independent of their faith"? Is here the issue not rather that they can all be addressees independent of their status, but not independent of their *faith?* So that in fact a particular potential danger remains linked with this universal claim of our religions, as far as they do not address these or those particular people, but all of them? After all, a human being who does not respond to a claim that expressly also concerns him, is endangered very differently than he would be if he were not the addressee of a universal claim. In other words, is the "compelle intrare" not fully brought into play only within a universal claim?

July 20, 1944 and the question of tyrannicide

OTT   In her statement Professor Gabriel actually alludes to the old theological topic of tyrannicide. *Dietrich Bonhoeffer* (1906–1945), one of the great theologians of the 20th century, and the whole group to which he belonged consciously decided for tyrannicide. All who attempted to kill *Hitler* on July 20, 1944 consciously underwent this struggle of conscience. This was also a religious decision, however one of a very special kind. Those who in this situation decided for tyrannicide saw no other possibility but to act in this way.

fundamentalism or the fundamental rejection of the other

The problem of fundamentalism lies on a very different level – and here I am coming to the question of Professor Potz. Fundamentalism is opposed by what I called in the lecture the acknowledgement of 'participation in the truth' of the other: even though, concerning the subject matter, the other is of another opinion than I, he is not completely outside the truth which I maintain in my religious faith. From the Christian point of view, *Karl Rahner* (1904–1984) arrived at the concept of the 'anonymous Christian'. *Rahner* saw the other already in the domain of the truth, as one who participates in the truth and in this way is an anonymous Christian. Whoever in this way, participating in the truth, is already in the domain of the truth, struggles to realise it and contributes to finding it. Thus *Thomas Aquinas* (about 1225–1274) can say about the heretics: we have to be grateful to our opponents, because they have helped us to progress on the path towards the truth.[2] Hence, in a good Christian theology the heretics have their important position, even though one has to contradict them.

On this line of participation in the truth I then also see the question concerned with the addressees of Galatian 3:28. The addressees are not only the recipients of the letter at that time, nor only those who have been baptized, of whom *Paul* explicitly speaks there, but all people of all times are envisaged in this word, as it were as 'implicit', 'anonymous' addressees. For, according to the Christian understanding of faith, through the acts of God in Jesus Christ something essential happened to mankind as a whole: all now belong together, are brothers and sisters, regardless of all differences, and may and can perceive each other also as such.

---

[1] *Paul VI, "Populorum Progressio",* nr. 10 f. – Cf. *M. Walsh – B. Davies* (eds.), Proclaiming Justice and Peace. Documents from John XXIII to John Paul II, London 1991.

[2] Commentary on Metaphysics of Aristotle. – Cf. on this topic also *J. Pieper,* Hinführung zu Thomas von Aquin. Zwölf Vorlesungen, München ²1963, p. 120.

Intolerance and Violence: Manifestations and Reasons

Saleha S. Mahmood

Introduction

As we gather today in the 2nd Plenary Meeting of the VICIRoTa, we find ourselves living in a world in many ways changed by the tragic events of September 11, 2001 and developments since then. September 11 marks the darkest day in the recent history and the harshest hour for Christian-Muslim relations. It has dramatically changed the world's perspective on the need for religious tolerance and even on the sacrosanct value of respect for human rights, dignity and freedom. The terrorist acts of September 11 have not only shattered and halted the progress of an increasing tolerant culture of diversity and openness that had showed its early beginnings in the calls for dialogue of civilizations, in the increasing evidence that more people are living in countries with democratically elected governments, the Berlin Wall was down, the bogey of Communism was out, and wars of ethnic cleansing were being valiantly fought and scotched with international interference and assistance. By the Fall of 2001, the world was living under a unipolar axis with a superpower that seemed to enjoy superior strength and went unchallenged. However, this slowly emerging utopia ended with a simple act of aviation navigation apparently masterminded by "vicious terrorists", who seemed to be short of alternatives and even shorter in judgement and foresight as to the immediate fallout and long-term consequences of their act.

1. Facing the challenge

The theme question we were asked to address in the first VICIRoTa in October 2000 focused on identifying the most important problems humanity is facing on their way into the future and what can be done to overcome it. Following our deliberations, we had arrived at five points of concern that included: injustice and inequality in the distribution of resources; religious misperceptions enhancing discrimination and violence; the crisis in human values; increasing hostility, conflict, and violence in the name

of religion; and the failure of national and international institutions to enforce and secure religious tolerance. We then developed a "plan of action" that included the promotion of inter-religious dialogue to enhance cooperation and reconciliation; promote education reinforced by moral and ethical values of our respective faith traditions; promote religious reconciliation and conflict resolution; encourage media to play a more positive role through fairness and moderation in coverage. The VICIRoTa and a five-member Steering Committee were then charged with the task of pursuing the above stated action plan.

It seemed even more appropriate from hind sight that at the Steering Committee meeting in June 2001, we chose as the general title for our future cooperation "Contemporary Challenges for Muslims and Christians" and further agreed to designate the topic of our current meeting: "Intolerance and Violence: Manifestations – Reasons – Approaches". Apparently we had then our hands on the right pulse for we were reading the signs of the times that intolerance and violence were acquiring intensity and gathering strength against which we ought to develop strategies for containment and eventual eradication. This would indeed require the examination of their various forms and manifestations, a study of their root causes, and a strategy to approach them in order to neutralize their destructive potential. Our work on these challenging issues had hardly begun when the skies came crashing in and the Twin Towers crumbled into dust taking with them the hopes of establishing a peaceful world where tolerance coexists with diversity and the respect for human rights ensure human dignity and celebrate freedom and justice.

Yet the world turned rancid that day. Why, they ask, did the anger of some turn into vicious hatred and to careless acts of indiscriminate violence, taking thousands of innocent lives in one swift go? What is it that gives such intensity to individual acts of violence and collective mobilization of hatred and aggression? Poverty, it is often said these days, is the root cause of it all. Half of the world's population, fully three billion people, live in poverty; even more have no access to safe drinking water and basic healthcare. Just as many go hungry at night and the children remain deprived of schooling. Poverty, they say, is the cause of it all. Yet, that is part of a vicious circle. Poverty keeps people hungry, denies them healthy lives and safe environments, and deprives them of even the most rudimentary necessities of life. That in turn, leads to more poverty and more hunger and so on, the spiral continues to dive downward.

2. In search of causes

Intolerance and violence have various forms and manifestations that have increased and multiplied along with the increase in the number and growth of peoples and communities, with their diversities as varied and as intense as their numbers and varieties. Intolerance based on religion, social class, ethnicity, or gender may become directly linked with the degree of commitment to one's religious beliefs and convictions; with the severity of the class structure and social stratification; with the sense of pride in one's ethnicity or gender; and the conviction of superiority and hence the assertion for dominance. Each of these value systems creates an inner core and an outer shell to protect them against the 'other', who ironically becomes more threatening the closer is the cultural and physical proximity. The enmity among brothers is more dangerous and damaging than that among strangers.

Affirmation of one's identity, racial, religious, or social, often sparks an element of intolerance of the other. The definition of 'self' comes with a specification of who I am (thesis) and who I am not (anti-thesis) and that which I am not is likely to become my nemesis. Thus, it is the greatest challenge to the identity forming clusters to create the positive forces of the 'I' as the true and trusted inner core, with a minimal quantity of the negative of 'they' as the false and threatening external 'other'. In the ongoing war games between the 'self' and the 'other', the stakes are raised by the overpowering forces of greed and exploitation that prosper in poverty just as they proliferate in the plenty. In conditions of depravity that accompany absolute poverty which afflicts a vast portion of contemporary humanity, the differences that could even be celebrated as part of diversity become the symbols of threat and the objects of fear for the loss of what little you have and a denial of all that much more that you would want to have. Hunger enflames passion, poverty emboldens, and depravity gives freedom from fear of losing what you have for who have little to lose.

But that is just one kind of emboldening and liberating experience that one might encounter, i. e. the empowerment of the depraved and dispossessed, when the oppressed turn the oppressors. However, an equally if not more strong impetus to a violent response to conditions of depravity or perceived threat to identity may come from the anger of denial or negation of the valued core that strengthens the self with pride in one's identity and intensifies the desire to uphold and defend that identity. A threat to this identity becomes a motive for action and an impetus for mobilization. Thus, many

wars have been fought in the name of religion and ideology, just as many fears have been exploited in the pillaging of economy and society.

Injustice and oppression generate anger that transcends reason and resorts to rationalization that transcends judgement and rational action. Widespread and endemic poverty is a manifestation of injustice that provides the breeding ground for violence and intolerance. Conflict is a manifestation of intolerance that acquires various dimensions and in its most intense forms becomes a vehicle of annihilation as well as of self-destruction.

3. Our way forward

The ameliorative measures to overcome intolerance, violence, and conflict would cover a wide canvas of corrective, supportive, and therapeutic actions to contain, reduce, and ultimately eradicate poverty, injustice, and fear of the other. The pro-active measures to be adopted in this process include:

- Active and informed dialogue;
- Planned and positive reconciliation;
- Education to reduce fear and intolerance and
- Promotion of values and respect for law as well as liberty and equality among fellow beings.

These measures must be studied further in our continuing deliberations at the second VICIRoTa.

Dialogue

Christianity and Islam, between them, share more than half of the world's population of six billion inhabitants. It is not an accident that in many parts of the world, Christians and Muslims share a common history as well as a common heritage as two of the three leading Abrahamic faith traditions. There is a long though chequered history of Christian-Muslim encounters, often direct and frequently intense. Yet the commonality of our origin (as revealed religions) and of our purpose (to serve and please the Creator) provides us a common platform for action that is based on religious and spiritual values that may instil respect for human life and dignity and their direct derivatives i. e. human rights, freedom, justice, and equality. Based on these fundamental values that both our religions teach and subscribe to, we can develop a system of education and a program of propagation that reintroduces once again the relevance of these values in the mundane affairs of this world and re-launches our historic Christian-Muslim relations on a different plane.

This, I believe, is the challenge we face as Christians and Muslims as to how we are able to delve into our rich spiritual resources and put together a framework that processes differences into diversity and that can elicit tolerance and respect in response to that diversity. We should aim to promote dialogue between our two communities – Christians and Muslims, for not only have we literally inherited the earth (for the time being), we are also the busiest in building or damaging it by promoting understanding among ourselves, we will reduce the fear and the tensions that have multiplied even further and distanced us even more. If we learn to recognize that the acts of the few do not reflect the wills of the many and that all retribution should be just and measured for as the Qurʾān states: "No bearer of burdens shall be made to bear the burdens of another." (Sūra 6,164; 39,7)

The role of education

Indeed, it is not any form of education but education for tolerance and respect for human rights and dignity that needs to be proffered. The understanding of the meaning of human existence and its relevance and purpose in the larger scheme of things is something that can be accomplished given our respective Muslim-Christian framework of religious and spiritual values. Yet, at the same time, the need for vocational education to control and manipulate the environment to serve our human and social needs remains urgent and in fact intensifies with demographic explosion and technological advancement. To break the cycle of poverty, vocational education is necessary; to break the spiral of violence and crime in the society in general, a curriculum rich in spiritual and moral values is essential. This message must be widely shared and strategies devised to disseminate it among fellow believers, Christians and Muslims. That remains one of the challenges that face us – education for tolerance.

While both Islam and Christianity are proselytizing religions, they recognize faith as a state of inner being and not simply as a matter of manifestation in ritual and practices. Building on this commonality, we can develop a philosophy of education that emphasizes the inner and personal nature of faith and therefore the necessity for respecting the sanctity of the self as the carrier of that faith and of granting the individual the freedom of choice as well as of belief that remains his fundamental human right. In Islam, as in Christianity, there can be "no compulsion in religion".

As part of an action plan, we at the VICIRoTa should develop a policy statement on the inclusion of values/ethics/morality content in the core cur-

riculum of schools and higher education institutions. The policy may be formulated with the assistance of curriculum specialists, particularly those associated with faith-based educational institutions. The form of pedagogy is to be disseminated and incorporated into all educational systems in order to combat the crisis in values that results from anomie or a culture of suspended values. It is only when ethical and moral issues are integrated into secular learning that we can provide the bases for balanced and informed choices. To meet the challenges of contemporary life, education of the young generation should be geared toward the objective of an overall development of the person and not just towards developing vocational skills and producing the fodder for the labor market. That philosophy of education has become redundant along with the failed experiments of Marxism and socialism. Man does not live by bread alone. As human beings, we need to live by higher values and meet our basic spiritual needs. Unless religion, faith, and spirituality are returned into the public domain of political entities, societies will pay the price of denying such a crucial component of our lives and our beings, thus exposing ourselves to the whims and fancies of the forces that be. The proliferation of sects, splinter groups, and of cults are the results of the spiritual vacuum we have provided by the absolute removal of religion from the public space. This also provides a lucrative opportunity for disaffected groups with political agendas to seek and secure recruits for their causes by providing them their brand of 'education' to indoctrinate the innocent with their philosophy and ideology.

In Islam, education has been acknowledged as the most valued asset for an individual to acquire and a learned person to give. The early history of Islam saw the flowering of its culture and civilization mainly through its institutions of learning, the *madāris*. The golden age lasted as long as these centers of learning steeped in Islamic philosophy of life and learning continued to flourish and dominate the economy and society. Once the political and economic tides turned, the *madrasa*, and hence the system of education, declined, thus spiralling the decline and fall of a dominant civilization. These *madāris* continue to provide social functions in today's impoverished societies, where at least some rudimentary education is available, often free of charge, to generations of deprived children. Yet in contemporary context these *madāris* have become the targets of suspicion, as purveyors of 'religious fundamentalism' and the hot bed of terrorism. Indeed special interest groups have used the *madrasa* as an easy avenue of access to future cohorts of recruits for causes that come with commit-

ted and resourceful providers. This has rendered the institution the greatest damage in terms of its utility as well as its credibility. Recognition of this problem and aggressive measures to remove such an exploitation will salvage this institution from disbarment or deliberate extinction.

Eradicating poverty

The various causal linkages that lead to violence and intolerance bring us to yet another intervening variable, that of poverty. Most of the 1.5 billion Muslims live in countries that by the United Nations definition are poor and underdeveloped. With a GDP of less than $ 300 per year in many, rates of illiteracy as high as 80 per cent in some countries, with some of highest fertility as well as mortality rates in the world, who live under unstable political structures and weak and shaky economies. To worsen their lot comes in globalization, which in claiming to provide a level playing field, only builds plateaus that rise high above the deprived multitude below. Globalization is often seen ironically as one more factor adding to the impoverishment of nations and not to their enrichment. The developed countries, the sponsors of the globalization process, would want the rest of the world to view this process otherwise. Most of these countries, overburdened by massive national debt which they can hardly service, a burgeoning population and their crumbling economies and fragile political structures, they become a fertile breeding ground for political opportunists of all shades. Eradicating poverty and ensuring economic development should therefore be the first objective of all national and international plans. This is being increasingly acknowledged by all concerned.

Political justice

Current and festering political conflicts are directly linked to issues of land and to access of economic resources and to demands for sovereignty on the basis of self-determination. Political entities crafted on their prickly and harsh bargaining tables remain structurally weak and inherit the traits of instability and potential conflict. Denial or delay in recognizing these claims breeds anger and frustration. Most intense conflicts today often involve Muslim communities who face Christian adversaries. The focus has now shifted from the theme "Islam versus the West" to the "West versus terrorism", a word which many Muslims lament is being equated to Islam or with their Muslimness. Indeed the accusers have found grounds to base their accusations on and, even though they have since taken precautions to distance Islam, *per se* express

that they do not mean to implicate Islam as a religion or Muslim people in general, their search for the lurking terrorists in *madāris,* in banking and financial institutions, in community centers, and non-governmental organizations all indicate the strength of their belief that this danger is widespread and endemic in Muslim societies and among Muslim people, hence the racial and ethnic profiling, the policing of borders, and the guarding of skyways.

Terrorism

The atrocious acts of a few perpetrators have let loose the intense anger of beleaguered victims. The contemporary world apparently cannot face the 'demons' of its own making and so the war on terrorism goes on, popularising new a terminology which now is made to cover and is claimed by all parties to the conflict who explain and justify their retaliatory actions thus – that they are fighting the terrorists. They as the rest of the world fail to recognize that the only effective way to fight terrorism is to address the root causes of terrorism which make people frustrated enough to risk their lives and destroy their livelihoods? Frustration aggravated by humiliation are the most powerful driving forces that provide the fuel for terrorism. This is a base response to a base threat.

However no amount of frustration or humiliation justifies purely terrorist actions. The use of terrorism is a reflection of the failure of our education/socialization system that fails to inculcate the proper values of respect for life and the sanctity of human rights of all, irrespective of their race, religion, gender, and political ideology. Indeed all ruthless and extreme actions, whether from the terrorists or from their victims, are expressions of the failure of our current systems, if they allowed anyone the exercise of excessive force or the use of unrestrained counterforce. Forceful retaliatory measures unaccompanied by acts to remove the root causes will not be sufficient, though they may seem urgent and necessary. The main causes for violence and intolerance as embedded in socio-economic and political inequities must be addressed and the widespread discontent must be removed. The swamps of poverty and ignorance must be drained and the social soil must be fertilized again for us to see the green pastures of peace and harmony and respect for life and the living and the celebration of humanity through its diversity.

International collaboration

In our efforts at the VICIRoTa to identify the most important problems humanity is facing on their way into the future and to explore their solutions, we would be helped very much if we could share our conclusions and deliberations with national and international agencies. This could provide wider exposure and possible adoption and application of our solutions to the degree of their relevance and applicability. I also recommend that we, as members of the VICIRoTa take active part in the review and formulation of international instruments drafted at the United Nations such as universal declarations and protocols on human rights, on the elimination of discrimination based on gender, racism, racial discrimination, xenophobia and related intolerance, prevention of discrimination and protection of minorities and elimination of intolerance and discrimination on the grounds of religion and belief. During the last two decades of the 20th century, major world conferences have been held under the auspices of the United Nations to address these issues and solutions were sought through the creation of 'platforms for actions'. Signatory states became obligated to enforce and implement these platforms within their countries, and this was ensured through the promulgation of formal United Nations protocols.

By participating in relevant conferences as members of NGOs (nongovernmental organizations) or through collaboration with and support of our respective governmental delegations, we can make a meaningful contribution to the formulation, revision, and ratification of these instruments created within the United Nations systems and implemented through the governmental and non-governmental organizations within the member states. Similar efforts should be exerted in other agencies such as the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund, other regional, bilateral, and multilateral organizations and emerging institutions such as the increasingly influential World Economic Forum. By participating in their activities we can not only inform ourselves of the latest trends and developments in vital areas, we will be able to bring our perspective to bear on their deliberations. Through our efforts at the VICIRoTa to re-introduce religious, moral, ethical, and spiritual values, while ourselves examining and assessing these values for the relevance of the emerging situations, we may succeed in stemming the ongoing process of the leaching of the rich soil of our social fabric. Currently, all the essential nutrients as embedded in our religious and spiritual values and universal social and cultural norms are being filtered out to preserve and protect the secular domain.

In recent years we have also seen a proliferation of interest in promoting inter-faith dialogue and joint efforts at easing inter-communal conflicts and tensions that have become endemic and have frequently reached and ex-

ceeded crisis proportions. A notable effort among these is the New York based Millennium World Peace Summit of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, which aims to forge an alliance of religious and spiritual leaders with the United Nations as it remains "an ideal forum in which to address world's problems". They are currently in the process of forming the World Council of Religious and Spiritual Leaders, which is to serve as a resource to the United Nations and its agencies around the world as well as nation states and other international organizations and through its council offer the collective wisdom and resources of the faith traditions toward the resolution of critical global problems. I recommend that VICIRoTa should interact and collaborate with the Council as it is formed and participate in its program of activities and share our vision and concerns on this wider platform.

A similar effort at promoting dialogue was launched during the proceedings of the Parliament of World's Religions (PWR) that was held in Cape Town, South Africa in December 1999. In this particular initiative concerned Muslims came together to form the International Council of Muslims for Interfaith Relations (ICMIR). Working closely with the Chicago based Council for a Parliament of World's Religions (CPWR), a group of concerned Muslims active in interfaith dialogue efforts and describing themselves as the "Global Muslim Community" came together to form the ICMIR. This launching coincided with the PWR's call to the leading institutions in society (religion, government, business, commerce, education, science, etc.) to work towards addressing the contemporary challenges and to offer Gifts of Service to Humankind on the eve of the Third Millennium. The ICMIR is offered as one of those 'gifts'.

The challenge to all such initiatives has multiplied many-fold particularly following the events of the last few months. There is a special burden of responsibility on the Muslim community and its religious and spiritual leaders to explain the proliferation of violent and terrorist actions emanating from Muslim individuals and groups and to seek efficacious remedies to redress the ensuing grave situation that seemingly bewilders the world today.

Conclusion

As a result of a cumulative build-up and as a response to the emerging situations around the world, much energy has been generated worldwide to bring religion back into the fold. There is now a vigorous and vocal call upon religious and spiritual leaders, and an increasing awareness on their own part, for the need for the religious leaders to take active interest in contemporary affairs and to get involved once again in addressing the numerous problems that confront the world. More than ever before, this task has acquired urgency and its significance cannot be ignored or underestimated without incurring risks.

We should not fail to recognize though, that the gravity of the problems worldwide that now seem to be epitomized in 'terrorism', is basically embedded in severe social, economic, political injustices and even moral crises which afflicts the contemporary world. All these areas have to be addressed simultaneously for any one side to be effective in eradicating terrorism and its corollaries, violence and intolerance. I hope that our efforts at the Round Table will prove fruitful in not only exposing the problems but also in exploring the remedies to these problems and in seeking ways to avoid them in the future.

I wish happy deliberations to all my colleagues around this Table and to my Muslim colleagues I wish a very happy *'Id al aḍḍhā*.

Questions and Interventions

POTZ   It is always hard for me to find something where I do not agree with Dr. Saleha Mahmood. Above all this applies to her concern that we have to make great efforts to integrate ethics into our education, into our curricula. However, whether we should concentrate too hard on including only our religious values or deal with this task in a more open way, remains a question for me.

As I see it, in the perspective of European history, the appeal to return to religious values is a certain challenge. For, as long as Europe had in mind religious values exclusively, did there things really go well? The history of Europe rather shows that it was the Enlightenment, which made Europe ready to accept other traditions. As long as the religious values alone were European values, Islam was much more the opponent of Europe than is the case today. Accordingly, I think, from a European perspective, we have to be very careful when facing those to whom we want to say, "Let's remember our traditional values!"

In this circle more should also be said about the tragedy of terrorism. Terrorists always start at a point where one can comply with their activities. Then the changes are not sufficient, whereupon their activities intensify and are in danger of becoming self-generating. Finally an explosion takes place, which one can no longer understand. And therewith the tragedy of terrorism begins, for at this point it begins to reinforce those against whom it originally fought. A brief political and very banal summary would be: never before have the United States been so politically powerful as now after the events of September 11. The problem that for me results from what I have just outlined is: how can we cope with the concerns behind a terrorist movement, which, in the beginning, can mostly be complied with, without disavowing these concerns because of those incendiary acts, which can take place at a certain point in time?

S. MAHMOOD   It would also be hard for me not to agree with what Professor Potz has said. One point however I would like to bring to your attention as expressed by Professor Potz: that Europe owes what it is today to the Enlightenment and not to Christianity, hence to the values of the Enlightenment and not to the religious values.

The flowering of the Islamic civilization, however, was not connected with any so-called secular experience of an enlightenment. It happened on the basis of religious values and teachings. Thus it is not problematic for us to go back to the religious, spiritual, and moral-ethical values. I therefore prefer to speak not only of religious values, but also of ethical and moral values, which are always universal. They are not the property of any particular religious tradition, but are general human values, at least many of them. And the fact that some of them are embedded in our respective religious faiths would give them greater strength and validity among those who are followers of that tradition. Yet, the difference with what Professor Potz said is not so great, because he would not play off the values of the Enlightenment against the religious values, but would see them, if I understood him correctly, in a complementary relation with one another.

We would not hesitate to acknowledge the 'fundamental values', which brings me back once more to the question of the fundaments raised by Professor Ott and to the exposition that in Islam the question of fundamentalism has a meaning that is different from its understanding in Christianity. For a Muslim, the term 'fundamentalism' is indeed no problem, when understood as returning to the roots, differing from the history behind its usage in the Christian and Western context. Thus we Muslims see no problem in the repeated call for a return to the fundamental moral and ethical values, which our respective religions teach. The problems however, which are raised against them on the Christian side, have, as I feel, certainly become a problem for the rest of the world. For was this not exactly also a reason for the disappearance of religion from the public arena of Western culture? And this was certainly problematic for the rest of the world, because subsequently religion gained a bad reputation. By removing religion from the public space we have created a vacuum in the world for spiritual needs which remain unmet, giving rise to religious sects and cults, and distorted social practices. In this sense I think that it is necessary to bring back religion into public life.

GABRIEL   I, too, could practically subscribe to everything that Dr. Saleha Mahmood expounded in her lecture. Yet, there are two questions that I would like to have deliberated together in this circle. We certainly have to proceed from the fact that the intellectual culture, to which we all belong, is an elite culture. If now one rightly attributes

such great importance to education, the first question that arises for me is how to reach those people also who do not belong to this elite culture.

The second question relates to the contents, which we link with religious values. We can certainly not link those contents with them, which were attributed to them in a situation existing in the Middle Ages. There are processes of learning in which we partake, no matter whether we learn from secular traditions or from each other. And we have to render account to each other, which are the best religious values, which have to be promulgated at a certain time.

In this way we could also see the relationship of our Christian tradition to the Enlightenment: whilst some think that they can conceive of the transition to the Enlightenment as a great rupture only, others want to recognize a continuity in the relation between the Christian religion and the Enlightenment, in as far as the Enlightenment took over certain contents from Christianity, which until then had had no respective standing in Christianity. Here one can above all think of the value of tolerance: if one looks for instance at the New Testament, one will indeed find there rather little in support of the fact that tolerance is a fundamental value in Christianity. And nevertheless one can recognize in the Enlightenment important impulses for the development of the concept of tolerance, which originated in the Christian tradition. Both theories have their points. Personally I would however proceed from the fact that there was a continuity within discontinuity.

What we are concerned with here is the question which contents we want to attribute to religious values. I think that about this there should be a continual discussion between us, and I think an exchange of this kind is extremely fruitful also in the Christian-Islamic dialogue.

MIHÇIYAZGAN A critical remark strikes me in connection with the lecture of Dr. Saleha Mahmood. Her exposition indeed seemed to me to presuppose fundamentally that cultivation of the mind and education, would promote human morality. Can education and study not also lead to immorality? If I look into our own history, it is not hard to see how even great thinkers could be misguided and made many people follow them along their erroneous ways. Therefore I think that despite all the valuable components that cultivation of the mind and education can provide, one has to be careful at the same time as regards the assumption that with this alone a better, more humane life would already be guaranteed.

POTZ Basically I completely agree with what my colleague Professor Gabriel said. Yet, history shows that developments like those of remembering our roots, the Christian fundaments of Europe etc., can also be dangerous. After all we have to expect questions such as: as long as these values were upheld, were things really better in Europe? My preceding contribution was motivated by the following concrete thoughts: as long as the ideas of a European unification were determined by religion, the Muslims, as for instance the Ottoman Empire, were left standing before the gates of Europe. Only when, in the wake of the Enlightenment, the idea of Europe was no longer determined by religion, there was free space for the idea that the Ottoman Empire also belongs to Europe. It is clear that today this is seen differently – of course differently also as to the religious aspect. We just have to expect the critical question, what in fact were in the past those Christian values of Europe? Did they not bring the crusades, wars of religion, and the exclusion of the Muslims? Only in later modern times did this come to an end. Hence, where does one want to return to, if one wants to return to the spiritual fundaments of the Christian Europe?

S. MAHMOOD I would like to follow further the discourse between Dr. Gabriel and Dr. Potz, for which I am very grateful, and I would like to hear more about it.

Here just a brief comment on the critical statements of Dr. Gabriel and Dr. Mihçiyazgan on education as an element of an elite culture: if I speak about education in this context, I do not in the first place imply it in terms of a formal school education or university education, for which in Arabic the word ta'līm is used. In Arabic there is another word called tarbiya (training/disciplining), for which as far as I know there is no real equivalent in English; it means proper nurturing and socialization, which makes an individual a more wholesome, effective and positive member of society, who deals with all issues in a rational yet considerate manner. It is in this wider sense that I would have the word 'education' understood.

However, even the formal education and cultivation of the mind, as it is taught in schools, is lacking in many parts of the world, and more so in the Islamic countries. There is a very high rate of illiteracy there. Not that literacy or even formal education could give you wisdom. At home I have had for 18 years a housemaid, who is, in terms of formal schooling, a completely

uneducated and even an illiterate woman. Yet, she gives me day by day much wisdom, telling me how to attend to my affairs in this life and in the hereafter. This wise woman has probably had a more solid 'education' than those who attend school day by day. In the village in Somalia, where she was raised in a community, she had a solid training in all of life's skills. In our contemporary societies, in the processes of modernization and urbanization, we have destroyed these old, approved modes of education and forms of socialization, we have rid ourselves of them. Now we only have the schools of today, where almost all socialization and nurturing takes place – and this also implies the answer to the critical question whether after all schools have not become dangerous places which can also do great harm. Yet, where else should we go today? As sociologists we know that our children spend most of their waking and receptive hours at school. Therefore we should also see school as a moral platform and use it for conveying to young people the relevant values. Of course then very quickly the questions arise: which values, whose ethical values, whose religious values? These questions remain important questions. As I recommended, we should dedicate ourselves to the questions as to how these values are to be conveyed, in discussions with experts on educational issues, particularly with curriculum experts.

ethical values to be conveyed anew to young people

It has already been said that religions also influence each other and can start a manifold mutual exchange. By the way, I am here not speaking of 'Christian values' or of 'Islamic values'. I am simply speaking of moral and ethical values. In whichever way we may interpret them in the individual case, they should be brought back and be given the place due to them in the education of young people – whether this is done in the formal school system or in the family or in the forms of neighbourhood socialization. In the old days one used to say, "It takes a village to raise a child." Today we should also set ourselves this task, making do with what we have.

Violence in the Name of Religion

Adel Theodor Khoury

One of the worst forms of violence consists in waging an armed fight, a war, in order to strike down or even to eradicate other people and other nations respectively, to destroy other states, to deprive other communities of their freedom. And the worst form of this worst violence is that which one tries to legitimate by religious motives or even by divine ordinance. Something like this is known to us from the history of Christianity and from the practice of some Christian peoples and communities respectively, as well as from the history of Islam and from the practice of some Islamic groupings. In our time as well, one can here and there observe that a mentality flares up, which supports and preaches violence and which directly leads to this form of violence just as it approves of the way groups act, which abuse religion in order to attain political targets.

I am no historian, my field is theology of religions, more closely Islamology. I may therefore be allowed to leave the necessary critical examination of Christian or Islamic history past and present to other, more competent colleagues, in order to turn to the problems of this kind of violence in the world of Islam.

It is not my concern to attack Islam – my respect for Islam is much too great to do so – or to downgrade the Muslims – but for some time I have endeavoured to gain a differentiated knowledge and to make a differentiated assertion. It is my concern to show the fundamental characteristics of the theory, which serves as justification of such a conduct and to trace the ways which can, from a theory of war, lead towards a theory of peace.

Yet, first it has to be clarified, why we bring up such grievances and what the supporters of the so-called _djihād_, the (armed) engagement for the cause of Islam, refer to.

So I am going to present my exposition in three steps:
1. The theory of the _djihād_,
2. Arguments in favour of a theory of peace,
3. Living together with Non-Muslims.

1. The theory of the *djihād*

1.1 Definition of identity

1.1.1 Identity facing the others

In the first period Muḥammad understood his message as an affirmation of the Torah and of the Gospel (cf. Qur'ān 2,97.101; 3,3 and others). He spoke of the unity of revelation and of the Holy Scriptures (cf. 3,84; see also 2,136; 4,150.163). He also professed the God of the Jews and of the Christians: "[…] Our God and your God is One; and it is to Him we bow (in Islam)." (29,46). However, after the emigration of the Islamic community from Mecca to Medina in the year 622, circumstances developed that called this concordance into question. In the years 622 until 624, Muḥammad had tried to win over the People of the Book, above all however the Jews, for an alliance with him against the enemies of Islam, the polytheistical Meccans. The references to the fundamental concordance between Muslims, Jews, and Christians bore no fruit. At this point Muḥammad took two determinant steps, which were to guarantee independence for him and for Islam. Firstly, against the claims of Jews and Christians, he maintained respectively to have the one and only religion of salvation, the religion of *Abraham*, the father of all believers (Qur'ān 2,135). This religion had already existed before Judaism and Christianity (3,65.67). Muḥammad had therewith affirmed the concordance of his message with *Abraham*, without however binding himself to Judaism or to Christianity. The second step to define the identity of Islam was at the same time of a religious and political nature. The Arab character of the Qur'ānic message was now to be emphasized and at the same time its direct connection with *Abraham* was to be made clear. Thus the Qur'ān ascertained that the main sanctuary of Old Arabia, the Ka'ba in Mecca, went back to what *Abraham* had done together with his son *Ismael* (cf. 2,124–134). At the same time the direction of prayers was changed, from Jerusalem to Mecca. The identity of Islam facing Judaism and Christianity was therewith ultimately confirmed, and the Ka'ba was elevated to the place where all Arab tribes assembled and to the symbol of the religious unity of all Muslims.

Based on their common faith, the Muslims now become brothers (Qur'ān 49,10); they are, men and women, mutual friends (9,71). "[…] And remember with gratitude God's favour on you; for ye were enemies and He joined your hearts in love, so that by His Grace, ye became brethren; […]" (3,103). Only Muslims are mutual friends; the others can belong to them, if they follow the call to accept Islam (9,11).

1.1.2 Identity as against the others

A further development exacerbated the definition of one's own identity. Now it was defined against the others. In the Islamic legal system as well as in the later commentaries of the Qur'ān, the differences between polytheists and People of the Book (Jews and Christians) are slightly blurred. Repeatedly, terms like *mushrik* (polytheist) are also extended to the Jews and the Christians. The differences between Muslims on the one hand and Jews and Christians on the other were exacerbated, and this as a token of their humiliation (cf. Qur'ān 9,29)[1], even though the latter were granted the right of permanent domicile in the Islamic state, in accordance with their legal status of protected citizens.

1.2 The engagement against Non-Muslims in the classical legal system

1.2.1 Assertions of the Qur'ān

The ordainments of the Qur'ān referring to the *djihād*, i. e. the engagement for the cause of God and of Islam, stem from the Medina-period of Muḥammad's preaching (622–632). The Qur'ān adopts a more unbending attitude against its opponents, who persecuted the Muslims with their hostility, denied them access to the sacred site in Mecca and respected no agreements made with them. After some time, during which the Qur'ān ordained a conditioned war of defence against the enemies, it then after all declared total war against the implacable enemies of the Islamic community. According to the Qur'ān, the Muslims should go to war and fight for their life (cf. 8,30), for their faith (61,8), and for the unity of their community (2,217). "And fight them on until there is no mor[e] tumult or oppression, and there prevail justice and faith in God altogether and everywhere; but if they cease, verily God doth see all that they do." (8,39; cf. 2,193). Those who, by participating in the fight, have proved that they are true to the faith and obedient, are promised to be rewarded when they are with God (cf. 4,74). The ultimate target of the fight is only to be attained and there will only be peace when the unbelievers finally adopt Islam (cf. 48,16) and when Islam wins the victory (cf. 9,33). Until then there will be total struggle: "[…] and fight the Pagans all together as they fight you all together. […]". (9,36). In this way the Muslims will return the violence done to them by their enemies and themselves punish the non-believers, thus doing their duty by their engagement for the rights of God and by se-

---

[1] Cf. in this context also my book: Toleranz im Islam, Altenberge ²1986, p. 141, fn. 8.

curing the predominance of Islam. This engagement is of great importance, for it simultaneously serves the maintenance and fortification of the Islamic community's unity and the maintenance and fortification of the Islamic order of life, so that Islam is the only one to attain sovereignty over the rest of the religions and communities (cf. Qur'ān 9,33; 61,9; 48,28).

Facing the Jews and the Christians, the Qur'ān also ordains: "Fight those who believe not in God nor the Last Day, nor hold that forbidden which hath been forbidden by God and His Apostle, nor acknowledge the Religion of Truth, (even if they are) of the People of the Book, until they pay the _djizya_ with willing submission, and feel themselves subdued." (9,29). In the following verses (9,30–35) the reasons for these ordainments are given. One of them is: "Fain would they extinguish God's Light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that His Light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest (it)." (9,32).

1.2.2 Specifications of the Islamic legal system
The specifications of the Islamic legal system in the classical period are based on these Qur'ānic ordainments and targets.

This legal system recognizes a partition of the world into two domains: the domain of Islam (_dār al-islām_) and the domain of war (_dār al-ḥarb_). The domain of Islam is the City of God, the Empire of Peace, which is ruled by Islamic law and the social order and political structure established by Islam. In principle, the domain of the Non-Muslims is called the domain of war. There the law of the non-believers and of the Non-Muslims is predominant, which in some or even in numerous points contradicts the ordainments of the divine law. The Muslims have the duty to defend their own domain against the attacks of the enemies. Beyond that they have to engage actively in order to help the law of God to win the victory and to apply the rights of God in the domain of the Non-Muslims also.

When, in order to safeguard its existence, the Islamic domain has to defend itself against a massive attack, then all Muslims are called upon to fight for the protection of their domain and thus to engage themselves for the cause of God. In less dramatic situations one proceeds from the fact that the duty of waging the Holy War is owed to the state and to the community as such, and that this duty is fulfilled when in some place in the world efforts are made to expand the domain of Islam's power.

This duty of the community is an everlasting duty. In principle the engagement for Islam only comes to an end when all peoples have adopted the faith in God or have even converted to Islam. The ultimate target "in the cause of God" as the Qur'ān expresses it (e. g. 2,190 etc.) will only be reached, when the domain of the enemies is also annexed to the domain of Islam, when unbelief is finally eradicated, when the Non-Muslims have been subjected to the one and only supremacy of Islam. As long as the sovereignty of Islam has not embraced the whole world, the Holy War remains a permanent state, namely one that has to take place either by means of military actions or at least by means of political attempts or in any other way.

As to _peace_, it is, as to the intention of Islamic law, the final condition to be attained in the controversy between the Islamic state and the non-Muslim communities. For the engagement takes place so that people can together live in peace and in awe of God as Muslims or at least as tolerated enclaves of protected citizens (_dhimmī_) within the borders and under the rule of the Islamic state: peace will only be attained and is only considered to be final when the borders of the Islamic state extend to the ends of the earth, when there remains one state only: the Islamic state. As long as this target has not been reached, there is a constant state of conflict between the Islamic State of God and the non-Islamic states; its relations with the foreign countries remain those of legal controversy. Yet, this state does not mean that Islam is engaged in an everlasting, active fight against the non-Muslims or has to wage a permanent war against foreign nations. Nor does this mean that Islam would not be permitted to entertain relations of whatever kind with them. Contracts and treaties may be concluded, agreements made and cultural and economic relations started and cultivated. Yet, according to the assessment of the classical legal system of Islam, these contacts and relations do not at all contain the acknowledgement or legitimacy of the foreign states. Taking up such relations only takes into account the fact that, as long as they remain, a certain authority and a certain social and political order have to exist also in the non-Islamic states. Thus one is ready to take cognizance of the existing authority and the dominant social order as well as of the institutions of the state and, in the interest of the Muslims, to establish contacts with the respective government and for the time being to agree upon peaceful relations.

These peaceful relations do not abolish the fundamental partition of the world into a 'domain of Islam' and a 'domain of war'. As long as the time of peace lasts, jurists refer to the domain of war as to the 'domain of peace' (_dār aṣ-ṣulḥ_) or 'domain of the treaty' (_dār al-'ahd_). Yet the fact is emphasized that the validity of concluded contracts and periods of peace agreed

upon do not mean that non-Islamic nations have a position that is equal to that of the Islamic state. Transitory and limited periods of peace are a break only on the path towards the islamizaton of the whole world. Although this target is hard to reach, in the practice of everyday life one has to proceed from the fact that normally engagement for the cause of Islam is only given its active expression in becoming a dormant, not positively performed duty. The theoretical target however remains and time and again confronts practice with the ideal condition and target willed by God.

Referring to the struggle for the cause of Islam and of the doctrine still or again held by militant groups in the Islamic world, one can summarize the concept of the Islamic legal system of the classical period as follows: peace is the condition of the internal order of the state, if this state is governed according to the laws of God and grants no free space to unbelievers, renegates, rebels, and similar groups that endanger existence, but converts or removes them. Towards the outside, peace means the final condition, which is reached after the victorious struggle against and the defeat of the non-Muslim communities, so that there is none other but the Muslim state, in which the Non-Muslims, only if they are adherents of a revealed religion acknowledged by Islam and possess holy scriptures, have the legal status of citizens protected by Islam. Therewith the political community of the Muslims (umma) fulfills its task of supporting and preserving the rights of God and of safeguarding the rights of people established in accordance with the rights of God.

2. Arguments in favour of a theory of peace

2.1 Engagement and peace

Against this classical position, contemporary thinkers in the Islamic world emphasize the priority of peace not only as the ultimate condition, but as the normal state of the mutual relations between peoples and communities. The representatives of this position like to refer to the re-interpretation of the duty to wage wars, which already took place in the Middle Ages. Theologians, spiritual teachers, and even some jurists at that time referred to war as the "small engagement". The "great engagement" is of a spiritual nature and consists in a threefold effort:

- in the engagement of the heart, which means in the daily endeavour towards a truthful faith and a truer obedience;
- in the engagement of the tongue, which means in the daily endeavour to encourage the righteous and to admonish the wicked;
- eventually in the engagement of the hand, which means in social service and social charity. Finally an activity of peaceful proclaiming and mission would be an excellent means of spreading Islam in the world.

Yet, the theory of war itself also contains components that emphasize the priority of peace. Even in the middle of an armed controversy, the Muslims are to be ready for reconciliation, as soon as their enemies stop their godless activities (Qur'ān 2,193; 8,39). The Qur'ān makes clear that it considers peace the actual target of the engagement for the cause of God and His religion: "But if the enemy incline towards peace, do thou (also) incline towards peace [...]" (8,61). Maintaining peace is ordained, when the opponents desist from their transgressions and mend their ways (5,34). "[...] Therefore if they withdraw from you but fight you not, and (instead) send you (guarantees of) peace, then God hath opened no way for you (to war against them)." (4,90; cf. 4,94). Peace is the chance of the Non-Muslims as well as the chance of Islam itself. For what is at stake is to make people hear the message of God and always leave to enemies, who are willing to learn, a chance to hear this message, perhaps to become converts and to be admitted to the full community of the Muslims: "If one amongst the Pagans ask thee for asylum, grant it to him, so that he may hear the Word of God; and then escort him to where he can be secure. [...]" (9,6). – "But (even so), if they repent, establish regular prayers, and practise regular charity, – they are your brethren in Faith: [...]" (9,11; cf. 9,5).

Those who hold this position emphasize that there may indeed be circumstances which can make an armed controversy a legitimate concern of the Muslims. Reasons which authorize the Muslims to wage a just war are the following: rejecting hostile attacks (war of defence), no matter whether these hostilities are expressed in a campaign (cf. Qur'ān 2,190), in disregarding contractual agreements (cf. 9,12), or in planning an attack against Muslims. In this last case the Muslims may anticipate their enemies and retaliate preventively. Going beyond the war of defence, the Muslims may interfere in order to prevent their brothers in the faith from being persecuted, oppressed, or even seduced in foreign countries (cf. Qur'ān 2,193; 8,39; 4,75). The Muslims may also engage in making it possible for Islam's work of announcement to develop without any hindrance.

2.2 The Meccan period as the model for today

According to the opinion of some thinkers, the Muslims who grant priority to peace should actually orient themselves according to the doctrine of

the Qur'ān, which prevailed in the Meccan periods of peace:

• In his relations with the polytheists among the Meccans during these periods, Muḥammad was very careful not to get involved in any dispute and to avoid any aggressivity. His call to adopt the faith appeals to people's self-responsibility and the right understanding of their own interests (cf. 10,108). At that time his mission did not contain the task to call people to account for their unbelief (cf. numerous Qur'ānic verses, like for instance 109,6; 11,93.121; 10,41; 26,216; 42,15; 34,25).

• Muḥammad should not always refuse discussion with the Non-Muslims. Yet, this discussion should not take the form of an aggressive dispute, but it should in the first place be a call to adopt the faith: "Invite (all) to the Way of thy Lord with wisdom and beautiful preaching; and argue with them in ways that are best and most gracious: [...]" (16,125).

2.3 Religious pluralism

The Qur'ān acknowledges religious pluralism concerning the rightful existence of the revealed religions, i. e. mainly relating to Judaism and to Christianity. Although, this is the assertion of the Qur'ān, God sent his individual prophets with the same fundamental message of monotheistic faith (cf. 21,25; 3,84), he also decided himself that the great messengers: Moses, Jesus, and ultimately Muḥammad, decree laws, which in some points deviate from one another. The Qur'ān acknowledges the validity and salvational effect of these individual religious paths: "Those who believe (in the Qur'ān), and those who follow the Jewish (scriptures), and the Christians and the Sabians[2], – any who believe in God and the Last Day, and work righteousness, shall have their reward with their Lord: on them shall be no fear, nor shall they grieve." (2,62; 5,69). Thus, the individual communities shall not dispute about their respective law (22,67), but emulate each other in being good: "To each is a goal to which God turns him; then strive together (as in a race) towards all that is good. [...]" (2,148; cf. 5,48).

According to the Qur'ān it is the particular role of the Muslims to be "[...] justly balanced [...] witnesses over the nations [...]" (2,143; cf. 22,78). However, this does not mean that all religions have the same ranking, for Islam remains the one and only true religion (3,19), the principle continues to be valid: "If anyone desires a religion other than Islam (submission to God), never will it be accepted of him; [...]" (3,85).

---

[2] Probably a baptismal community like the Mandæans.

This acknowledgement of religious pluralism that can practically not be abolished is not only a phenomenon of the early periods of the Qur'ānic message in Mecca and Medina. It is confirmed by the later verses of the Qur'ān itself (5,43 f.: Judaism; 5,46: Christianity; 5,58: Islam). The Qur'ān addresses all with the words: "[...] To each among you have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way. If God had so willed, He would have made you a single People, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. [...] " (5,51).

3. Living together with Non-Muslims

From what has been explained sofar it easily becomes clear which position is that of Islam in doctrine and practice, concerning the question, which form to give to the practical living together of Muslims and Non-Muslims. When faith is the core of Islam, the uniting tie in society and the effective factor of the believer's solidarity, finally the fundament of the Muslims' political standing in the state, then there exists some kind of graded community with people: a full community with the brothers and sisters in the faith, a partial community with those who have another faith, like Jews and Christians, which one can call partial believers/partial unbelievers, finally no community with the non-faithful.

3.1 No community with the non-faithful

The unbelievers are considered to be the enemies of God and of his messenger and also of the Muslims in general (Qur'ān 60,1; 8,60). There shall be no community between the believers and them. Thus the Qur'ān forbids the Muslims to eat what is expressly pagan, the meat of animals which were slaughtered invoking the idols: they are above all sacrificial animals. Only somebody who is in distress may eat of it (16,115; 6,145; 2,173; 5,3). Nor may the unbelievers be accepted in marriage in the families of the Muslims and become relatives of the faithful (2,221; cf. 60,10). Moreover, the Muslims shall protect the interests of their community by not making friends with the unbelievers. For such relations endanger the faithful, undermine their unity, and erode the morale of their struggle. The coherence of the faithful and the solidarity of the members of the community shall be expressed by their offering their friendship to the believers rather than to the unbelievers (cf. 3,28; 4,144).

Thus the Qur'ān draws a clear line dividing the Muslims and the unbelievers. This partition also applies to relatives who are not believing (58,22;

cf. 9,23 f.). The order is: "O ye who believe! Take not for friends and pro-tectors those [...] who reject Faith; [...]" (5,60). The issue is fighting against the enemies of God and the Muslims. The engagement and the struggle of Islam is in the first place directed against them.

3.2 Partial community with Jews and Christians

3.2.1 Mixed marriages between protected citizens and Muslims

A protected citizen may not marry a Muslim woman, for such a marriage involves a direct danger to the faith of the Muslim woman. If it is concluded by mistake, it has to be dissolved. A protected citizen, who knows the legal position and the existing prohibition and nevertheless marries a Muslim woman, has to be punished. A Muslim may marry a free woman from within the People of the Book, as above all Jews and Christians are called in the Qur'ān; this is determined by the Qur'ān itself (5,5).[3] Yet, such marriages are not recommended by the jurists. There would be many reasons for dis-puting this. For instance, a non-Muslim woman may do many things which is a Muslim not allowed: theoretically she may go to Church, drink wine, eat pork. Thereby she becomes a constant source of defilement for her hus-band, with whom she lives and has sexual intercourse, apart from the fact that she is not suitable for the religious education of her children. Should she even come from the domain of the enemies, then there is a constant danger that her children will tend towards joining the enemies, or at least have ties with the Islamic community that are less tight. The only advan-tage of such marriages is that the woman may feel motivated to adopt Islam. The Jewish or the Christian woman who marries a Muslim enjoys the rights of a Muslim woman. Moreover, as regards some restrictions, she enjoys the liberties that are due to her from her own religion.

3.2.2 Community at table

The Qur'ān allows Muslims to eat what Jews and Christians prepare, and declares it permissible to let them share the meals of the Muslims: "This day are (all) things good and pure made lawful unto you. The food of the Peo-ple of the Book is lawful unto you and yours is lawful unto them [...]" (5,6).[4]

---

[3] However, the Prophet Muḥammad says of the Zoroastrians: "Do not marry their women and do not eat their sacrificial offerings."
[4] On the food regulations relating to the Christians see my contribution: Speisevorschriften und das Problem des erlaubten Schächtens, in: *A. Th. Khoury – P. Heine – J. Oebbecke*, Hand-buch Recht und Kultur des Islams in der deutschen Gesellschaft, Gütersloh 2000, pp. 177–183.

3.2.3 Relations of friendship

As in the case of the unbelievers, here too political interests above all of the Islamic community are protected by not making friends with Jews and Chris-tians straightaway (cf. 5,51). The Qur'ān warns the Muslims above all against a friendship with the Jews (58,14; 60,13). For these "take your religion for a mockery or sport" (5,60; cf. 5,61). Moreover, they show no solidarity with the Muslims, but turn "in friendship to the Unbelievers" (5,83) and make them their allies (cf. also the list of reproaches addressed to the Jews: 3,118).

As to the Christians, the Qur'ān ranks them above the Jews. In general it considers them to be no direct danger to the Muslims' political interests. Despite all criticisms of their doctrine, it emphasizes their greater close-ness to the Muslims: "Strongest among men in enmity to the Believers wilt thou find the Jews and Pagans; and nearest among them in love to the Be-lievers wilt thou find those who say, 'we are Christians': [...]" (5,85).

Based on these and similar assertions in the Qur'ān, some Muslims see the possibility of a solidarity, comprising not only the Muslims but also the Christians. Beyond that they support a practical co-operation between Mus-lims and Christians.

Concluding words

At the end of this exposition some questions arise:

• Muslim scholars repeatedly reproach the militant Islamists for not act-ing in the sense of Islam but against Islam and its interests. The question is, are they able not only to make statements but to provide arguments which, by means of a clear interpretation of the texts of the Qur'ān, of the tradition, and of the *sharīʿa*, have sufficient strength of persuasion that the Muslims – above all the militant ones among them – would be ready, with-out being afraid of diminishing or even losing their identity or of betray-ing the cause of Islam, to renounce violence and at all times to search for the paths of peace and to tread them?

• Can the Muslim scholars interpret the texts of the Qur'ān, of the tra-dition, and of the *sharīʿa* in such a way that the Muslims would be ready to practise universal solidarity with all peoples in the world, convinced that we are all responsible for all our human fellows, be it only because we are indeed all creatures of the one God?

Questions and Interventions

KHIDOYATOV   I would like to have the meaning of the word *djihād* explained more closely by Professor Khoury: what was originally meant by this term, was it oriented towards creating peace or did it have another meaning? In view of the fact that in some places, as for instance in Afghanistan, the *djihād* is declared, this would at present be an important question.

KHOURY   In Arabic lexicography, the word *djihād* means 'engagement for a cause', 'efforts towards achieving something', 'engagement for the cause of Islam, for the cause of God, for the cause of religion'. Yet, already in the Qur'ān itself the word was also used in the sense of battle, battle against those who endanger the cause of God, the cause of Islam. Thus, by tradition, both meanings are to be found: that of a peaceful engagement and that of a belligerent engagement for a certain cause. Unfortunately many groupings do not use the word in the sense of a peaceful, but in that of a belligerent engagement for the cause of Islam. When in Afghanistan or in other countries groupings proclaim the *djihād*, the issue is not the maintenance of peace, but the battle against those who are considered to be the enemies of Islam, in order to defend the cause of Islam and the cause of God respectively.

Some stop short at the etymology of the word and say that the *djihād* has nothing to do with the Holy War, but only has the general meaning of 'engagement'. In principle this is possible. Yet, as already mentioned, in practice, also even in the Qur'ān, the term was very often used for battle in the interest of Islam. One indeed has to face the fact that in history and in the *sharī‘a* itself the term was used as a synonym for armed controversy with the Non-Muslims.

SCHABESTARI   In history this concept of *djihād* was actually present, it is also rooted in the books of the *fiqh*. It is also correct that recently some Muslim scholars backed a new theory, which one can call 'theory of peace'. I personally try always to understand the Islamic texts in their historical context, in the spirit of a certain period, against the background of the respectively dominant concepts of politics and society, etc., in short, against the background of the historical conditions. For me they are no abstract orders and commandments, which can claim validity for all times.

Yet, what I would like to emphasize here in particular is the fact that in my view overcoming the present tensions between the 'Islamic world' and the 'Western world' does not depend on removing some religious theory of the Islamic world. This conflict does not have much to do, and at least not in the first place, with the *djihād*-verses in the Qur'ān and with their interpretation, but it is an international conflict of a political and economic nature. Its roots reach back to the colonial period and its present brisance has something to do with the economic injustice and existing political conditions in our world, with the shaping of international relations and many other things.

What is truly at issue is the attempt of some groups in the Islamic countries to use their religious tradition for carrying out certain conflicts with Western countries. At issue here are not primarily religious doctrines, but political, economic, and other problems. In Islam, theology and jurisprudence have always been dependent on politics, since from the beginning Islam has been a political religion. Here a great difference is inherent between the Christian and the Islamic understanding of religion.

Thus, the interpretation of the Qur'ān and the formation of theological concepts have always been dependent on the political realities – in the past as well as today. When people in the Islamic world have difficulties with another country or with several countries, they tend to make use of some religious concepts or ideas, by which they can support their struggle or their revolution. As long as in the present political situation in the Islamic countries the feeling is predominant that one is suppressed by the Western countries, those interpretations of the religious doctrines will be encouraged, which seem to be suitable for the struggle against suppression.

Thus, in the Islamic world the main concern is not that this *djihād*-theory plays a great role, but whether the political situation between the Islamic countries and the other countries normalizes again. If it normalizes, subsequently the respective religious theory, and the interpretation of the Qur'ān respectively, will change as well. Let us take the Islamic revolution in Iran as an example: had the political and economic conditions before the revolution not been characterized by injustice and suppression, which essentially also had something to do with the politics of the Western countries, there would never have been a revolution in the name of religion. In

order to be able to remove the unjust conditions, one needed an ideology: one drew it from tradition and fought with it. Hence, the question under discussion here should not be considered from an abstract perspective, but against the background that the roots of the present conflicts go back to a political conflict and that here one is confronted with massive feelings related to unjust treatment and suppression.

T. MAHMOOD   I am not questioning the statement of Professor Khoury, but want to make a few remarks in a deep fraternal spirit. The comprehensive code of life based on the Holy Qur'ān indeed contains both a Law of Peace and a Law of War. Yet, in his presentation mainly the Law of War was mentioned. Professor Khoury stated that the Islamic law in this respect was developed on the basis of certain Qur'ānic verses and in interpreting those verses he followed a well-known Western perception that Islam divides the countries of the world into the twin categories of *dār al-ḥarb* and *dār al-islām*: areas at war, and those at peace, with the Islamic State.

Historically speaking, first, this classification could not have referred to the modern nations as it was mentioned in the works of Islamic jurisprudence long before the modern concept of nationhood was born. Second, besides the categories *dār al-islām* and *dār al-ḥarb*, very early in Islamic history a third concept had been developed, the concept of *dār al-amn* (domain of peace). Since the 8th century A. D., Islamic theory of law classified different parts of the world into these three categories and included in the category of *dār al-ḥarb* only those countries which were directly at war with the Islamic State of the time. In any case, this classification of nations was a subject of the political science which early doctors of Islamic law tried to put forth – it was not an original or integral part of the Islamic religion.

The Muslims are indeed committed to peace under the Qur'ānic doctrines. To appreciate this it is necessary to read and understand certain verses of the Qur'ān not in their literal sense but in their historical and contextual perspective. The Muslims are rightly presenting those verses in such a perspective. These efforts on the part of the Muslims, which have a great potential to contribute to peaceful co-existence of the people of the world and of different nations, must be appreciated and fully supported.

S. MAHMOOD   I was hoping that the topic of the lecture would also include the Christian positions on violence and intolerance respectively, in the search for new ways of peace among mankind. As to the presentation of the Islamic positions, for me as a Muslim some things were strange and not the real facts of life. I do not see Islam as a call somewhere and everywhere to take up arms against the Non-Muslims.

Professor Mahmood already referred to the fact that the distinction between *dār al-ḥarb* and *dār al-islām* is incomplete. As Professor Schabestari emphasized, the Sūras of the Qur'ān have to be interpreted in their historical context, and I would add that indeed they also have to be read in their completeness. Thus for instance in the context of the gender issue, where it is said that men have to be the guardians of women, the reason for it is also given in the rest of the Sūra: because in fact they spend of their wealth on them and are responsible for maintaining them (cf. Qur'ān 4,34). Similarly, in the Sūra where it is said that one should fight, the reasons for it are also given: "Since they fight against you" (Qur'ān 9,36). For in Islam war is always a war of defence, never a war of offence. There is never any encouragement to take up arms and to convert the world to Islam. There is always encouragement to accept the other.

Hence, on the part of Islam there has never been the intention that the whole world should convert to Islam or that every human being should become a Muslim. Perhaps such a philosophy is adopted in extremist and 'fundamentalist' religious groups, which are dominated by the ideas of violence and aggression and by the fear of the other. However, this is not the Islam I know and the Islam I was taught. Islam teaches rather that I should respect the other, that I accept others for what they are. I was taught to be proud of my own identity and to be enriched by exchange with the identity of the others. If everyone were like I am, the world would be a very dull and uninteresting place to live in.

KHOURY   First I would like to remove a misunderstanding. I did not intend to speak about Islam, I am concerned with violence in the name of religion. It is clear to me that Islam as such does not apply violence, only some militant groupings do so. In view of these militant groups I tried to explain why they make use of the name of God in order to justify their acts of violence. This is also why those theories of the Middle Ages were mentioned, where of course, as I explained in my lecture, the usage of *dār*

aṣ-ṣulḥ, of *dār al-ʿahd,* and of *dār al-islām* was also current. So it was my intention to speak about those who abuse religion in order to justify their actions and their militant procedures.

And in this context I am concerned with a second question: how can I begin a dialogue with these people, in order to guide them away from abusing religion and towards a better understanding of Islam as a religion of peace? Here necessarily I am faced with the task of confronting those texts, which are used by the extremists for legitimizing their actions. How does one deal with these texts, which in fact exist? I am grateful to Professor Schabestari for his hermeneutical principles, which are of a kind similar to those of *ash-Shāṭibī* (died 1388) and many other great scholars of Islam and which, in the interpretation of the respective texts, would really not only take into consideration the *naṣṣ,* the literal wording of the text, but also what the text is concerned with, *maqāṣid ash-sharīʿa,* and its respective roots in life, *asbāb an-nuzūl.* Yet, this theory, which can lead towards a better interpretation of the significance of these texts, is today much contested in the Islamic world.

In brief, I am thus concerned with the question, which interpretation of those texts, to which the fundamentalists refer in their extremist conduct, can one offer them, so that they learn to read them as texts that do not contradict Islam's message of peace. In other words: how can one prevent this ideologization of religion in the sense of a theory of violence?

KHODR What is the meaning of a Holy Scripture? This question concerns Christianity as well as Islam. To what extent is it the absolute, uncreated word of God? In what sense is it related to our life? What is historical in it? And is the sentence, as it is written in the holy book, the absolute word of God or is the meaning, the human meaning of this sentence at issue? When I read *Sūras* 8 and 9, I can read there that the Muslims are obliged to fight against the polytheists and the infidels. Here the issue is not only defence. Nobody fought against the Muslims in the year 636 in Damascus – they came, conquered the city and the whole of Syria. The same happened in Egypt, and it happened in the name of God. What about this problem of violence, with which Christianity has also been concerned from its beginnings? When *Paul,* in his First Letter to the Corinthians forbids women to pray unless their head is covered (1 Cor 11:2 ff.), or when *Abū Bakr* in the Ḥadīth says that Islam does not allow any apostasy

– *lā ridda fī l-islām.* And in a similar way, this Ḥadīth finds a historical interpretation, when for instance a Muslim friend explains to me today, that *Abū Bakr* said this because at that time he had to reconvert his compatriots to Islam, because otherwise the whole Islamic society would have fallen to pieces. Can this axiom that Islam permits no apostasy today in fact be interpreted in a way that the Muslim is free to be an atheist or anything else? Thus, my problem that even goes beyond the encounter between Christianity and Islam is what the historical context generally means to us.

KHIDOYATOV A great misunderstanding, which Western scholars confront, would be to think that Islam is as a whole one uniform religion. When today 2 1/2 million people are in Mecca, they all perform together certain rites. Yet, when they return home, they are very different from one another. Thus the written and the orally handed down Islam, the original Islam, as it was written down by *Caliph ʿUthmān* and the Islam in the period after the Ḥadīths of an *al-Bukhārī,* differ greatly from each other.

Hence, one has to differentiate the true Islam from what became of it centuries later only. Thus Islam became very militant after the crusades, because at that time the Muslims could defend themselves sucessfully. Studying the history of Islam deeply is therefore important for understanding it. For this reason many scholars, who do not make this effort, are very far from reality. It is a fact that Islam has become a very political religion. This is also a reason why it is difficult to come to an agreement between Islam and other religions.

However, this problem exists wherever religions today and in the past have been entangled in political affairs. Last not least this shows for instance in the relations between Catholics and Orthodox Christians in the Russia of today. Thus, in our day there were controversies and much unpleasentness between the Pope and the Patriarch of the Russian Orthodox Church, because the Catholics wanted to establish three Dioceses in Russia. The Orthodox Christians set their mind against the spread of the Catholic Church in Russia – they defended themselves. Of course in history the *djihād* also had something to do with defence. Truly, however, *Amīr Tīmūr* for instance (died 1405) had in one hand the Qurʾān and in the other hand the sword. To the extent Islam was politicized, it developed extremist and fundamentalist characteristics. Therefore it is very important to find the right approach to the study of true Islam.

KHOURY   Where is now this 'true Islam', which can and has to serve as a criterion, as a standard for the Islam as it is lived? I think it is that Islam which results from the authoritative sources of this religion. And this is what I am concerned with here: I do not speak about Islam as a whole, but about those militant groupings, which make use of violence in the name of religion, and I am asking whether they can thereby rightly refer to religion. Personally I think that they cannot do so, since I have a different picture of the true Islam, which is not compatible with a conduct of this kind. Therefore I am searching for pertinent arguments, which, in the course of time have been developed in Islamic belletristic and scientific literature, in order, by argument, to support my persuasion that this militant aspect is not compatible with the true Islam. In other words, I am concerned with collecting arguments, as to how the scholars of Islam interpret those texts, to which those Muslims refer, who – in my view wrongly – use violence in the name of religion.

can militant groupings rightly refer to 'the Islam'?

SCHABESTARI   From the experience of my participation in many dialogue circles, I am today persuaded that in the Christian-Islamic dialogue all topics should always be treated from various perspectives, particularly from the standpoint of theology, of economy, and of politics. After all particularly these points of view have been strongly linked with one another in the Islamic countries. Religion and society, which since the time of the Prophet have always been considered as belonging closely together, have today undergone an additional new ideologization. Therefore particularly in the Christian-Islamic dialogue this interdisciplinary linking should be taken into account.

theology, economy, and politics have always been closely linked with one another

T. MAHMOOD   I have to comment on what Bishop Khodr has said subsequent to the presentation of Professor Khoury. If I have correctly understood him, he has posed a question to the Muslims as to what now in fact has to be accepted and believed – the actual words of the Qur'ān literally or their 're-interpretation' given today by the Muslims. I would like to submit that if the Muslims in the modern age are even 're-interpreting' the Qur'ān in a bid to ensure that peace in the world is promoted, what is wrong in it? Let them do it. After all if the Qur'ān is sacrosanct, it is for the Muslims only, and not for the others. Why should the others insist that the Qur'ān must never be 're-interpreted'? If the Muslims are doing it themselves to promote peace in the world, all others should welcome it.

interpreting the Qur'ān to promote world peace

Intolerance and Violence –
Conditions and Ways of Combating it on an International Level

Irmgard Marboe

The past "UN-Year of Dialogue among Civilizations" brought numerous remarkable initiatives, which discussed and brought to public attention the important question about the role of culture, civilization, and religion for our society and for peace. In that year, however, also the devastating attacks of September 11 took place in New York and Washington, which became an enormous burden on Islamic-Christian relations. Against this background, is it possible to draw conclusions and to learn something for the future?

Every dialogue is – as *David Wilkinson* of the University of California, Los Angeles, stated at the International Conference on the dialogue of civilizations in August 2001 – a dialogue between persons and not between "cultures" or "civilizations". Therefore intercultural relations are not reoriented from one day to the next. Many individual initiatives, which are dedicated to the dialogue and to peace, can however together contribute to a growth of the readiness to hold a dialogue and to cultivate it.

It is certainly positive that interest in knowing more about Islam has increased, regret about the lack of which was expressed particularly by the Secretary General of the Organization of the Islamic Conference *Abdelouhed Belkeziz* at the above-mentioned conference at the United Nations University in Tokyo. Beyond that, sensitivity was aroused, inhowfar also in the Western societies there exist tendencies towards religious fanaticism or even terrorism, which are otherwise always attributed to Islam. This made possible a differentiated view, which does not straightaway class religiously motivated intolerance and violence with the domain of one culture, but deals with its origins more profoundly.

A study at the University of Augsburg[1] for instance made a comparison between religiously motivated terrorism in the Near East and in the USA. A striking example for the latter was the attack on the Federal Building in Oklahoma City, where in April 1995 168 people died and 853 were in

---

[1] See in this context also a short and preliminary report of *E. Heiligsetzer,* so far available in: Die Friedens-Warte 76 (2001) H. 1, pp. 81 ff.

part seriously hurt. After the initial suspicions were directed towards Islamists, it finally turned out that the perpetrator had been a Gulf War veteran and sympathizer with the extremist 'Christian Identity'. The causes, backgrounds, and conditions of religiously motivated intolerance and violence as well as the possibilities of preventing and fighting against them can thus certainly be identified by analyses of most different cultures.

Religiously motivated terrorism seems to be particularly promoted by certain social conditions: a good hotbed obviously are heterogeneous, mixed societies, in which, historically conditioned, a distinct culture of violence is predominant: in such societies revenge, violence, and feud were originally accepted as legitimate and necessary measures to safeguard the polity and to prevent chaos. Added are an exaggerated idealization of a morally integer and exemplary primeval community: in the Islamic domain this is above all the *umma*, the Islamic community of the Prophet Muḥammad in Medina and the period of the first rightly guided Caliphs; in the USA this role falls to the idealized primeval community of the "Pilgrim Fathers".

When such predominant constituents favour the development and the general social acceptance of charismatic-religious movements, concrete crises then support their breakthrough. In Islamic countries the crisis above all consists in a socially and politically bad situation (as for instance in a high unemployment rate, above all among young people), in addition the feeling of a loss of collective identity and of self-esteem caused by the confrontation with Western culture and its "story of success". Yet, in the USA as well, representative opinion polls indicate a widespread anxiety about crises to be expected, where beside existential and economic concerns above all the general loss of values is deplored, a "decline in morals", a dwindling of religiosity and of moral standards. 60 to 70 per cent of the population hold the opinion that "things in the Nation are off on the wrong track"[2]. The American "core values" seem to be threatened.

Conversely, the traditional-religious forces are a panacea, which, with their recourse to transcendental, ultimate truths, have the resolution of the social, political, and personal problems ready. They consider their own convictions as infallible and therefore see themselves legitimized to discriminate and to dehumanize those who think differently, starting with 'mere' intolerance down to violence. This cultural fight at first takes place less outwardly than within the respective society.

The opposition between the liberal-secularized (mostly dominant elites) and the traditional-religious counter-forces can not only be observed in Islamic countries. In the USA the "Washingtonians" and other inhabitants of the East coast are sometimes downgraded by the religious right and called "secular humanists". They demand a rigorous punishment of adulterers and vehemently reject *Darwin's* theory of evolution as heretical. Consequently, in some handbooks of biology – having recourse to the Bible – the descent of man is traced back to Adam and Eve only.[3]

For many different reasons it is very difficult to identify and in time find religious-extremist groups that are ready to exert violence. This is at first linked with the fact that, ideologically, the extremists are hard to distinguish from the 'normal' culture of the respective society. As a rule they are not socially isolated, they just put general ideals and maxims more consistently into practice and in fact also by means of violence. Thus there is a broad spectrum of groups, organizations, and loose associations, which form a wide zone of transition between the cultural-social centre and the extremist margin. Accordingly, the number of followers and sympathizers is surprisingly high: beside 10–15 per cent explicit followers, there are up to 30 per cent sympathizers. In agreement with fundamentalist positions however – without denoting them as such – is a majority of up to 60 per cent.[4] This is the reason why in the USA the religious right understands itself as the representative of a "silent majority".

There are also astonishing parallels with reference to the social causes and to the environment of religiously motivated violence in Islamic and Christian societies. Yet, one must not forget that they are substantially different as to the frequency and extent of destructive violence as well as to its juridical consequences and to the sanctions they impose.

This is on the one hand explained by the different economic situation, for also in Islamic countries the danger of religiously motivated violence rather decreases, the better the economic situation is (as for instance in Tunesia). On the other hand, a state system and a political order, which are above all bound to the principle of state legality, offer more effective possibilities to persecute and punish terrorists.

In recent years, the connection between economic development, political

---

[2] Cf. *E. Heiligsetzer*, op. cit. (fn. 1) p. 85.

[3] Like this in Georgia, Alabama, and Tennessee; cf. *E. Heiligsetzer*, op. cit. (fn. 1) p. 85.
[4] These data are presented in the above-mentioned study and are based on estimations and opinion polls such as: Public Opinion Report, in: The American Enterprise 5 (1994) September / October, p. 1999.

stability, and state legality has definitely been realized by different international agents. In more recent development programmes, above all within the framework of the European Union and the United Nations, efforts are made to take this into respective account. Thereby, the criterion of the so-called "good governance" has proved to be increasingly important. It is based on the idea that economic development and political stability are presuppositions that mutually condition and strengthen each other. Often quoted is *Kofi Annan*'s statement "Good governance is perhaps the single most important factor in eradicating poverty and promising development."[5]

The term "good governance" in brief combines above all the following principles: state legality, tolerance towards minorities and opposition groups, transparent political processes, combatting corruption, independent jurisdiction, an impartial police, an army subjected to civil control, a free press, and living civil-social institutions as well as objective votes; yet, above all respect of human rights.[6]

In its agreement with the AKP-States (Africa, Caribic, Pacific) of Cotonou, on June 23, 2000, the Euopean Union (continuing the Agreement of Lomé[7]) declared that "good governance" is not only an essential precondition of a development oriented towards human rights, democracy, and the lawful state, but largely also the aim and subject matter of European development co-operation.[8]

In the United Nations it is above all *Secretary General Kofi Annan*, who feels particularly committed to the concept of "good governance" and who started the initiative for a "culture of prevention". In numerous reports[9] he presents concrete proposals for a comprehensive and anticipatory approach towards resolving the problems of this world. Thereby he speaks above all about removing poverty and preventing violent conflicts, which again condition each other.

The Security Council of the United Nations supports the initiatives of the Secretary General and appeals to all international agents, like particularly also the Bretton Woods Institutions (International Monitary Fund and World Bank) to engage actively and increasingly in creating conditions for lasting peace and sustainable development in the world.[10]

What knowledge have the analyses and initiatives now brought sofar? Although the reasons for violence are very complex and multidimensional, some conditions may however be underlined, under which the probability of violence increases strongly. They are above all: poverty, inequality within society as well as lacking access to political power. From this results the fact that so-called "inclusive governments", where as many groups of the population as possible are represented in the important institutions of the country – government, administration, police, military – are the best guarantees against violent conflicts.[11] This agrees with the so-called "democratic peace thesis", saying that democracies hardly wage wars against each other and are, beyond this, very rarely shaken by internal violence. Whereas the first point is sometimes called into question[12], there is no doubt that the latter can be proved empirically. Democracy is as such a non-violent form of internal conflict resolution.

Combatting poverty should also be promoted on several levels. A study of the United Nations University shows the unjust distribution of affluence in this world and has set up a "World Income Inequality Database" available in the internet, containing "all available data on inequality". The shocking result is that despite years of efforts made – and certainly also much rhetoric – towards development co-operation, injustice has steadily increased in recent years. Nevertheless the Bretton Woods Institutions seem to be the only internationally organized bodies that attend to financing of development projects. Since however in the past some projects, intended to promote the economy and development of a country, even increased existing economic inequalities and thus additionally supported the potential of conflict and violence, on the model of "environmental control" of large-scale projects, a so-called "conflict impact assessment" is demanded, which controls the effects of economic programmes on social structures.

[5] Cf. for example *United Nations University* (ed.), World Governance Survey: Pilot Phase, http://www.unu.edu/p&g/wgs/index.htm (08.01.02).

[6] *K. Annan,* Facing the Humanitarian Challenge: Towards a Culture of Prevention, United Nations Publications Sales No. E.99.I.28, New York (1999).

[7] Agreement of Lomé I to IV dating from 1975, 1979, 1984, and 1989, partly revised 1994; cf. in this context *P. Fischer – H. F. Köck,* Europarecht, Wien 1997, pp. 679 ff.

[8] Cf. in this context *A. Windmeisser,* Menschenrechte, Demokratie, Rechtsstaatlichkeit und "good governance" in der Entwicklungszusammenarbeit: Das Beispiel der AKP-EU-Beziehungen, Diss. 2001 (Wien).

[9] Cf. above all the Report of the Secretary General to the General Assembly and to the Security Council of June 7, 2001, A/55/985 – S/2001/574, and the Annual Report on the Work of the Organization 2001, United Nations Publications Sales No. E.01.I.22, New York (2001).

[10] Resolution of the Security Council 1366 (2001) of August 30, 2001.

[11] Following a study of the United Nations University, Tokyo, from the year 2000.

[12] Above all because of the question, which states are to be called democracies and which not.

Moreover, there is the trend, in this context also to redefine the role of private firms, above all of international concerns. Based on many years of involvement or attempts to be economically present in certain countries, they can contribute their experiences and personal relations. The specific responsibilities related to human rights, to environment, and to development, which are due also to enterprises, have recently been discovered more and more also by the former themselves.[13] The Secretary General of the United Nations *Kofi Annan* is optimistic in this respect and holds the opinion that the political situation would improve if the enterprises also engaged actively in creating a climate in which human rights as well as business would prosper.[14]

A comprehensive "Culture of Prevention" is however hampered above all by two serious problems: although the costs of a preventive policy are lower by far than those of reconstruction aid only reacting to catastrophes, they however have to be financed immediately and become successful in the longer or long run only. The fact that prevention is now more important than in the future is a mere reaction still hard to convey or to put into political practice. This is also linked with the second great problem, namely that the results of a preventive policy are hard to measure: its success being of course the non-occurrence of catastrophes and conflicts. This is a political success hard to sell in public.

Immediately after devastating catastrophes have occurred, the world public is mostly aware of the fact that prevention is important and necessary. Unfortunately this insight often disappears again ever so quickly – until the next catastrophe comes along. Yet, it is possible that the extent of the destruction and the symbolic force of the terror attack on the World Trade Centre of September 11, 2001 this time caused a concern that is so profound that its effect will be felt for some time and that by it the existential relevance of a comprehensive, consistent, and worldwide "Culture of Prevention" will remain rooted in public awareness.

---

[13] Cf. for example the initiative of the "UN-Global Compact", in which numerous enterprises participate on a voluntary basis http://www.unglobalcompact.org.

[14] *K. Annan*, op. cit. (fn. 5).

Questions and Interventions

how to convey a culture of prevention to the public?

OTT   At the end of her interesting presentation of the problem, which was based on interviews and analyses, Dr. Marboe spoke about public concern following catastrophes, how this always disappears again very quickly, but how important it would be on the other hand to build up a sustainable "culture of prevention". The usefulness of such preventive measures is of course hard to prove directly, because for its support no statistics can be presented. For there are no statistics about what does *not* happen, unless one has a very specific material and figures to be compared; yet, as a rule they are not available, at least not sufficiently. So, this seems to me to be one of the most pressing problems on the political level, how the necessity of a preventive culture can be conveyed to the public. In other words, how can one expose in a cost-profit analysis that, although preventive measures cost much, this is mostly by far not as much as the catastrophes would cost, which one could prevent through them? I would be grateful for a personal assessment of Dr. Marboe's, inhow far religion can possibly contribute to the resolution of this dilemma.

what is terrorism?

KHODR   Within the frame of our discussion, which is now focused on a political field that is directly practice-oriented, it is about time to ask how to define terrorism. Up to the outbreak of World War I, one would have said: an army that kills civilians can in justification not refer to the fact that after all we are in a state of war; here crimes are being committed. Subsequently, this field of war crimes has been extended more and more. In the Western or American terminology of today, terrorist acts are committed by the poor and the weak. The powerful people however do not opt for terrorism, they exercise justice over the poor. They understand themselves as representing democratic conditions, and until the end of history they will claim the democratic characteristics as their own. Themselves incapable of ever becoming corrupt, they do – far from any terrorism – nothing but justice to the poor.

I ask myself, can and must we not also speak of a "terrorism of the state"? In the case of the respective military actions, as for instance the burning of 40,000 olive trees in Palestine. Is this part of war or is it terrorism? When a Palestinian boy – as an act of desparate resistance – throws a stone, which would never ever be able to kill anybody, why is this described as terror?

Tanks and helicopters of an army armed to the teeth, which are used against these young people, are however justified? When a population resists an occupant who uses any kind of arms, then this is called terrorism, because those resistants are poor and Muslims. Were they not Muslims and have-nots, they would be called heroes. Here we are really facing a problem of definition.

examples from history can help in persuading people

MARBOE   First my answer to the question whether it would be possible to convey the importance of a "culture of prevention". I see a first possibility in examples from history used as means of orientation. Against the background of preceding centuries of belligerent controversies, one could refer to European integration after World War II: ever since there has been peace, unification has prevented further possible controversies. This function of peace is of a central importance. Facing it, the question of costs, which are known to be substantial, ranks second. An example of this kind could as it were be a proof of the importance and meaningfulness of adequate measures of prevention. I am also persuaded that the religious communities should speak up in public on this topic and emphasize the importance of this prevention – being ready as well to co-operate in it.

'terrorism' and the difficulty of defining the term

As to an adequate definition of terrorism, within the framework of the United Nations great efforts have been made in recent years, and an international convention was about to be drawn up. Yet, this target was reached in part only, because among other things it was not possible to agree on a definition of this kind. What is terrorism for one state is in fact fighting for freedom for another. Until today a definition of the term 'terrorism', with which all can agree, has not been achieved on the international level. However, it seems to be easier to agree on what is a "terrorist act". Thus in pertinent conventions it is said that this is an "offence", committed with the aim of causing great damage to persons or objects.[1] An important additional criterion is considered to be the fact that a terrorist act frightens the population, in order to force a state or other powerful authorities to conduct themselves in a certain way. The background motives are consciously set aside.

---

[1] For instance art. 2 of the "International Convention for the Suppression of Terrorist Bombings", 1997, UN-Doc. A/52/49 (1998).

civil wars more expensive than European unification

POTZ   On the costs of European unification, which Dr. Marboe rightly mentioned as a process characterizing a preventive culture, a complementary remark pointing out that the two devastating European civil wars, as one now already prefers to call them, in the first half of the past century cost incomparably more than European unification in the second half of that century. Today nobody has any doubts about this.

on the potential of violence in the modern state

And on the question of state terrorism: in German terminology, the term 'Staatsgewalt' (power of the state) for a long time had a positive connotation. Marxist criticism then led to a more differentiating consideration of the term and to calling the state violent. When one today consults modern publications, one will even find that it became a rather negatively connotated term, because now 'Gewalt' is much more understood in the sense of 'violence' than before. Thus 'Staatsgewalt' as it were has become a suspicious term. There is certainly no political entity in history that, through the fusion of political possibilities, had and still has such a great potential of power as the modern state. Hence, in the German-speaking countries – interestingly at least in Marxist criticism – one has certainly been aware of the fact that the state has a potential of power, which can also degenerate into terrorism.

European initiative to overcome lacking education in Asia?

KHIDOYATOV   In the middle of the 20th century, Asia was at the edge of the Red Revolution. The reasons were poverty and hunger. Yet, with the help of the United States, the United Nations initiated in this precarious situation the Green Revolution, which, for its part, saved Asia from the Red Revolution. Today, at the beginning of the 21st century, many problems are caused by deficient cultivation of the mind and education. Perhaps now initiatives will be taken in Europe, so that Asia can establish those institutions that are appropriate for overcoming illiteracy in this densely populated continent. When people know how they can find work and earn their bread, poverty will disappear automatically. For this purpose Europe would have to take the initiative – and this investment will pay off in future, since many of the resources needed are in Asia. Today Asia knows only the uniforms of American pilots, and in Europe Asians are known mainly as 'guest workers'. What would have to happen now is for Europe to kindle the love of edu-

cation and modern culture. Thus I consider the lack of education as the true problem inherent in all the problems of intolerance and violence, of which we are speaking here.

education part of the *culture of prevention*

MARBOE   The concern to provide people with the necessary education, so that they can master their lives themselves, certainly is an essential part of that "culture of prevention", which we need so urgently. In fact there exist already substantial programmes of UNESCO for education really to arrive amongst people in the respective countries, who otherwise would remain illiterate: above all in the countryside, so that teaching in classes can take place, where there are no schools yet. However, obviously the means required for it always remain insufficient.

nor must the problem of state terrorism be ignored

S. MAHMOOD   I think that the question that still remains is how to define terrorism. Whenever we talk of terrorism, we usually mean certain individuals or groups; we have, however, ignored the fact that there is state terrorism and institutional terrorism as well. In this way it will be perpetuated. I am just reminded of a small incident during the peak of the Bosnian war: when the Bosnian Foreign Minister was giving evidene to the United Nations, he spelled out the irony of all this, when he said, "When you kill one person you are a murderer and you will be prosecuted. When you kill ten people as a serial killer or murderer, you become a celebrity and they want to make a film story for television. But when you kill 10,000 people, they invite you to a peace conference." This is the irony of our life today.

how to prevent terrorism, when it is based on ideology?

KHOURY   Whether, as Dr. Marboe said, terrorism can be prevented by "good governance" still remains a question for me, particularly that terrorism which is based on ideology. The terrorists of the "Red Army Fraction" in Germany for instance continued to plan their schemes no matter what the government did. They followed the logic of their ideology. "Good governance" may possibly prevent the number of sympathizers from growing, yet it remains an open question for me whether one could have thereby prevented the violence of the RAF-terrorists altogether.

MARBOE   Certainly the lawful state and affluence are not sufficient in order to completely prevent terrorism. At the time of RAF-terrorism there were in Germany certainly not those desparate living conditions which were

mentioned here and which above all result from poverty, from illiteracy, and from unemployment. Yet I think that it makes a great difference whether such terrorist groups, which elevate themselves to being saviours and oppose law and order, are also persecuted because it is clear what is right and what is wrong – or whether this is not the case because the state is not lawful. There is the danger that the problem becomes boundless when a certain state not only does not prosecute the acts of terrorists, but perhaps even supports and protects them instead of punishing them.

Cousins in Crisis:
Christian-Muslim Harmony in Terrorist Trap

Tahir Mahmood

Since we in the VICIRoTa met last here in Vienna, the global scenario of inter-religious relations has undergone a monumental change.

Ghoulish violence displayed in one corner of the world, widely believed to have been engineered by a band of misdirected souls in another far-off corner, has spread shock-waves across the globe generating deep feelings of anguish and mutual mistrust among the two major religious communities of the world.

Lip service paid by the tradesmen of terror to either of our two great religions – Christianity and Islam – has misled their followers into grave suspicions about each other. In an atmosphere of reciprocal misgivings belligerent pronouncements have been unhesitatingly made and outdated concepts of the bygone ages like *'djihād'* and *'crusade'* freely traded.

We must, and indeed do, strongly condemn the ghastly destruction of the pinnacle of humanity in one part of the world. On the other hand, the mighty determination of the political masters of the destiny of those who suffered it to wipe out the handful of men believed to be guilty of it resulted into monumental losses of small human abodes and their innocent occupants in another distant part of the globe. This also we equally disapprove. In no way can we appreciate either of these indefensibly devastating acts against the humanity of mankind.

Let me quote here these heart-rending words of a young Indian poetess, *Vidhi Jain,* where she so laments:

Burning human life like coal turning into ashes
I look at these tears, miseries and crashes
The deafening sound of cries and wails
I feel as if my body is pinned with nails
Not water nor tears but blood is rolling down
I see Satan dancing all around like a clown
Who caused this world burn with such brutal flame
Whom shall I question who do I blame?

Do I ask my God or your God or my own soul
I am confused as to who rules the world as a whole.[1]

These sentiments are indeed moving and thought-provoking. But, neither such sad laments nor a mere condemnation or disapproval of all this ghastly inhumanity, even though in the strongest and most reassuring words, can solve the problem. We have to go further deep into the matter and unearth the factors that have in fact led to this ugly development. Knowing the real causes of a problem itself amounts to winning half the battle, they say. The real causes of all this newly experienced inhumanity are also to be seriously analysed by all those who are genuinely concerned about it.

For this exploratory and remedial exercise a correct perception is most important and indeed imperative. The world must look at this outburst of unprecedented devastation in its proper and true perspective. Any wrong perception is bound to only aggravate the problem. Let us coolly and dispassionately think about this aspect of the matter.

Are we, citizens of the global human habitation, indeed facing a "clash of civilizations", a conflict between the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized' worlds, as some political leaders have chosen to say? If in fact there is such a clash, which 'civilizations' are parties to this clash? Who are being seen as the 'civilized' and the 'uncivilized' in this conflict? Let us look at all this and honestly decide whether even in this 21st century of human progress such sweeping generalizations can be justly made and the global human civilization justifiably so compartmentalized. Is an initial barbarity destroying one group of people 'uncivilized' and the revenge for it destroying another group 'civilized', or vice versa by another standard? Is the norm of "an eye for an eye and a tooth for a tooth" fit enough to be adopted by one so-called modern civilization against another?

Have really been the Cross and the Crescent at war once again, as some sections of the international media have been projecting the recent events? Is this how we want to look at our common problem effacing violence and terror in the name of religion? Can we quietly allow this attempted nullification of all the noble efforts made through the recent decades to bring the Cross and the Crescent closer?

I am reminded here of what a great jurist-judge of contemporary India, *VR Krishna Iyer* once wrote, reacting to a communal carnage in my country:

---

[1] *Eurasia*, New Delhi, March 2002, p. 16.

"Religion is a terrible Satan in its decadent status when people plunge into spiritual illiteracy, miss the divine essence of the lessons of the sages, prophets, and seers and kiss the holy nonsense of 'my religion right or wrong' and 'my religionists alone to me belong'. In this vulgar, barbarous degeneracy humanism dies and values of tolerance and compassion perish because religious brutalism takes the sten-gun and brother kills brother in the name of God. In the perverse reversal of higher meanings, the man on earth becomes the blind ammunition of divine rivals in the skies."[2]

If we do not want our world to face all this, we have to go back to the noble teachings of our two great religions. What has our Lord Jesus Christ taught us, and what did Prophet Muḥammad stand for, in terms of humanism, human compassion, human rights, and human obligations towards one another? Christianity had taught us to counter hatred with love, and injury with pardon. "I, as a guilty sinner, have been pardoned by a loving God and I in turn need to forgive others" – this in its simplicity is said to be the message of Christianity. Islam had adopted for itself a name the very meaning of which is "peace". Islam's Prophet carried a Divine declaration that he had not been sent to the Earth except as "Mercy for Mankind" (Qur'ān 21,107). Islamic sociology taught people to greet each other with the beautiful and indeed meaningful salutation of "Peace and God's mercy be on you"[3]. These basic teachings of both the religions have to be kept in mind, revived, and translated once for all into the realities of life. Christ's injunctions on compassion and Muḥammad's exhortations on mercy both have to be simultaneously invoked. Without this the modernist march of mankind will not bring human deliverance.

Going by the true teachings of our two great religions can we allow the use of the grossly obnoxious and highly misleading jargon like "Christian militancy" or "Islamic terrorism"? Each of these expressions is indeed an oxymoron and a contradiction in terms. Yet, while nobody ever uses the former expression, the latter has, of late, become a favourite *bête noire* in the western world. For the misdeeds of a few disgruntled and frustrated Muslims who, rightly or wrongly, had an axe to grind with a political super power, the basic Islamic beliefs and values are being unhesitatingly denigrated far and wide, by all and sundry.

The powerful weapon of the western media is ruthlessly demonizing

---

[2] *VRK Iyer, J.* in *Abdul Hussain Shamsul Huda* AIR 1975 SC 1612.
[3] In original Arabic: *as-salāmu 'alaykum wa-raḥmatu llāhi wa-barakātuhū.*

Islam. "Media is the message", they say – and today this message is that Islam means violence. A great revolutionary faith of the post-Christian era is being maligned day in and day out as an archaic religion unfit to be in harmony with the requirements of the modern world. To the reasoning that if the terror unleashed in the past by Nazism and Fascism cannot be associated with Christianity, how could the current spate of violence be associated with Islam, the media turns a deaf ear.

Why is not the conscience of the followers of one of our two great religions disturbed at this mass-scale vilification of the other, I indeed wonder. In my country, India, in the recent years there has unfortunately been a spate of unprecedented violence against the Christians and their religious institutions. In the background of this barbarism has been a powerful vested-interest propaganda that Christianity means just proselytizing and that its only mission in India is to win converts from the locally dominant religion by hook or by crook. This utter falsehood had to be exposed, and happily the Muslim leadership in the country has been in the forefront in attempting to fulfil this pressing need of the hour.

We the Christians and the Muslims of the world, whose noble faiths are minority religions in numerous countries of the world, cannot afford to remain silent spectators of such stereotyping of each other's faith. We have a sacred obligation to protect both our noble faiths against such onslaught. If the Christians defend Christianity and the Muslims Islam, the world may remain indifferent; but Christianity protecting the honour of Islam, and vice versa, will be surely a giant step for the mankind on the pathway to a really peaceful religious co-existence. It is high time the fraternity of ecumenists in both the communities, who value and love the ideal of Christian-Muslim unity, broke its fast of silence in defence of each other's faith.

Due to the crude caricature of Islam in the western media a sense of moral outrage, indignation, and hurt is sweeping across the Islamic world. It has to be contained; and for this a proper role is to be played by the well-meaning scholars in both the communities.

True that Islam has been brought into disrepute, to a large extent, by some misguided members of the community of its own followers, who have a tendency to extrapolate an imaginary Islamic foil for all their antics and foibles. It is this deplorable tendency that provides ample openings to the others to question the credentials of Islam as a religion of peace and human welfare. But, must we simply ignore the blinders and deceptions inherent in the misstatements and misdeeds of these misdirected individuals and be-

lieve that Islam really is what they want us to believe it is? Instead of being misled by this menace of exploitation of Islam, the non-Muslim world should be guided by the mainstream view on Islam that it is indeed a religion of peace and human welfare. To ensure this, all the right-thinking exponents of the pristine ideals of Islam, both in the West and the East, and to whichever religion they might belong, have to make their contribution.

The problem facing the human world today must be of equal concern for the general human-rights activists. In the present atmosphere of inter-religious hatred and anger, the biggest and most serious casualty has been an unceremonious death of our glorious tradition of respect of and concern for human rights. All the relevant international-law instruments – whether on the need to eliminate all sorts of religious intolerance or on the human requirement of keeping away from bodily and mental torture even of misdirected souls – have been thrown to the dust-bin. Whatever human-rights concerns were there for the innocent humans facing inhumanities in various parts of the world, especially the Third World – whether at the hands of despotic rulers or coming from the unruly majorities locally dominating – have suddenly vanished. This is indeed most unfortunate, a big tragedy of the human world as a whole. The humanists have to be deeply concerned about it and cannot remain its silent spectators.

We have to jointly search for and seriously analyse the inner causes of what has been happening around us in the recent months. Where are the real breeding grounds for violence, terror, and devastation? Why at all do young, educated, and professionally trained boys agree to end their own lives and simultaneously kill hundreds of other fellow human beings? They must not be gleefully indulging in these awfully unnatural acts just for the fun of it. There have to be some reasons, wrongly or rightly weighing mighty with them. Do any sorrows, humiliations, resentments, or burning rages inside them force them into such suicidal acts? And how are they misdirected into reacting in such palpably inhuman ways? Why can they not appreciate that there are also many sane and civilized ways, too, to give vent to their wounded feelings, if any?

These and similar other related questions are to be asked, looked into, and answered by all those seriously concerned about liberating the human world from such inhumanity. They have to locate the fire underneath the surface from which the volcanoes erupt.

Proper solutions to the problem facing us have to be carefully worked out and effectively implemented. It has to be genuinely appreciated that

the deep-rooted crime-commerce nexus plays havoc with humanity. Communalism, fundamentalism, regionalism, feelings of political or religious superiority, and – over and above – the big-power selectivity in opposing or supporting all these trends generate and provide cover to more violence and terror. In the words of a distinguished American scholar, *Edward S. Herman,* "imperial terrorism inevitably produces retail terrorist responses."

What is to be genuinely realized, by all concerned at all levels, is that violence cannot be wished away by mighty political rhetoric. The governments of the world and the international market forces have to put an end to their arbitrary selectivity in encouraging or discouraging violence. They have to promote, with uniformity and consistency, a non-violent way of living, a terror-free habitation on all parts of the globe. Political planks adopted in the world centres of political and economic powers to wage a global war against terrorism will not, and cannot, solve the problem; they can and indeed have created more problems. These have in fact already provoked one category or kind of terrorists against another in different parts of the rest of the world. There is now wider religious intolerance and uglier communal violence in many countries, all encouraged by such political rhetoric of those who are seen as the mighty and big in the politico-economic terms.

Should not the recent events make the citizens of the world in the various walks of life more empathetic to focus on matters that are truly important to human life rather than on trivialities? Are common human miseries like hunger, poverty, deprivation of basic necessities of life, socio-economic exploitation, communal hatred, false claims to hegemony, etc., not worthy of receiving our full-time attention?

We in the world of inter-religious cooperation have to contribute in our own way in solving the problem of the day. There has to be a global collaboration for peace education and human rights literacy. Our great religions have to be thoughtfully used to strengthen this social reconstruction process world-wide. The followers of our two noble faiths have a special responsibility to discharge in this context. We have to cooperate and collaborate with each other, defend each other, build bridges of mutual trust between the world communities following one or the other of our great faiths. As we try to remove terrorism's threat and eliminate its causes, our shared history and common beliefs should activate us to promote mutual respect and understanding.

We have an uphill task convincing our co-religionists that not only violence provokes greater violence but also hatred provokes greater hatred, minor misgivings generate major misgivings and intolerance leads to wider intolerance – that there is now a pressing need for the Christians and Muslims of the world to actively defend, and not just magnanimously 'tolerate' each other's religion.

The unfortunate events of the recent past and the resulting crisis of confidence between the followers of the two world religions both have been serious setbacks to the work of all those striving hard for peaceful community relations. Yet, we cannot afford to be disillusioned and have to continue to move on our carefully chosen path.

We the Christians and the Muslims of the world are indeed in a deep crisis of mutual confidence. The community described by the Holy Qur'ān as the "nearest in affection" for the Muslims is now dreading the same Muslims. The Muslims too have developed grave mistrusts against their brethren in monotheism. Brothers and sisters are being divided by the Satanic forces of mutual hatred.

If we really do not want a catastrophe for the mankind, we must realize that the present situation does call for drastic changes in the mindsets. We have to develop, adopt, and practise new paradigms of closer cooperation between our two faiths. How and in what manner, our latest discussions here in the VICIRoTa should throw light.

I will conclude my presentation, with another reference to the ideas of that eminent octogenarian legal scholar of modern India, *VR Krishna Iyer:*

"Be that as it may, religions cannot be wished away or wiped out but surely must be humanized and weaned from cannibalistic habits. Comity of denominations, not a zoo of savage faiths, must be the governing code of religious pluralism in the human world."[4]

The human world looks forward to this direction and is in the urgent need now of a new thinking about inter-religious relations. A human culture with a new positive vision of Christian-Muslim unity has a long journey ahead. Once we start on the course where these great religious faiths of the world are on friendly terms in the real sense, the process will generate its own momentum. Human happiness will widen and inhuman frictions diminish, making it possible for the modern man to turn towards nobler aspirations. Let us, then, move ahead.

---

[4] *VR Krishna Iyer, J.* in the case cited supra (fn. 2).

Questions and Interventions

in future mutually taking the side of the other

BSTEH   The idea that in future Christians and Muslims should mutually take the side of the other so that in the world of today we can fulfill our tasks[1] was already given spontaneous applause during the lecture of Professor Mahmood. It happened at the right point.

Gandhi and the outbreak of violence in India

KHIDOYATOV   As a rule *Mahatma Gandhi* is mentioned in our world in the context of the problems of intolerance and violence. For us he is indeed a model of tolerance and non-violence (in the Indian context rendering it with the Sanskrit word *satyagrāha* is preferred[2]) in resisting political suppression. Himself a victim of intolerance, his answer was never violence. How can one now, in the country of *Gandhi,* understand outbreaks of violence, as we must see them repeatedly at present? Perhaps one has to distinguish more clearly between terrorism and banditry: whilst terrorism is to be understood rather as fighting for power, banditry would have something to do with fighting for money.

T. MAHMOOD   Since my presentation was in the context of global Christian-Muslim relations, I had no special reason to speak about *Mahatma Gandhi.* There is no doubt that in the Indian context *Gandhi* was an outstanding personality for his compatriots and an epitome of tolerance, but his efforts to teach tolerance had remained rather unsuccessful because of the 'divide and rule' policy of the foreign rulers. I am indeed concerned about how India has now forgotten *Gandhi* and is facing the problems of forced religious hegemony, mutual intolerance, communal violence, and terrorism.

positive statements of determinant authorities

KHOURY   As to the question to what extent, following the events of September 11, public opinion turned against Islam, I can at least point out in view of the situation in the German Federal Republic that there leading politicians and the two great Christian Churches immediately stated that the terrorists must not be mistaken for Islam. These public statements made in our country were important for fending off, from the beginning, anti-Islamic emotions in the German population.

searching arguments to persuade the militant

Yet my real question relates as to how one can describe more closely that misguidance, to which those militant people fall victim in our day and thereby do great harm to the reputation of Islam. In other words, how can one gain access to their way of arguing, in order to confront their actions on the level of argument.

terrorism and liberation movements

GABRIEL   In the context of Professor Mahmood's lecture, which I found particularly important because of the differentiated manner thoughts were presented in it, I became aware of the fact how important it is, especially in the juxtaposition of terrorism and liberation movements, to develop criteria that show where violence can be legitimate and where it is not. Looking for instance at the RAF-terrorists of the 1960s and 1970s, to whom Professor Khoury already referred, it is not possible straightaway to establish a determinant relation to the socio-economic situation, there rather a kind of nihilism was in the fore, a protest without any concrete targets. Therefore it seems important to me to take into account that, based on wrong ideas, people perpetrate actions that are destructive. On the other hand socio-economic reasons may still also play a role, for instance through the great sympathy, which certain perpetrators enjoy with the poor and the deprived. Thus people in Thailand are said to have worn T-shirts sporting "Our hero Bin Laden". Thus, in such acts a deep frustration can also find its symbolic presentation.

real effects on public opinion

MARBOE   It would be interesting for me if one could examine more precisely what effects the events of September 11 in fact had in the West on Christian-Islamic relations: to what extent can one find today perhaps an even greater interest in Islam than before, or inhow far is a deterioration to be observed in the form of violent language, of increasing prejudices, etc.

appeal to the Christians to stand by the Muslims

T. MAHMOOD   In my presentation I have emphasized the need of the Islamic religion, in the present situation, to be defended by the Christians. I am surprised that in the discussion nothing has been said about this. Instead, among other things, I am being asked why I have not quoted *Gandhi,* how one could react to or confront the arguments of those misguided people who can be seen by no means as repre-

---

[1] Cf. in this context also the Conference votes of the Second International Christian-Islamic Conference 1997 in Vienna, published in: *A. Bsteh* (ed.), One World for All. Foundations of a Socio-Political and Cultural Pluralism from Christian and Muslim Perspectives, New Delhi 1999.
[2] Cf. in this context also *J. Heesterman* in a contribution to the discussion, in: *A. Bsteh* (ed.), Der Hinduismus als Anfrage an christliche Theologie und Philosophie (Studien zur Religionstheologie; 3), Mödling 1997, 446 f.

sentatives of Islam, how one can differentiate between general violence and terrorism – questions which are important to me too, which however were not the focus of my exposition. What I was concerned with was the response this small group of Muslims, who are called 'Islamic terrorists' or 'Islamic fundamentalists', evoked from the majority of the other religious communities – particularly of the Christians – as regards what they say and want us to believe. I also submitted that our Christian brothers should listen to the mainstream-view of Islam, as it is predominant among the Muslims themselves, and help the Muslims to explain that Islam is not what those misguided people are claiming it to be. It was from the heart of my heart that I appealed to the Christians to come to the defence of Islam in this critical hour and I was guided therein by the persuasion that this is in the interest of both our religions and of the world as a whole. Thus I would like my friends to comment on this aspect of my presentation.

BSTEH   It was not without reason that at the beginning, in my thanks for the lecture of Professor Mahmood, I mentioned that agreement which was expressed already during the lecture exactly at the point where the issue was that in future we would mutually take the side of the other, and where it seems to be appropriate that the one should also defend the other. In this sense I welcome the wish of the speaker that in what follows we should in greater detail deal with the concern expressed by him.

VICIRoTa fully supports this concern

KHOURY   I think that Professor Mahmood's concern is one of the most essential concerns of this Round Table. This was – as Father Bsteh already said – expressed also by the extraordinary and spontaneous applause - exactly at the point where you addressed this appeal to the public. May I assure you that, for many years, we have shared this concern with you and that it is part of the original purpose of this Round Table.

OTT   Obviously independent of each other, Professor Mahmood and I had in mind the same idea when preparing this meeting, namely the idea of an 'alliance', of a mutual obligation of our two religions, in public discussions to protect each other against unjust reproaches [cf. above p. 16]. In a plenary discussion within the framework of this meeting, it should be possible to deal more closely with this concern.

in the media mostly differentiated reactions

POTZ   As I have observed it, I would also like to underline what Dr. Marboe and Professor Khoury have already referred to: the reaction to the terrorist attacks of September 11 wherein we are mostly and clearly

pointed towards the fact that these events must not be identified with Islam, that therefore the difference has to be made between what certain terrorists did there and what Islam says.

In Austria in any case, in this situation the conduct of the media was mostly very responsible. Above all Television and Radio over here regularly invited the President of the Islamic religious community to take a stand on these events. Similarly we all here at the Round Table received numerous invitations to take part in discussions and were asked to take our stand in the media. It also became obvious thereby that, apart from a few critical responses, in this matter the attitude of people was mainly positive. Despite the sadness of the occasion, these events finally aroused public interest of a kind that had perhaps never existed before, to deal in greater detail with what Islam in fact is and says.

making further steps in the sense of our common concern

T. MAHMOOD   My sincere thanks to all who have appreciated my concern; also for clarifying that the way Islam was discussed in public in Europe was not as bad as it was often presumed to be. Of course on the whole the fact remains that, after the attacks of September 11, Islam was misunderstood and maligned. The general agreement that my concern has found in this circle, that something has to be done in defence of Islam on the part of the Christians as well, is very gratifying for me. The details as to solving together problems of this nature will have to be given further consideration at this Round Table, which was indeed founded in order to resolve problems of this kind in common.

Violence, Tolerance and the Liberating Force of Love

Georges Khodr

The ultimate problem of humanity seems to be that of violence because the most burning question is that of death. The issue immediately connected to it is that of intolerance. If the archetypical drama, the slaying of *Abel,* stands for the rejection of the other and thus the risk that he might disappear, we are confronted with the question of establishing whether the other is himself of significance so that I may consider how he relates to myself.

If I reject the mystery of the other's liberty, how can I at least tolerate his existence, let alone welcome his presence?

One of the essential and basic liberties is to accept the other in his error. If all the dogmatisms in the world reject error considering it to be a sign of spiritual death, how can one then allow the other to err without giving up one's own convictions? This concern is of primary importance in itself, raising it on the political level is secondary. If our togetherness in social life is founded on our will to live democratically so that we avoid wiping out each other – all the more so since the options on the national level are generally relative and hence debatable –, when it comes to deep convictions and godly matters, our position in relation to the other becomes more complex. On this level, nothing is considered to be provisional. Hence forth, the possible inclination which was widespread in past history towards intolerance in respect of error, fault, or rejection of what I believed to be the truth. This is followed by intolerance with regard to the other.

Looking at the communities of early Christians only – disregarding the deeds of the state that had become a Christian state – we see that the heretic was declared to be simply anathema, to be expelled from the communion in the Church. He is rejected; thereafter follow many dialogues between the Church Fathers and the Jews and pagans. No one was killed for being apostate. Moreover, in the 4th century *St. John Chrysostomos* declared that he, who taught that heretics should be killed, was to be himself excommunicated.

This doctrine was not upheld by *St. Thomas Aquinas,* and this fact led to the establishment for the Tribunal of the Inquisition. Popes preached crusades, so did *St. Bernard of Clairvaux.* The liberty of conscience was

rejected in the 19th century by *Pius IX* and was really reinstated only at the Council of Vatican II. In Eastern Christianity, I do not know of any doctrinal foundation for the massacre of heretics.

With the same concern for transparency and a determined love for liberty in modern man, I call on Muslims to consider the Qur'ānic revelation when it states: "But when the forbidden months are past, then fight and slay the Pagans wherever ye find them, and seize them, beleaguer them, and lie in wait for them in every stratagem (of war); but if they repent, and establish regular prayers and practise regular charity, then open the way for them: for God is Oft-forgiving, Most Merciful." (Sūra 9,5).

Only those will enjoy their liberty once they have converted to Islam. Many Islamic thinkers rebel against the death sentence inflicted on apostates. To name only one of these, *Mohamed Charfi* who writes: "The most disastrous idea that the Ulemas have had, their most horrible invention, which is still today the worst blemish in the *sharī'a*, is to have elaborated on what they have called apostasy to be punished by the supreme sentence of death."[1] Could there be a possible appeal for a historical interpretation, hence limitative if not making it relative, of this passage of the Qur'ān?

At any rate, the issue is to understand the other as he understands himself. If he understands his liberty to be the total unlimited freedom of expression according to his religious conscience, he can claim to have it recognized as such.

Tolerance is founded on the right to be different, on willingness to live with the others. We face a world of ideas different from ours; we live with men and women who are different. This allows us to have friends from all the communities, it enables us to understand the motives behind their behavior and to create a space for collaboration and friendship. I may be allowed to deplore of course one or other of my friends' convictions or actions, provided this does not stand in the way of sharing with them a real living together. The 'other', on which ever side we place our self is considered to be *kāfir* for the fact that he denies the essence of what we hold onto. The foundation for such a mutual acceptance is found in Sūra 109: "In the name of God, Most Gracious, Most Merciful. Say: O ye that reject Faith! I worship not that which ye worship, nor will ye worship that which I worship. And I will not worship that which ye have been wont to worship, nor will ye worship that which I worship. To you be your Way, and

---

[1] *M. Charfi*, Islam et liberté. Le malentendu historique, Paris 1998, p. 78.

to me mine." We leave to God the task of sorting us or uniting us in future life. The ultimate foundation of this noble tolerance is love.

In the absence of liberating love one could bring to light masculine frustrations, a phallic tragedy, the fear of women, leading people to assemble around the band leader who is supposed to be free from the fascination of women. She is not the 'other'. The androcentric unconscious survives in man as well as in woman to such an extent where the orthodox Jew reciting his morning prayer says: "thanks God for not having created me as a woman". The fanatic does not need the woman. He fulfills his passionate desire for her in the flesh, whereas his real need is what he believes to be the truth. And the universal truth propagates itself by the death of the other. I know that politics is not interested in psychoanalysis; this is why it is imperative to focus on political analysis. But here also from a 'catharsic' perspective, the 'bad aggressiveness', as the Greek fathers call it, is that wrath that targets the other and ultimately kills him.

Ideology is an instrument of this bad wrath, which is one of the eight capital sins that, in spiritual combat, were identified by the ascetics of Eastern Christianity. It is not only a matter of struggling against the dominating power of the state or against a class of society; it is not in the first place a matter of rejection in the social or international field but rather the suppression of the other because he shares with him the same desire. The commandment given to *Moses*: "You shall not covet your neighbour's house, you shall not covet your neighbour's wife, or his manservant, or his maidservant, or his ox, or his ass, or anything that is your neighbour's" (Ex 20:17), starts from the fact that I and the other desire the same object. Christ says that we need to eradicate the root of the desire: "But I say to you that everyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart." (Mt 5:28). It is by freeing ourselves inwardly from passion that we shall be freed from our subjugation to the spirit of domination, and that we shall not bend our knees in front of the authorities of this world. The idol falls in front of him who does not believe in it. This is why the powers of this world strive not only to maintain their power on the political scene but also in the minds and convictions of their citizens by means of elaborating ideologies.

Religious fanaticism finds a privileged place in the craving for power. Since there God is not the liberator but an instrument. Faith is an illusion. It is put at the service of the will to dominate by a mechanism that identifies God with the power of the collective religious group or the party. For

this concept of the powerful God or of the undebatable ideology, which is another form of godliness, is put at the service of an exclusively human passion. The center of the struggle is not God, but man. By so doing, the individual submits to the collective. Here there is no more need to kill, instead, a flag is burned, a statue is destroyed, the aim being to testify really or symbolically that the 'other' is non-existent.

The fundamental violence that interests us on the spiritual level is the violence endured by minorities, no matter how benign this form of violence may be. It is based on the thirst for finding a scapegoat that is unwilling to identify with the dogmatic allegiance of the group, whether this dogma is religious or political. "It is better for you to have one man die for the people", proclaims the high priest who demanded the death of Jesus (Jn 11:50). The group does not tolerate anyone who questions its reason for being, and its certitudes. The group is an absolute, because it embodies the dogma. It is so unless love establishes in the heart of its followers a distinction between the absoluteness of the collective and the faith that animates it. It is true that love shakes the cohesions of history.

Paradoxically, and as a reaction to the majority, the feeling of the minority is also linked to a desire for power. It is a mimetic phenomenon. If being against the West means the desire to inherit its achievements in science, technology, and social organization – this however being still impossible – it becomes imperative to destroy it in order not to recognize its superiority, in which we still believe whether we recognize it or not, while we glorify what is archaic in our values or obsolete in our civilization. Here there is a clash; it is not between two civilizations but rather between a sociological reality and a glorious past.

But on the surface of things, the oppression of the small by the big remains: the small wanting to imitate the big, render the big a victim in their turn. Consequently the powerful feel guilty and the infernal circle continues.

The small do not even believe that they will become big, as a matter of fact, because they kill the big or destroy their symbols, but their wrath blinds them, and acting as they do, they believe history belongs to them.

Here, the question takes on the following form: can the collective, the violent nation, the Church or the Umma convert from its aggressiveness? Violence achieves nothing; it is from within that a group converts. Nevertheless, it is with every hope that one must call for justice, the pillars of which are, for a great people, not to believe itself to be God, nor to adore itself as being God. Salvation for the weak and the strong is according to the Gospel according to Luke: "He has brought down the powerful from their thrones" (1:52). Emptying the heart of a nation of arrogance is the first step towards diffusing national aggressiveness. This is the conviction that the strong is called upon to believe, namely that the weak can have another kind of strength, which is of a different quality and that both of them are called upon to put together the gifts that God has bestowed upon them. Humanity is no more the reality of power but the reality of communion.

To be offered means essentially to be crucified for the others. Destroying the others does not erase the complex of those who remain, nor does it cure those who destroy. It is utterly unreasonable to believe that violence can be eradicated with impunity. The effort that grace demands of us to make is to refrain from sowing elements of rebellion among the weak and not to make them believe that till the end of history they would be the 'humiliated and offended' because of their race, culture or religion. Sharing the goods of the earth and those of the mind, which are the fruits of the reception of the heavenly Bread that Jesus spoke of (cf. Jn 6) or of the Table, descended from above as mentioned in the Qur'ān (cf. Sūra 5,112–115), remains an obligation that rests on our shoulders till the end of history, for the world to bathe in the sweet mercy of the Lord.

Questions and Interventions

KHIDOYATOV   In the lecture above all two terms or phrases were used, which I heard for the first time: "victimizing oneself" and "national aggressions". I would be very grateful for some explanation.

KHODR   Putting it very simply: now the Americans consider themselves as victims of mankind. They have become so humble and say: we have become the victims of humanity as a whole. For me all this is a paradox, a system, a philosophical and psychological reality. Or let me give you another example. In a situation of conflict it may happen that one side holds the view that it is in their interest to present themselves as victims, in order to arouse sympathy and to obtain support. Well, this means 'victimizing oneself'.

"National aggressions" – this phenomenon can be found all over the world wherever in a country politicians nurture ideas among the people that they are threatened and the object of aggression by others. This is a kind of national aggression or aggressivity, as I meant it.

MIHÇIYAZGAN   Doubtless the idea of self-victimization is as such very important and helpful. The mechanism is also known from feminist theory. For too long women have ascribed to themselves the role of being the victims. As long as they successfully present themselves as victims, they succeed in declaring that they do not share the blame for committed wickedness. In the course of this mechanism of self-elevation, they believe they are able to acquit themselves of all accusations. At the basis of the Americans' effort today to present themselves as victims and the question what they want to achieve with it, there is again, among other things, the idea also that they are invulnerable. Believing that one is invulnerable makes oneself of course all the more vulnerable and one can consider oneself all the more as a victim. This gives a specific touch to the strategy of self-victimization.

KHODR   When I mentioned here the Americans, I just wanted to mention them as representatives for many others. Ever since *Kissinger,* there has not been a single declaration of a responsible politician in America, in which mention has been made that we are doing this or that, because we ourselves are suffering injustice or because we are a poor country or because we love the poor or the Muslims or some other fellow men. What is said instead is: we are doing this or that because it is in the interest of America. They are the centre of the world, they are at the same time judge and party. Therefore they have a political interest in victimizing themselves.

GABRIEL   As I see it, in the context of the topic "Violence and Intolerance", a key position falls to the question whether one is ready to accept the other even though he commits an error, in the sense that was also mentioned in the lecture. Yet, can one also accept the other if he is a violent human being? Indeed, as a Christian, in the sense of Jesus' high ethos, one is even bound to love one's enemy.

On the political level, however, the question of course arises once again in another perspective. Traditional societies and religious communities often draw very restrictive borderlines in accepting people of another religion or origin. There it is said that only somebody who belongs to our religious community can be accepted. Concerning this question, pluralist societies are more open-minded, but they too have to draw borderlines. The question whether to accept the other belongs to the central problems that confront us in our societies today. To what extent do those deserve tolerance who are not tolerant themselves?

KHODR   On this topic there is an important assertion in the Qur'ān, when it is said there: "[...] so strive as in a race in all virtues [...]" (Sūra 5,51). Indeed one can already here and now experience some of God's benevolence, but it is above all in the next life that we have to accept one another. By the way, among Muslim scholars there is a wonderful saying: when they expose several ideas or standpoints, they like to say, "And God knows better".

Something similar is of course also to be found in the relationship between the Christian Churches. Beside a few very fundamental things that are beyond contest, very many things can be discussed, and this is done in great sincerity and mutual appreciation.

In political life there is great rivalry. Apart from the fact that allowing room for the freedom of every human being is absolutely binding, there will again and again be different perspectives and positions in all practical fields, whether in financial policy, in education, or elsewhere. As I see it, the true basis for political pluralism is that we accept each other, that we do not persecute each other and that the polity is not called into question.

Following the events of September 11 last year, I wrote an article in one of the most widely read newspapers of our country, saying that the Muslims should now not simply return to their old civilization, into the closed

world of their faith and to their _sharīʿa_, but that they should open up their Muslim civilization to a new togetherness with the other civilizations. This idea, which pointed towards relativizing the world of their Muslim life, was well accepted by my Muslim friends in our country, we have a common perspective for building up a so-called national mentality or attitude of mind. In brief, I think that we could go very far in being ready to accept people even as to their freedom to commit errors, whatever in our eyes may now be an error in individual cases.

KHOURY In the following question I am not concerned with the level of the world as a whole, hence with what we can accept of people who live far away from us, but with the pluralist society of our countries, more closely with socio-political affairs in them. How much diversity can a society bear without breaking asunder, and: how much in common does a society need in order to safeguard its existence and to preserve its fundamental identity? I have often posed this question already, yet there is obviously no concept to answer it satisfactorily.

how much difference is bearable – how much in common is required?

KHODR As to the Lebanon, this is of course a very important question. Before our civil war, which, as one of my friends said, was a war for the others – "la guerre pour les autres" –, we were once asked by America,

... taking Lebanon as an example

Great Britain, Israel, Irak, Syria, etc. how we conceived ourselves, what was our role? I confronted this question and felt free to say that, before the civil war, two of three Lebanese did not agree on their identity. Some said: we are Arabs, others: we are Syrians, others finally: we are Lebanese. Today we say, as defined in our constitution: we are Lebanese, but part of the Arab world. My impression is that, as Lebanese, we live according to the Qurʾānic verses, "To you be your Way, and to me mine." (Qurʾān 109,6), "[...] Let him who will, believe, and let him who will, reject (it) [...]" (Qurʾān 18,29). This of course resulted from the fact that we were completely cured of being linked with any foreign power.

Thus this question is indeed characterized by the dialectical problem of being one and at the same time different. Yet, to which degree the one, to which the other? Some of the warriors in the civil war maintained that we Christians would belong to the West and the Muslims to the Arabic culture. In general this was believed to be so, until I discovered that the Muslim bourgeoisie speaks French or English at home and is as westernized as the Christian bourgeoisie. Yet, if the country were on the whole less poor

and would certain people not hold dominant positions, people would certainly be willing to accept each other. However, if one analyses the situation in the country more closely, one will find that most people are more or less equally poor, equally westernized and that the families are less stabilized and strengthened than before. In addition, among the Muslims the faith of many is equally weak or dead, just as is the case among the Christians. The same applies, above all in the bourgeoisie, to the drugs problem: one out of seven Lebanese students takes drugs. Thus the people in the country have many things in common concerning the oppressing problems of today and sinfulness.

KHIDOYATOV In his exposition, Msgr. Khodr developed a new, perhaps very important science – victimology, the science of the victim, about its subject and about its object. And in the age of globalization it finds its expression in the war of resources.

'victimology' – a new science

KHODR My exposition is intended to be an appeal to analyse history in great detail. We have all acted mercilessly in our history, and this has to be condemned. I was therefore deeply moved by _Pope John Paul II_ confessing to the world public the sins of the Church, fully aware of the wrongs the Church did in the course of her history.

as an appeal to study history and to confess our sins

In this context I also mentioned _Bernard of Clairvaux_, who asked in his great homily for the crusades, how they could leave the tomb of Christ in the hands of the Muslims – although Christ was not buried there any more, and therefore the tomb was no longer important. One might say that therewith the Christians have taken over the theory of the _djihād_. We must simply condemn all the wickedness that has happened in history.

Secondly, we have to take into account the difficulty that, although in the Gospel no violent assertions are to be found, the Christians shed incomparably more blood in their countries than the Muslims did in their countries. Hence, at issue is not only a problem of the texts, but a practical problem of history. I would like to dream of a great Islamic reformer, who would be even stronger than _Muḥammad ʿAbduh_ (1849–1905) or _Djamāl ad-Dīn al-Afġāni_ (1838–1897), who said – without renouncing one single word of the Qurʾān – that some things were caused by the historical situation on the Arab peninsula in the 7th century and that the _djihād_ is directed against the enemies of God, who however do not necessarily have to be Hindus or Sikhs, Christians or Jews. Hence, at issue is seeing the _al-mushrikūn_ as a model, not as a group

of people, and that we should not raise arms against them, because this is not a political fight, but the *al-djihād al-akbar,* "the greater *djihād"*. We are hoping that some day this will be the case.

Christians and Muslims together witnesses of God's glory

At the end, a very personal word: wherever in the world I meet a Muslim, I have the feeling that he belongs to me and I belong to him. All Arabs love the Muslims, they read the Qur'ān, we also read it and are strengthened by it. When I am at home with my Lebanese community, my ears are used to the prayers of the muezzin – and if I do not hear them, I am ill at ease. Accordingly, we communicate closely with one another, and I think, it would be a most important step for us, if the feeling of a corporative life between Christians and Muslims all over the world could be developed, because we all are witness to the sovereignty and glory of God.

Religion as the Cause of Violence

M. Modjtahed Schabestari

I would like to begin by quoting a brief text about power and violence by *Helmut Kuhn,* a qualified expert: "Etymologically, power is derived from potent. Whoever is potent has power, great power has he who is very potent. Power is the potency to produce effects []."

"Power is the fundament.[] Authority and violence form a pair []. Authority is spiritual power. It spares the freedom of whoever submits to it. Violence however is physical power. It uses coercive means.[] Violence is power that does not spare freedom but actively negates it. Instead of persuading it coerces.[] Violence is the active negation of human freedom. However, with his freedom I also indisputably negate the humanity of man, his fundamental rights and above all the first and foremost of all fundamental rights, the right to life.[] The very nature of violence is murderous."[1]

It is clear that one can speak in various fields of life about violence in the sense defined above. What I want to speak about here is that kind of violence which is caused by religion and which is in my view the basis of religious violence.

This kind of violence is always practised where, with the help of a certain terminology, a human image of God is created and in keeping with it the word of God and its content is understood in a way in which nothing is left to question and interpretation. This human concept of God and his word causes many different kinds of violence: violence between God and the world, violence between God and man, violence among people.

---

[1] „Macht hängt sprachlich mit Vermögen zusammen. Macht hat, wer etwas vermag, große Macht hat, wer viel vermag. Macht ist das Vermögen, Wirkungen hervorzubringen []. Macht ist das Fundament.[] Autorität und Gewalt bilden ein Paar []. Autorität ist geistige Macht. Sie schont die Freiheit dessen, der sich ihr unterordnet. Gewalt hingegen ist physische Macht. Sie bedient sich der Zwangsmittel []. Gewalt ist Macht, die die Freiheit nicht schont, sondern aktiv verneint. Statt zu überreden zwingt sie.[] Gewalt ist aktive Leugnung der menschlichen Freiheit. Aber mit seiner Freiheit verneine ich unweigerlich auch die Menschlichkeit des Menschen, seine Grundrechte und vor allem das erste aller Grundrechte, das Recht auf Leben.[] Gewalt ist ihrer Natur nach mörderisch." *H. Kuhn,* Macht – Autorität – Gewalt, in: *E. J. M. Kroker* (ed.), Die Gewalt in Politik, Religion und Gesellschaft, Stuttgart etc. 1976, pp. 11. 22.

Firstly about violence between God and the world. The human concept of God meant here is based on the mechanical idea of the relationship between him and the world. In this concept God is like a mechanical cause bringing forth all that happens in the world by certain ways of wielding physical power and then administering it also in the same way. The world is submitted to the despotic sovereignty of God. This sovereignty of violence leads to a 'weltanschauung' of the believer, which sees the whole world dominated by an order organized by violence. This weltanschauung motivates man to accept all kinds of violence and to practise it him/herself. In my view for such people being is identical with violent power. Such a human being cannot love being, since a violent order cannot be loved. He can treat this world only with odium, and his actions in this world can be nothing but an activity replete with odium.

Worse still is the personal relationship between believers of this kind and God. They always have the impression that God is an extremely great and omnipotent power which treats them from without and gives orders to them by means of his strict commandments and prohibitions and rewards or punishes them accordingly. The will of this God is like the will of an uncanny, great commander, whose will is above all human volition. It is a matter of course that by this concept of God the autonomy of human beings and their freedom are negated and it gives rise to a great alienation. This powerful God, who is encountered from without, forms a constant point of conflict with mankind. This conflict deprives people of the feeling of security in their life and causes great fears and many violent deeds.

The cruel consequences of the concept of an extremely great commander mentioned here are not restricted to individual components, but give rise to the concept of a particular right of God's sovereignty (i. e., a kind of right in the juridical sense), which is due to him alone. Subsequently, this specific divine sovereignty right is considered to be the source of all kinds of systems of theocratic sovereignty over people. The believers dispute as to whom God has assigned this specific sovereignty right (again in the juridical sense). In order to answer this question, some assert that they have the right to deduce this delegated right from the word of God in the holy books. In this context a terminology develops, which we often encounter, "This is in the Book". Everyone says of himself: what I have said is in the Book, and God said it.

From the understanding of such a right that is deduced from the sovereignty of God all kinds of sovereignty claims result, which are political, religious, cultural, etc. and leave no room for the concept of human rights.

Political and religious orders are created, which are based on the practice of violence and divide people in the name of God and his will into various groups of believers and unbelievers. And this is exactly what happened in the course of history, whereby people were embroiled in manifold conflicts with one another.

I have tried to show how the human concept of God described above leads mankind towards thoughts and actions charged with violence and how this kind of violence is caused by religion itself.

Now I would like to maintain that the present official concept of God in the Abrahamitic religions – Judaism, Christianity, Islam – unfortunately still contains a human image of God, as has always been the case in the course of history. We have therefore been divided and separated into different religious groupings. Our traditions, which are already to a great extent rejected by the generation of today, bear the imprint of the concepts mentioned. Our religious dogmas are based on these concepts. Our religious symbols contain a concept of God that is too human. The God who is at present described by our religious authorities and institutions is the God of a layman's concept, which is linked to various human assumptions. It is this God who, in the course of history, has divided mankind into different religions, such as Judaism, Christianity, Islam. In the best case this God demands that the different followers of the religions tolerate each other, but not that they set aside the separations.

Our present God is not the God of *Meister Eckehart* or of *Rūmī*. Their God does not divide people into different groupings, because he transcends in the most sublime way what is human and is not a God of laity.

My question is now how we today, as followers of different religions, can take a stand against violence, although our official religious teachings contain such a potential of violence. Would it not be to the point to speak no more of Judaism, Christianity, Islam, but in the name of the God of *Eckehart* and *Rūmī* to strive towards a mankind with a common approach, without religious fragmentations. If we direct our mind towards this God of *Eckehart* and *Rūmī* and strive towards a one and only mankind, we would, in my view, prefer to keep silent rather than to speak. Then our dialogue will be rather a dialogue of those who keep silent than of those who speak.

I honestly doubt that we can take seriously the autonomy and freedom of man and negate and avoid violence, if we maintain the historical religious forms. It needs great courage on our part to free ourselves from the prison of our religious traditions. We need a resurrection.

Questions and Interventions

faith in God has to transcend anthropomorphic thinking

OTT   First a word expressing personal affinity with what we have heard Professor Schabestari tell us. Indeed, for quite some time I have tried to think on similar lines, namely to preserve personalism in the concept of God, however to transcend any anthropomorphism. Inspiring for me was particularly the idea also that there is an inner link between the understanding of power and violence in the relations between people, as it is also a topic of our meeting, and the omnipotence of God, which – anthropomorphically interpreted – confronts us mechanically, thus coercively and which, having its effects on us, does not set us free.

It seems to me that in this context the concept of the Last Judgement plays a special role, and neither Christianity nor Islam can renounce it. Is it then not every day that the mighty outward power of this anthropomorphically conceived God exerts its full effects on us and can be experienced by us human beings in its full radicalism? If we re-think and think anew the omnipotence of God – namely neither anthropomorphically nor outwardly and as it were mechanically any more – then it seems to me that we also have to re-think what will happen on Judgement Day.

ineffability of God and yet revelation in the word

GABRIEL   It seems to me that there is a dialectical relation between the ineffability of God and therewith of the inadequacy of all human forms of expression on the one hand and the fact that God revealed himself in the word on the other. Do we not have to maintain this dialectical relation and hold out?

And subsequently, in answer to the question whether really all historical forms of the religions are for their part repeatedly in danger of leading towards violence. Would it not be our task to interpret all these forms in the perspective of the central message of the Bible and the Qur'ān respectively: of the compassion and benevolence of God? Therewith the concrete assertions and symbols of our religions would keep maintaining a lived relation with the ineffable mystery that is God, and this would be a hermeneutical key to understand it, defending it against the abuse of our religions to justify violence and intolerance.

searching for new ways of speaking about God

KHOURY   My questions refer to the concern expressed by Professor Schabestari to re-form our religious language in such a way that it anticipates deviations into anthropomorphic conceptions and therewith into a violent abuse of our religions. If one not only wants to keep silent about God, which would certainly be alien to our religions, one would – as the speaker suggested himself – have to develop respective new forms of speaking about the ineffable God in our world. Yet, if we develop new symbols, do we not, sooner or later, again fall into the same trap as people before us? And of what kind would be our criteria for stating that the newly developed concepts and symbols are appropriate to the content at issue? How does one resolve the tension between the identity of a religion and the re-forming of its language? Finally: choosing the mystical movements in our religions as the basis for re-forming our religious language in a new way would not appeal to the great majority of our religious communities, because the mystical orientation is not what attracts the majority. Therefore finding ways within the orthodox traditions has priority within the concerns mentioned here.

liberation from the concept of God exercising a mechanical power

SCHABESTARI   It is not possible for me to render a completely clear concept as to the dogma of resurrection and Judgement Day respectively in our faith, whether in Islam or in Christianity. Nevertheless I can imagine that the presupposition for it will be liberating mankind from this outward, mechanical violence, which God's omnipotence exerts on us according to our current concept. Thus I cannot conceive of resurrection without having this presupposition fulfilled. So much in answer to the question of Professor Ott.

traditions have to transcend themselves into what is ineffable

As to the dialectical relation between what is ineffable and what has been revealed as the word of God, I am of the opinion that we can neither extinguish nor forget our traditions. One could not conceive of religions without tradition. A liberation from tradition means for me rather permanently transcending it. The path there can perhaps really be trodden via this dialectical method, which Professor Gabriel mentioned. In other words, at issue is a tradition, which permanently transcends itself into what is ineffable, which has the courage to leave behind what is defined and enter into what is undefined, to leave behind what can be grasped to enter into what cannot be grasped. If one can thereby

summon the courage to start out following a path, of which one does not know where it leads, then I can accept this dialectical method.

We certainly cannot exist in this world without prisons of some kind. In this respect I agree with Professor Khoury. Even in the case whereby we transcendentalize our prisons, we in principle stay bound to them, because man cannot live without symbols, without language or other forms of expression. Yet, we have to leave certain symbols, if we can no more live with them, because we have the impression that in them we can no more find the truth. In this sense I think that it will be necessary time and again to create new religious concepts in order to be able to live in them, in order to rediscover in them traces of the truth. Thus the determinant question is: where can we find traces of the truth. And I maintain that presently everything that is left over from the concepts and symbols of the past gives the impression that they have become empty for us and contain truth no more.

What criteria are there now for the correctness of new symbols? Thereby is raised the question concerning truth, and I think that from the outset there are no clear criteria – they have to be found in mutual dialogue, in the dialogue of the believers, who agree to having discovered in this or that respect new traces of the truth. Thus the criterion for the conditioned genuineness of new assertions of faith is decisively determined by the encounter with truth: whether it allows us to live in it as believers; hence, whether we can find in it something of the truth of faith. It would not be possible for me to name an a priori criterion.

Yet, how can one preserve the identity of a religion with these new concepts and symbols? For me there is a clear answer to this question: everything depends on whether the relation to the original revelation, which is at issue in the respective religion, is preserved or not. As long as our searching, our discourses and discussions are related to the Bible or to the Qur'ān, in my view what happens is Christian or Islamic. The fact that new symbols or new concepts are introduced into the discourse is not decisive, however the Christian or the Islamic identity would no longer be guaranteed if a Christian no longer argued on the basis of the Bible or a Muslim no longer on the basis of the Qur'ān.

On the last remark of Professor Khoury: that the mystical path cannot be the path of the majority of a religious community and that for this reason the re-forming of the religious language cannot be undertaken in the perspective of mysticism. In this context my problem is whether we are always supposed to find a path on which we can communicate with the great majority of the population. Thus every science has its own way of thinking and its own language, which is not understood by many people, if one for instance thinks of philosophy or of mathematics. Something similar is also true of the religious truth, that either one speaks about it correctly – and this means that facing one's conscience one really has the feeling of coming from an encounter with the truth – or one just pretends to speak about it without in truth doing so. Whether one can now speak about it with everyone or not is for me a question which I cannot answer. Perhaps many people cannot understand this truth.

KHODR I would not say that the problem of violence lies in the mechanicity of God but rather in the all-causality of God. And is God really the cause of everything, of death and of life, as all our scriptures say? Did God say everything about everything or is there some room left for man to say something? If God says everything, no room is left for creativity. Therefore the all-causality of God is the problem for me. For instance, when we beg for something, do we then as it were mechanically get under the wings of God or do we keep flying ourselves?

Yet, the main question is the power of God. al-qahhār, for instance – which in a certain way could correspond to al-qadīr (the powerful one) – would be compatible with the concept of the creator. Yet I would think that it is too easy to draw an identification of concepts between the Old Testament, the New Testament, and the Qur'ān. Jesus of Nazareth introduced something quite new. Thus, in his First Letter to the Corinthians Paul mentions that "God's weakness (τὸ ἀσθενὲς τοῦ θεοῦ) is stronger than human strength" (1:25). In the powerlessness of the Cross, God freely abandoned his power, freely renounced all his power (cf. Phil 2:5–11). God, who in the Old Testament killed everyone – in this way Joshua had conquered the land of the Canaanites – was himself killed on the Cross. Thereby everything changed. When, in the Gospel of John it is said, "But to those who

did accept him he gave power to become children of God [...]" (1:12), so there power is not spoken of in the sense of *pouvoir,* but in the sense of ἐξουσία, of 'strength' or 'authority'. He did not give them power, but strength. Hence, in this context at issue is no longer *potestas,* but *auctoritas.* Accordingly, the God of Jesus Christ as it were renounced his old power, the image of YHWH, who conquers all peoples, has lost its validity: in Jesus he became the one who gave himself into the hands of the sinners, in order to guide them into the true freedom of the children of God. And therewith also the idea of all-causality and of all-power became a fundamentally different one.

not transferring 'mechanistic' working to the relation with God
SCHABESTARI   To be more precise: when I used the term 'mechanistic', then its denotation was according to our classical concept of causality: it means the effect which, according to its nature, a causality has on something else. This causal nexus is at issue here, that, as it were, automatic effect which a cause has.

mutuality between God and man
Whether God already said everything or whether man can also say something? In my view a dialectical way of thinking can also resolve this problem. Ḥāfiẓ (died 1389), our famous mystic, says in a poem that God cannot be imagined without man and man not without God. Thus he sees a dialectical relation between God and man and between man and God, which is characterized by an ontologically grounded mutuality. Hence, in this mutuality of the relation, saying the word is on the one hand the prerogative of God, and of man on the other. Perhaps a solution of the problem can be seen in God and man speaking with one another, in that their relation is one of dialogue.

Finally, I completely agree with what Msgr. Khodr said, that we should not understand God as a power confronting man, dominating him, but in the sense of that word of *Paul,* which he used as an explanation.

power is making others do something for me
S. MAHMOOD   Three remarks on the very thoughtful lecture of Professor Schabestari. Firstly, my definition of power differs from that which was put forward at the beginning of the lecture with reference to a specialist in this field. There power was defined as the capacity to do something oneself. Yet, in the human context I do not understand power as putting me in a position to do something myself, but as making *the others* do something for me at my behest.

authority is legitimation of power
Secondly, it was said that authority is a mental construction of power. I however think that authority has to be understood as the *legitimation* of power rather than simply as mental power. It legitimizes the exercise of power by that person who exercises it, independent of whether that person is able or willing to accept.

verbal violence – the severest form of violence
Thirdly, violence was mentioned as physical power. In my view, in the human context verbal violence is rather the severest form of violence, not merely physical violence.

not placing on God what man is to be blamed for
Yet, with the whole lecture in mind, I ask myself why we are absolving man and human nature of the entire guilt of being the source and the perpetrator of violence and place all the responsibility for it on God or on religion. It is human nature that is violent. We respond to God and to religion, and we created social structures in order to be able to control this violence among us. So let us put the blame where it really belongs: it is *us,* we humans, we are the source of violence. I feel that Professor Khoury's questions remain well legitimated and still need to be answered. Before we launch out on the quest for a new definition of God, we should go further into these questions.

liberating man from anthropomorphic concepts of God
SCHABESTARI   Two remarks on what Dr. Saleha Mahmood mentioned last. What I said in my lecture about God and about the religions, this is exactly what I hold man responsible for: we are to be blamed for having such a power concept of God and for conceiving religion in such a wrong way. Hence, what I would like to say is precisely not that God is in fact like that, and that he is really to be blamed for everything, but that in the course of history we have developed such concepts of God that we have to be blamed for it and we are obliged to make up for it. And that explanation of the term, which I cited in my lecture, as I see it, starts out from the fact that violence in whatever form ultimately leads to physical violence. This also applies to mental violence. It is hard to imagine a violence that has its effects in a mental context only, without leaving its traces in the physical domain. This is what, in my view, was intended to be maintained by that definition of the term, which I cited at the beginning of my lecture.

Can Active Tolerance Prevent Intolerance and Violence?

Ursula Mihçiyazgan

In view of recent international events, the question arises what we Christians and Muslims can still do in order to stop the spiral of violence.

This question is posed with a certain degree of scepticism, which undoubtedly seems to be appropriate: confronted with the consequences of globalization, even its advocates admit that there is cause for concern and that, thus far, there have been but few winners and many losers. The unequal distribution of opportunities to benefit from global networking is a matter of injustice that makes the older unfair inequalities even more clear to us. Tensions within the world community are increasing and have already resulted in regional conflicts and wars, but they lead also to acts of terror. Chances for a peaceful easing of tension are hardly to be found. In any case, I do not see that the current 'War against Terror' is likely to achieve a lasting solution.

Should we not demonstrate 'intolerance' of such an unjust situation? If the term 'intolerance' is not appropriate here, then this is because 'intolerance' (as well as 'tolerance') does not refer to situations or conditions. When tolerance is spoken of it always refers to a social, interpersonal relationship that can, in its basic characteristic, be described as a relationship between an 'I' and a 'You'. In other words, 'intolerance' and 'tolerance' can become a topic only in the context of a relationship, at least according to my thesis.

From this point of view it follows that peace in the world in our day is less threatened by the increasing gap between the rich and the poor than by the tensions between the weaker and the stronger: the poorest ones have no other choice than to bear their plight, as they are excluded from the social and economic relations that shape the world society. The fact that they – must – endure this has nothing to do with 'tolerance'.

"Tolerance" means "enduring tensions which emerge from the otherness of other people, that is in their reasonings, wishes, feelings, and deeds"[1], while 'intolerance', logically, signifies a lack of willingness (or ability?) to cope with such tensions, since if they are not endured, there will be vio-

---

[1] Cf. definition given in: *N. Mette – F. Rickers* (eds.), Lexikon der Religionspädagogik, Vol. 2, Neukirchen-Vluyn 2001, p. 2132.

lence. To this extent, tolerance is a condition for peace, whereas intolerance tends to violence because there is someone who is not able (or willing?) to accept the otherness of the other – or even less to respect it.

It is generally accepted that tolerance on the one hand is more important in our day than at any other time, on the other hand it is also more difficult to achieve: global networking or globalization has made the world a smaller place, with the effect that different people are living closer together now. In order to manage this 'living together' in a peaceful way, there is a call for more tolerance, the 'enlightened' virtue par excellence. But can that really be seen as a solution? I have my doubts and I would like to pose two questions to illustrate my point.

What do we mean by 'living closer together'? Of course, space is given a new meaning in the globalized world. But does this relate also to social, interpersonal relations? This question is pertinent because 'enduring tension' does not yet mean 'recognition', it rather implies 'passive toleration'. And the acknowledgement of plurality is not yet the respect for the other as a person. Is it possible to respect one another without a relationship existing between the persons in question? If one assumes that tolerance is meaningful only within the context of a relationship, then it follows that there must be a relationship between 'me' and the other. By that the other becomes a 'You'. As the other is only the other from the perspective of the 'I', we have to assume reciprocity. Both parties have to accept one another – as partners in dialogue.

Is it possible to view 'intolerance' and 'tolerance' separate from power relations? The otherness of the other is constantly defined within the framework of cultural and religious plurality, not within the context of social and economic hierarchies, and therefore of inequalities. Yet it is obvious that someone who is in a position of power, and therefore in a position to define a situation – and this always means for the weaker party also, someone who determines the framework of their relationship –, can practise tolerance more easily than someone who is subject to this power.

1. Tolerance in religious communities

When we ask what we – Christians and Muslims – can do to reduce or overcome intolerance and violence, we generally start with the positive contributions of our religions towards world peace. Most probably all religions call upon their believers to associate with other people with consideration.

As documented in the reports of the Vienna Conferences[2], both Christian and Islamic teachings lay the foundations for a peaceful living together. Both these religions teach peace and tolerance. They maintain that the call for tolerance is rooted in God's love of his human creatures, so that we are obliged to show respect and love towards our fellow creatures.

Why then do we see so little love among people today? Does this refer to 'modernization' and 'secularization'? Do these religious teachings lose their significance in modern times and/or within the secular structure of (modern) societies?

It is a fallacy to take for granted that in modern times religion disappears, i. e. that the process of modernization inevitably means secularization. By contrast, there are many indications that religion becomes more and more important.[3] Should we then not redouble our efforts to ensure that the peaceful message of our religions is better communicated and that religious groups who do not place this creed at the heart of their teachings should be marginalized?

History teaches that religion(s) have not only led to peace but also to violence and war. The more important it is that we do not start only from the assumption that religions make a positive contribution to world peace, but evaluate also in a critical way the very real power that religions exert. The argument that whenever religiously motivated violence occurred, religion had not been correctly interpreted or had been misused for political purposes, is not strong enough to really convince. Religion, too, can drive people into violence insofar as religion represents more than the belief of individuals and is not only a question of personal preference, but also of conviction and of having the courage of one's convictions, i. e. of confession. It does not only regulate the relationship the believers have towards a transcendental power, it also regulates the relations they have to other people. Thus, tolerance on the one hand and faith in religious truths on the other can open up a vast field of tensions: each religious group, in the light of its convictions, advocating living together according to its re-

[2] Peace for Humanity. Principles, Problems and Perspectives of the Future as Seen by Muslims and Christians, ed. by A. Bsteh, New Delhi ³1998, and: One World for All. Foundations of a Socio-Political and Cultural Pluralism from Christian and Muslim Perspectives, ed. by A. Bsteh, New Delhi 1999. – Here I shall refer to the second volume in which the discussions about the call for tolerance that had already taken place in the 1st Conference were continued.

[3] Not the Iranian, not the Afghan, but the US-American society is the best example for this thesis.

ligious teachings can easily become intolerant towards those who do not (or do not wish to) live according to this way of life[4] – either because they call for a way of life shaped by a different religion or because they are convinced that people should live together without mentioning religion at all and without taking into account the normative influence of religion(s) – especially if these religions claim, or even have, the power to determine how the situation has to be defined.

Excursus: Religion and secularity

At this juncture we have to reflect more closely on the problem of secularity, even though in a secular state tolerance for all is presupposed, and the state can neither prescribe nor guarantee tolerance.[5]

Since the time of Enlightenment, confidence has prevailed in the West, that the principle of secularity guarantees the prevention of religiously motivated violence – religious wars – and a peaceful living together of people from various religions. Due to the positive experience of the outcome of this principle in Europe, it is now proposed as a model for all states and societies. A secular ethic[6] is expected to offer a chance to religions as well as to individuals.[7]

Secularity as a regulative principle for a state order implies neutrality towards and sympathy for religion as well. In other words, we find there in principle the acknowledgement of religion and religious plurality. But is it possible for a state to maintain the same degree of closeness or distance to all the different religions?[8] In practice, every state is in favour of the religion which has exerted the greatest influence on the history and culture of the society in question.

So what can be said about the principle of secularity in the world society, which is gradually beginning to emerge? Although there is no reason to speak of a 'world state', rather than of a living together in this world emerging from the process of globalization, yet, it can not be ignored that today the points are set for the future.

As *Khamene'i* showed[9], secularity is also advocated by Muslims, if and insofar as the societal order is structured according to their religion and it is rejected, if it contradicts Islamic teaching. On the other hand, world(wide) society is clearly coming under the increasing influence of Western models and structures. Given this, is the resistance on the part of Muslims not predictable? Can believers really accept an order that contradicts their religious beliefs?

As is shown by history, believers have often long endured or been forced to accept an order of society that conflicted with the basic principles of their own religion; but, in terms of worldwide standards, this being tied to the margin of acceptance would not only mean a very insecure basis upon which to build lasting peace, but it would also do them injustice.

If we, Christians and Muslims, join together to find ways for peacefully living together, then we must be prepared to specify more closely what we mean by 'tolerance'.

2. Different forms of tolerance?

Generally speaking one can distinguish between two kinds of 'tolerance', i. e. a formal tolerance and a tolerance of the contents. Whereas the former implies the passive toleration of a tension, the endurance of the other, the latter implies the active acknowledgement of the other, my willingness to recognize the other as a partner in dialogue, as a 'You'.

If it is true that tolerance only becomes meaningful in the framework of interpersonal relations, then passive endurance tends rather to negate this relation as to its possible realization. In this case the other remains the separate one, does not become a 'You'. If there is a relationship at all, then it has to be characterized by distance and asymmetry. In other words: tolerance contains an 'othering' (and disparaging), in the sense of only recognizing the otherness of the other by concession; it can thus become a means of distancing the other.

In consequence, the formal passive form of 'tolerance' should be regarded as insufficient for peaceful living together in the global village. In

---

[4] Here I am referring to the 'indisputable' positions, cf. *H. Schneider*, Legal Structures and Political Guarantees of a Pluralism on National and International Levels, in: One World, op. cit. (fn. 2) pp. 191–258, here: p. 253.

[5] I would like to mention this problem here because there was a controversy about secularity and secularism at the 2nd Vienna Conference (cf. *A. Th. Khoury's* intervention in the Plenary Discussion, in: One World, op. cit. [fn. 2] pp. 122 f.).

[6] Cf. *G. Luf's* contribution to the Plenary Discussion, in: One World, op. cit. (fn. 2) p. 128.

[7] But it is obvious that I can regard my religion as my private affair more easily, if I am sure that an intermediating institution – the Church – mediates in a way that I can rely on the Church ensuring the social structure to be appropriate to my religion.

[8] Is the 'Minister of Religious Affairs' a believer of one of them?

[9] Cf. *S. M. Khamene'i*, The Claims of Religious Truth and Socio-Political Pluralism, in: One World, op. cit. (fn. 2) pp. 109–121, here: p. 117.

its place, we need active tolerance. Should we then jointly plead for more active tolerance? Rather than hastily agreeing with this view, which is widely accepted in the West, I would urge a more critical appraisal: perhaps the assumption that tolerance is only meaningful in the context of social relations is due to an entirely Christian way of thinking? In this case the claim or also the preference for active tolerance, in which the other is always already re-interpreted and sought as a partner in dialogue would be the consequence of such an assumption.

Is here perhaps once again Western rationality operative[10] with its method of appearing as acting from an entirely rational and logical approach, but obviously doing so in a perspectival and biased manner? Then my reasoning and arguing hitherto could be an example of how in a dialogue initiated by westerners "the scales are usually tilted in favour of the stronger party and to the disadvantage of the weaker side"[11] – how the West always remains in the right.

There are however many arguments suggesting that from an Islamic point of view the more formal (passive) type of tolerance is prevalent, whereas seen from a Christian perspective it is the more active type. Thus, as a result of my arguing, the Islamic understanding of tolerance with its recognition of plurality seems to be insufficient, but this is only since – from a Christian standpoint – the active form of tolerance is a priori defined as the only right one.

In order to avoid this effect it is important to deal with the fact that both, Christian and Islamic teachings, contain basic elements in respect of our relations to others. And to phrase it again differently: in both religions there are various perceptions of the general commandment to love, by which our relations to others are preformed differently.

Whereas in Christianity the category of 'thy neighbour' has outstanding significance, in Islam it is – as I see it – rather the category of 'the other'. Both categories can be related to the category of space: 'thy neighbour' need not be physically close but is close in his suffering; 'the other' may be close in space but remains separated by a 'fence of law'. Both concepts are relevant in this globalized world; the concept of 'the other' leads to

relativity, because for Muslims the acknowledgement of the different 'ways' is set down in the Qur'ān.[12] On the other hand, the concept of 'thy neighbour' leads to universality, because love of 'thy neighbour', charity, transcends the borders of a community, it is not limited to members of my family or my religious community, it is also for those who do not belong to my collective. As a Christian I feel called upon to develop a relationship with those who suffer.

This is why I find the Western efforts to establish universal standards as expressed in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights as well as in the efforts to bring freedom and democracy to all peoples in the context of a Christian engagement for those who suffer.

Is this perhaps the reason for me to maintain that tolerance is only meaningful in the context of relationship? Do I, in consequence, define 'the other' a priori through suffering?[13] That would indeed be a difficult presupposition for a peaceful living together! It is all the more important to raise the question as to whether, according to Islamic understanding, precisely no relationship is assumed.

If we start from the English phrasing 'Intolerance and Violence' as the overall topic of our meeting here, we very easily find the meaning of 'tolerance' as determined by the Christian understanding, since the word 'tolerance' is of Latin origin. It would therefore be advisable to start at the same time from the corresponding Arabic term and to examine its semantic field more closely, since I suspect that we as Christians and Muslims have quite different perceptions of 'tolerance' – and by that also of 'intolerance and violence'.

Since I am not able to speak Arabic, I can only refer here instead to the Turkish-Osmanic term *müsamaha,* which can mean 'forbearance' and 'negligence'[14] as well; it does therefore not have the same unambiguous positive connotation as 'tolerance'. Nonetheless, 'indulgence' tends towards 'benevolence' and 'kindness' – and not towards 'persistence' and 'endurance'. Used as an adjective it contains also the meaning that there is someone who on purpose is overlooking the errors and failings of another person. Does this perhaps still presuppose the existence of an interper-

---

[10] As to Western rationality cf. *M. Aoun's* contribution to the Plenary Discussion, in: One World, op. cit (fn. 2) p. 126.

[11] Cf. *N. Iqbal,* Juridical Structures and Political Guarantees of a Pluralism on the National and International Level. A Discussion Paper, in: One World, op. cit. (fn. 2) pp. 145–167, here: p. 166.

[12] Cf. address to the Conference by *M. Zakzouk,* in: One World, op. cit. (fn. 2) pp. 25–29, here: 26; cf. *H. Schneider,* op. cit. (fn. 4) p. 244.

[13] The reason why there is someone suffering – in the parable of the Good Samaritan (Lk 10:25–37) the robbers, that means 'the others', are the culprits – is in this context less important. May be other people are suffering also because I do not sufficiently respect their otherness?

[14] Cf. Redhouse Dictionary 1968.

sonal, reciprocal relationship? Definitely, a benevolent attitude of allowing the other to go his way and to realize his own existence. It also assumes an activity towards the other. And this activity is seen as connected to the concept of justice![15]

Even I have no doubt that love and respect towards our fellow creatures can be expressed in this way, I have, however, great difficulty imagining how 'forbearance' and 'kindness' could be integrated into a concept of justice normative for the global society. Taking the global networking into consideration, the key question would then be whether and in which way we can conceive of a relationship with the poorest of the poor and how this relationship could be guaranteed normatively.

To sum up:

If we assume that our dialogue also takes place under certain power conditions, then we must ensure that 'Intolerance and Violence' should not be considered solely in the way I discussed in the first part of my statement. I hope, however, that our dialogue will help us to identify the differences rather than overcome them. For only by taking these differences and indisputable positions as basics, together and in the light of the convictions of our faith can we find solutions leading to a peaceful living together.

Can we practise among ourselves active tolerance which for me implies equally self-limitation and giving space to the other? I hope that my statement can be read as an attempt in this sense.

---

[15] As M. Zakzouk showed: "[...] not only tolerance towards people of another faith, also kindness and justice towards them is expressly required of Muslims, because, as the Qur'ān says (Sūra 60,8), this enables them to act justly.", in: op. cit. (fn. 12) p. 28.

Questions and Interventions

SCHABESTARI According to the point of view expressed by Dr. Mihçiyazgan, the Christian understanding of tolerance is based on the principle of love of one's neighbour and speaks of tolerance as its content. The Islamic concept of tolerance on the other hand is of a formal kind and leads to polarity.

critical questions on the Christian and Islamic understanding of tolerance

My question in this context is, whether tolerance in the course of history has really been understood in this way, or whether the concept presented here is one certain interpretation of Christian concepts only. If the first is true, the question arises, how one should then understand the many aggressions and wars, which have continually been waged, based on Christian concepts.

Similarly I am asking myself with reference to the understanding of tolerance on the Islamic side as presented in the lecture, that here tolerance is one of a formal kind: is such an understanding only to be found in certain groups and at certain times or has this, according to the speaker's view, in the course of history continuously been the Islamic concept?

MIHÇIYAZGAN As I see things, I would generally say that the concepts mentioned are enduring concepts, characteristic of the whole course of history on the Islamic as well as on the Christian side. First, as to the Christian model of tolerance based on the idea of love of one's neighbour, this concept doubtlessly had a very broad influence in history, however as it were only in a paradoxical way, because it also brought great suffering. After all, in the understanding of love of one's neighbour, the issue is not so much what causes suffering, but rather the fact that there is suffering. The moment I define someone as a sufferer, for me it is not only possible, but also obligatory to be concerned with the respective individual. I know that I am called to begin a relationship with him and to transform him, since this relationship does not leave him unconcerned. Motivation and dynamism of the love of one's neighbour means turning towards the sufferer. What does not become obvious here is that the definition of suffering is my definition and not that of the other. Defining how the other suffers, what the other suffers from, always means taking sides.

the model of tolerance based on love of one's neighbour is paradoxical in its effects

Seen in this way, the Islamic understanding of tolerance is less oriented towards the relationship with the other and towards the transformation of the other. In the *milla*-system – if this can be considered as an Islamic principle – the other is granted the possibility to tread another path. Of course the determining thought seems to me to be that the other accepts the Islamic law as superior. With reference to the recognition of the other as a person, Islamic tolerance, which allows the other to tread his own path, is relatively weak, yet it leaves to the other more possibilities to remain an other.

KHODR   I think that in Islam and in Christianity there are two different concepts of tolerance. Linguistically, the term is used neither in the Qur'ān nor in the Bible. This is a concept of Enlightenment. Yet, if one wants to take up the term 'tolerance' and trace it back as to what it means in the Christian tradition, one arrives at the fundamental assertion that I have to love every human being for his/her own sake, despite their weaknesses, because they are made in the image of God.

In Islam on the other hand, 'tolerance' means something quite different. Within the family of mankind as a whole, Christians and Jews are considered to be *ahl al-kitāb*, People of the Book. They are not tolerated because they are loved, they are rather tolerated because they are in the way of truth. Regardless of all criticism, the Qur'ān addresses Jews and Christians as "Muslims" (worshipers of God). As such they have a right to exist, and in this respect the assertions of the Qur'ān are much better than the relations in almost all Islamic countries in fact suggest. The *ahl al-kitāb* have the right to worship God because they believe in him, because they are *muslimūn li-llāh*. In this way, if you like, the Christian Church is secular, because it does not scrutinize the faces of those who are not Christians. It wishes that they should exist, so that they can be loved by the God in whom the Christians believe.

KHOURY   To me it seems necessary to differentiate between the relations among individuals on the one hand and the relations among the different communities on the other. And I ask myself whether what Dr. Mihçiyazgan spoke about is related also to the field of relations between communities, nations, and states.

Another question is how far tolerance goes. Is it still appropriate where – as I heard myself – someone says: in the German Federal Republic there are two societies: the German and the Turkish; now they have to approach each other and mutually tolerate each other? Does tolerance really mean that one suddenly constructs two societies, which are then supposed to approach each other?

Finally, when it was said in the lecture that the state is to guarantee the plurality of religions, in what sense is 'religion' spoken of here? In the sense of religion more strictly speaking or in a sense comprising also all the concepts of a socio-political order, which a religion can have and which, as the case may be, can contradict the socio-political concepts of a certain state?

GABRIEL   I have the impression that Dr. Mihçiyazgan in her statement introduced the category of difference before the category of what all human beings share. People have *face-to-face* relations with one another, and there are political relations. In view of these different facts, I am continuing in the sense of the question Professor Khoury has asked. On the one hand the issue is how I shape my personal relations, in which I acknowledge the other, which also implies an emotional component – different to that other form of tolerance, which concerns the political level and which is necessarily anonymous. I would not like to class Christianity with the personal line and Islam – as this seemed to me to have been the case in the statement – with the political line in the sense of a formal tolerance.

Finally, another remark: in the present philosophical discussion, above all in post-modernity, the concept of the other is used as a concept of culture criticism against Western culture, which is said to be incapable of recognizing the other as the other.

MIHÇIYAZGAN   In the post-structuralist discourse the conviction is important that the difference is not to be considered as something that is given, but as something constructed. Thereby every discourse on difference is always already an object of suspicion. At the same time the discourse on what is common to human

beings meets with suspicion: for what makes the human being a human being is but a matter of fact; for this reason there is no prospect to discover a truth in it.

These deliberations, which in my view introduced a new perspective into our thinking, result in the insight that in starting out from what is in common, the danger is always inherent that differences are overlooked and everything is levelled. And vice versa: in starting out from the differences, the danger is always inherent to position the other even further off than he is already. I am aware of the fact that with my kind of argumentation I am prone to this latter danger. Nevertheless I think it is necessary to point out the differences and to be able to think that the term 'tolerance' is most closely linked to the Enlightenment, knowing that the period of Enlightenment is a historical epoch in our cultural development.

In any case, interhuman relations as a fundamental form always have a central position for me, for the state is something created by man, not an entity from above. Therefore I am trying to conceive of everything that is living together primarily as a human living together and not as life in a state.

religious plurality and its practical consequences

Therewith I arrive at the question posed by Professor Khoury, what do I understand more closely as plurality of the religions. I think that today it is no longer as difficult to acknowledge the plurality of the religions as it still was a century ago. Yet, drawing the practical consequences from it, asking what it means concretely to be really able to live the plurality of religions in my living together with those whose credo is different, this is for me still a difficult question. What does this mean for example in the concrete relationship that I am living with my next neighbour, in a spatial sense as well? In this context I am very well aware of the fact that for instance life in the neighbourhood ranks substantially higher in Muslim societies than in our societies.

That this concept of the neighbourhood is a different one and that accordingly also the concept of foreignness and living together with the foreigners really has to be taken seriously has nothing to do with my saying that within society there also is another society or a minority society within it. In the worldwide social context, the issue is rather how a living together that is characterized by these different concepts is possible, whether and to what extent they do not contradict but complement each other. At the edge of this question I am trying to think in a processlike way. This means that I want the thoughts I do not think and the words I cannot speak to be illuminated by the thoughts the other does not think and by the words he cannot speak. As I see it, for this the dialogue is important, perhaps indispensable, in order to better understand these empty passages, these blind spots in what is our own, and from there together to create a common basis.

rights of neighbours

T. MAHMOOD   I just want to make a clarification. In the Islamic law of rights, the rights of the neighbour are an important chapter. Some authentic books of Islamic history say that when the Qur'ān was being revealed, the rights of the neighbours were revealed day by day in the Holy Book. One of the most respected Companions of the Holy Prophet is said to have even told the Prophet that the way God was prescribing the rights of the neighbour made him fear that the neighbour would also be given the right of inheritance.

without making any difference as to the respective religion

The Prophet was in that context asked what he meant by "neighbourhood". The books of Tradition tell us that his answer was: "40 houses on each of the four sides of your house". This would mean 160 houses every occupant of which would be a "neighbour". The Prophet surely did not say that all of them had to be Muslim – his definition of neighbours included everybody – *mushrikūn* [polytheists], *kāfirūn* [unbelievers], *ahl al-kitāb* [People of the Book], and Muslims. This is a fundamental aspect of Islamic law on *ḥuqūq al-ʿibād* (Human Rights).

Intolerance and Violence.
Manifestations – Reasons – Approaches

Richard Potz

"Tolerance is a term denoting relation. Its development, history, and effectivity are due to the endeavour to shape human relations normatively."[1] Hence, the incapacity to shape human relations normatively is not only one but perhaps even the essential basis of intolerance.

Thereby two concepts of tolerance are to be found, which were used at different times and are mutually overlapping. Originally tolerance had something to do with the individual's capacity to suffer, as this is expressed above all in the early tradition of the Church (*Cyprian*: "tolerantia passionis"). Later tolerance is also to be found as toleration of deviating – sinful – conduct, in order to prevent greater evil.

As to its historical development, in Europe the idea of tolerance has been inseparably linked with the necessity of shaping peacefully the living together of citizens of different credos. In the sense of the initially quoted citation, tolerance grew from the practical necessity of normatively shaping the relations between individuals, although, in view of one's own claim of the truth, the otherness of the other seemed to be an evil. Thus, the history of tolerance began with a mere toleration of other opinions and habits by the still denominational state, which took sides with the dominant religion. In this way it was at first a compromise on the smallest common denominator of what one was capable of bearing, which was at the beginning mostly and explicitly disfavoured by the Churches. Thus it was mainly a passive toleration, in which the otherness of the other had to be 'suffered' for the sake of the necessary non-violence.

This concept of tolerance was overcome by freedom of religion and opinion. The power gap between the practice of tolerance and what was tolerated was criticized (*H. G. de Mirabeau*, 1789). *Goethe* pointedly expressed this idea: "To tolerate means to insult".

---

[1] *K. Schreiner – G. Besier*, Toleranz, in: *O. Brunner* (ed.), Geschichtliche Grundbegriffe. Historisches Lexikon zur politisch-sozialen Sprache in Deutschland, vol. 6, Stuttgart 1990, p. 446.

Although legally guaranteed freedom of religion definitely goes beyond religious tolerance, the principle of tolerance was not made superfluous and annulled by freedom of religion, but is inherent in it. Without tolerance as the fundamental attitude, freedom of religion and opinion cannot be conceived and lived[2], "the importance of practised tolerance [is not] to be underestimated, because it brought about the training in political coexistence of different denominations, disconnected from religious claims of truth, and because this coexistence was in the long run not felt as a threat, but vice versa as a promotion of peace within the state."[3]

Hence, the claim linked with the principle of tolerance is also maintained in a legal order of the state, which, through the recognition of fundamental rights and rights of freedom has gone far beyond the mere guarantee of tolerance by the state. Although the state must no longer be a merely tolerating party, tolerance in the relationship among citizens still remains also in the future a "vital principle in every democracy"[4], intolerance on the other hand endangers the "vital foundations" of every democracy.

Related to the principle of tolerance is therefore the process of weighing values against each other, which frequently becomes necessary, when in an individual case conflicts arise between fundamental legal guarantees.

In art. 13 of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights of December 16, 1966, the signatories pledge themselves to an education that has to "be directed to the full development of the human personality and the sense of its dignity, and shall strengthen the respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms". Furthermore, everyone has to be given the opportunity "to participate effectively in a free society, promote understanding, tolerance and friendship among all nations and all racial, ethnic or religious groups [...]".

With regard to Article 10 of the European "Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms" (1950)[5], the European judiciary finally developed the formula that without the requirements of "pluralism, tolerance and broadmindedness" a democratic society could not prevail. A liberally constituted state relies particularly on the attitude of personal tolerance among its citizens. For, when this state begins to control and to enforce the spiritual, moral, and social convictions on which it lives, it is in danger of losing its liberal-democratic identity.[6] In the sense of *Böckenförde's* famous formulation, tolerance belongs to those spiritual preconditions, on which the liberal-democratic constitutional state lives, without being able to enforce it as *moral persuasion*.[7]

Referring to the possibility of legally enforcing tolerance is therefore necessarily not quite to the point. In order to prevent intolerance, a continuous practice of tolerance is needed, which is indeed the task of the state, which it has to fulfill within the framework of its comprehensive commission to educate. In other words, in the democratic (constitutional) state, the 'legal term' tolerance is decisively enlarged by a pedagogical dimension. This is a challenge also to the religious communities, which have to bear in mind the position of peace in the fundaments of their faith, in view of the multi-religious society that is spreading increasingly all over the world, and they have to try as hard as they can to prevent, with the help of religious concepts, the coals from being stirred in the scenario of violence of the "Clash of Civilizations".

From this also are derived the links between enforceability and tolerance. If intolerance reveals itself in the incapacity to shape normatively the relations between individuals, then through intolerance free scope is given to a 'regulation' by means of unlawful violence. The democratic constitutional state, which derives its legitimization from a legal order structured on participation, has to create – last but not least also by its legislation – a climate, in which intolerance as the hotbed of violence is not given any chance.

---

[2] *J. Neumann,* Toleranz als grundlegendes Verfassungsprinzip, in: *J. Neumann – M. W. Fischer* (ed.), Toleranz und Repression. Zur Lage religiöser Minderheiten in modernen Gesellschaften, Frankfurt etc. 1987, p. 75.

[3] *G. Luf,* Die religiöse Freiheit und der Rechtscharakter der Menschenrechte. Überlegungen zur normativen Genese und Struktur der Religionsfreiheit, in: *J. Schwartländer* (ed.), Freiheit der Religion. Christentum und Islam unter dem Anspruch der Menschenrechte, Mainz 1993, pp. 80 f.

[4] *H. Kelsen,* Staatsform und Weltanschauung (Recht und Staat in Geschichte und Gegenwart; 96), Tübingen 1933, pp. 14 f.

[5] Cf. the judiciary decisions concerning Austria EGMR July 8, 1986, 12/1984/131 (the Case 'Lingens'); EuGH May 23, 1991, No. 6/1990/197/257; EGMR December 19, 1994, 34/1993/429/508.

[6] Op. cit. (fn.1) p. 605.

[7] *E.-W. Böckenförde* uttered this point of view several times, last in his contribution "Fundamente der Freiheit", in: *E. Teufel* (ed.), Was hält die moderne Gesellschaft zusammen?, Frankfurt/M. 1996, p. 89.

Questions and Interventions

MARBOE   Following *E. W. Böckenförde*, it was said in the lecture that tolerance is a necessary component of the democratic constitutional state, that, however, it could not be guaranteed by the state. Is this presupposition in itself not to be understood as being necessarily different, that hence the constitutional state can very well guarantee tolerance?

POTZ   The quotation of *Böckenförde*, which I rendered freely[1] in my lecture, is, "The democratic constitutional state lives on preconditions in the human mind, which it can neither create nor guarantee, but has to presuppose with its citizens." Complementing this view, which *Böckenförde* expressed several times, I now hold the opinion that the attitude of tolerance is one of these presuppositions in the human mind. If the state ordered tolerance and defined it more precisely as to its content, it would begin to divest itself of its own foundations. Of course the state has to do everything to promote the attitude of tolerance, particularly in the field of education. The legal enforcement of attitudes is very soon confronted with set limits.

MARBOE   Why not guarantee these ideals? We after all say that the state has to guarantee the fundamental rights of man, as for instance the freedom of religion – as the most important expression of tolerance.

POTZ   The state indeed has the task to protect and to guarantee tolerance as the attitude of the individual, but it cannot order it as an attitude to be adopted. The state cannot renounce the citizens' tolerance, yet legally it cannot bring tolerance about, it can only promote it. Hence the state can, as *Böckenförde* expressed it, not formally enforce persuasions, of which it lives itself – of those presuppositions in the human mind, to which in my view tolerance belongs as well. After all, how should one be able to enforce a tolerant attitude?

---

[1]   See in this context p. 117 with fn. 7; cf. also *St. Hammer*, Zum Verhältnis zwischen Rechten und Pflichten, in: *A. Bsteh – S. A. Mirdamadi* (eds.), Werte – Rechte – Pflichten. Grundfragen einer gerechten Ordnung des Zusammenlebens in christlicher und islamischer Sicht, Mödling 2001, pp. 297–306, here: 305 f.

SCHABESTARI   How could one define more precisely the relation between ethics and tolerance? Can a certain limitation of tolerance also originate in ethics? As an ethical task it is clear that I have to tolerate the other – but how far does this go?

POTZ   The state of which I am speaking is largely a state of ethical procedures, which means that it is part of its tasks to guarantee fair procedures. Via the fundamental guarantees, the individual is given the possibility to develop. In the perspective of the law, the linking of both fields – of ethics and of law – only becomes relevant where the balance, which is necessary between both fields, is no longer guaranteed, where the rights of the other are infringed.

As regards material-ethical attitudes, the law has to withdraw, without intending to ignore a certain interdependence. In every case, tolerance as the attitude of the individual is rooted in the individual's ethics, and the state has to promote such attitudes, for instance in educational models, as far as these lie within the scope of its responsibility.

MIHÇIYAZGAN   I am very grateful for the clear statement that the state has to presuppose tolerance and cannot guarantee it itself, as well as for the assertion that the subject of tolerance is part of the field of education, which the state however is obliged to supervise. Hence it has to guarantee that the subject is adequately represented in the educational system.

Yet, at the same time we are confronted with the problem that in the study of education, in all fields the promotion of social components stops short of its task. We have no persuasive concepts as to how social learning can be conveyed to young people. It is up to the respective pedagogue to define what is tolerant and what is not, how pupils have to be tolerant of one another, etc. Hence, there is a grey area that is much too wide between what is presupposed by the state with reference to the subject of tolerance and what – above all by education – is to be promoted by the state respectively and what in fact would actually have to be said about it in the field of education.

Moreover, there are examples showing how the state itself is incapable of taking decisions in a spirit of tolerance: when for instance the issue is that a teacher wears a head-scarf in the classroom and a civil service position is therefore not accessible to her, because supposedly in her teaching she does not sufficiently practise tolerance.

POTZ   As is well known, some time ago a decision was taken at the European Court of Justice in a Swiss case, that for reasons of tolerance a teacher has to remove her head-scarf, so that the pupils may learn tolerance – instead of telling the pupils, "You learn tolerance by confronting a teacher who wears a head-scarf."[2]

If one today were to consult a legal data bank for the entry 'tolerance', the term would probably most often be found in teaching curricula, followed by decisions concerning civic rights.

T. MAHMOOD   Despite all that Professor Potz and I myself share because of our common interest in questions concerning the relation of religion and the law, there still seem to be tremendous differences in attitude and thinking. Saying that the state cannot be obliged to guarantee tolerance – which his presentations seem to have suggested – is indeed a contradiction in terms.

Intolerance cannot be something abstract, it exhibits itself in a particular attitude, which the state has to confront eventually. And there are all over the world both penal and civil laws of which the state can make use to tackle behaviour which results from a feeling of intolerance towards various religions.

The problem is that many states – both in the East and in the West, in Islamic societies and in Christian societies – have adopted selectivity in this matter. In Great Britain, for instance, insulting Christ has been an offence from the 16th century until today, punishable under the law. However, insulting Prophet Muḥammad or the Lord Kṛṣṇa is no offence in the England of the 21st century. Apart from this discriminatory aspect, in Great Britain law represents the authority of the state, the implementation of the laws of tolerance in a certain sphere and to a certain extent.

In India we have a regular chapter under the Indian Penal Code of 1860 titled "offences relating to religion", under which deliberately saying or doing anything which offends the religious sentiments of another person is an offence punishable with imprisonment or fine. This Penal Code is now applicable also in many countries including some Islamic countries. As is commonly known, the UN Declaration on the Elimination of All Forms of Intolerance and of Discrimination Based on Religion or Belief (1981) defines intolerance of religion or persuasion and obliges all the signatory states worldwide to fulfil the demands of the Declaration. Therefore, one cannot say that the state cannot take the responsibility of eliminating intolerance from society.

POTZ   It is absolutely beyond questioning that the legal order as a whole and the field of human rights respectively start out from principles of equality in order to protect freedom of opinion, of religion, and others of this kind, and therefore presuppose tolerance as the attitude to be held among human beings. Inherent therein is the obligation to protect them in all fields and with all their strength. In this context Professor Mahmood rightly also referred to the fact that in pertinent international documents as well as in the field of jurisdiction this responsibility of the state is laid down.

There is no doubt that, as to the question of the blasphemy law in Great Britain that was mentioned, the decision that only the Christian concept of God is protected cannot be approved either. For this decision contradicts the equality of religions, religious freedom, and everything related to it; in a certain way it even supports the intolerance of other religions towards what is sacred to them.

What I wanted to say in my lecture is that today the attitude of tolerance cannot be enforced straightaway, but only aimed at indirectly, particularly through education. Maybe in this respect my formulations were too pointed, so that the impression was given that in my opinion the state should do nothing to promote tolerance and to prevent intolerance. The principle I wanted to underline is rather: the state has to start from the fact that the citizens have certain attitudes – and the attitude of tolerance is one of them – and it has to try to promote them. With its citizens the state cannot enforce everything directly.

MARBOE   On the ambivalence of the possibilities the state has concerning the question of tolerance discussed here: doubtlessly a law on blasphemy, which guards against the downgrading of certain religious matters and against the violation of religious sentiments, can partly cover an aspect of the civil right of religious freedom. It provides the state with

---

[2] Cf. in this context the article of *W. Mayer*, Die Rolle des Islam im Wiener Schulalltag am Beispiel einer Wiener Grundschule, in: Wiener Osteuropa Studien (edited by Österreichisches Ost- und Südeuropa-Institut), vol. 9, Frankfurt/M. etc. 1999, pp. 125–130.

the possibility in its territory to promote tolerance and if necessary also to enforce it by taking certain measures. Yet, applying this very law can also be a vehicle to promote intolerance – when the law is applied in excess against everyone who is accused of violating religious sentiments because he said or did something against a certain religion. The intention of the law can then be reversed.

T. MAHMOOD   I did not mean to say that these laws are actually being implemented everywhere, but that there are legal provisions in force. I was only contradicting the view that the state has no responsibility to turn the doctrine of tolerance into actual practice. Also people may, and indeed do, use criminal laws on religious intolerance as it suits them. The Indian Penal Code of 1860 is in force both in India and Pakistan, yet a Non-Muslim insulting Prophet Muḥammad or the Holy Qur'ān will have a tough time only in Pakistan – not so in India. Thus, the existence of laws against religious violence does not necessarily mean that these are actually in use or are used uniformly everywhere.

tolerance in view of colliding persuasions   POTZ   To add finally a concrete example which can illustrate what is at issue in the question discussed here: In a suburb of Moscow the wife of a colleague of mine works as a teacher. Among her pupils there are also three or four whose parents are Jehovah's Witnesses. Thus being very active, the parents of these children demanded that in the accepted form Christmas and very generally the children's birthdays should no longer be celebrated, because their (religious) persuasions had to be taken into consideration.

Here a minority demands that their (religious) persuasions be taken into consideration against the will of the majority, whose persuasions are different and which would like to have Christmas prepared at school and to have birthdays celebrated. It is exactly those colliding persuasions that are at issue here, a fundamental right on both sides, which, when applied, necessarily entails a situation of conflict.

Some time ago there was a similar situation in Germany (and less widespread also in Austria) concerning the fixing of crosses in classrooms. At issue here is establishing the right relations: is fulfilling the wish of the majority of the children to celebrate their birthdays inequitable for the minority? Is it rather a pedagogical problem – that, in this situation, a section of the children feels excluded from the classroom-community? I think that what is at issue here is exactly training in tolerance, since on the part of the state no general regulation can be formulated, which would do justice to the wishes of both sides to have their religious persuasions respected. Hence, here the state cannot enforce tolerance, but only ensure that the attitude of tolerance is promoted in the classroom of the children and in the teachers' communications with the children's parents so that, based on this attitude, a peaceful resolution to this very real conflict can be found. Thus, by offering a choice the state has to make it credible why here there has to be a balance of interests and why here there should be training for tolerance.

The Problem of Terrorism: Causes and Cures

Nasira Iqbal

There is no agreement on the definition of 'terrorism', which is complex and assumes different forms and is the most perplexing problem confronting the international community today. However, there is a consensus that terrorism is a violent method of expressing opposition to, or combating an undesirable situation. It is the threatened or actual use of force or violence for a cause, which may be religious, ethnic, economic, social, or political. State terrorism, which is violence by the government in power, may transform victims into terrorists.

The Western mind generally believes that terrorism in all forms must be condemned, whether it is motivated by purely criminal intent, or is in the form of legitimate resistance, or struggle for national liberation. Therefore reprisals against terrorist activity must be condoned. The Third World also condemns terrorism, but its attitude takes into consideration the liberation struggles of peoples seeking the right of self-determination, and lays emphasis on the removal of the causes of terrorist activity, condemning instead, the retaliatory reprisals. There are many instances where the terrorist activity disappeared when the root cause of the grievance was removed. Examples can be cited of Jewish terrorism against the Palestine Mandate, the EOKA terrorist campaign in Cyprus or the Algerian FLN terrorism. Therefore philosophers like *Jean-Paul Sartre* and *Franz Fanon* believe that terrorism is a liberative phenomenon.

Yasser Arafat stated: "We oppose terrorism because we are the victims of terrorism. Any armed resistance can be condemned as terrorist activity. This is how we are seen by the Western/American/Israeli mass media. But there is a fundamental difference between terrorism and armed resistance. It is the right of the people of any nation facing opposition, occupation, and racism to offer resistance by all means. The United Nations Charter gives them this right."

Even before the terrorist attacks on the World Trade Centre and the Pentagon on 11th September, 2001, with the presumed involvement of Muslims, there existed an impression in the West that Islam is an intolerant creed, which encourages its adherents to kill innocent people with terror-

Since *Mrs. Nasira Iqbal* was prevented from personally attending the meeting, her lecture was read out by *Dr. Saleha Mahmood.*

ist methods. This impression is based on the assumption that after the collapse of the Soviet Union, Islam is the next ideology of hate and the world is likely to witness a clash of cultures between Islam and the West in the 21st century. The main concern in this debate is that, under the New World Order, the global Islamic conglomerate serves as a threat to the basic values and interests of Western civilization.

Islam and Christianity have a long history of conflict. In the 7th century a. D. the armies of the Prophet of Islam swept like forest fire across the then civilized world. Within a 100 years the Islamic Empire extended from the shores of the Atlantic to the Indus valley. Later, when Muslim rule in Spain began to collapse, the Islamic Empire launched a new wave of conquests. The memories of Muslim rule over Spain, the fall of Constantinople, the siege of Vienna, the Christian defeat at Gallipolis, and numerous other such incidents make Westerners feel perennially threatened by Islam. For centuries the West considered the Ottomans the 'present terror of the world'. When new challenges emanate from 'militant' Islamic factions, it only exacerbates this feeling.

Old suspicions and fears are re-awakened by recent events, fuelled by inflammatory references to a 'clash of civilizations'. As a proselytizing faith, Islam is projected as a catalytic force destined to achieve ultimate triumph and universal acceptance. As a universal ideology, Islam by itself is a challenge to the West's conviction of its own civilizational superiority, claimed on the basis of secular humanism, and its ultimate victory. Against this background, "Islam is the ideal candidate for the new enemy figure that will fill the gap created by the fall of Communism."[1] Reports of Islamic bombs and terrorists, illustrated by pictures of wild-eyed, bearded fanatics, heighten these fears.

On the other hand, memories of barbarous Crusaders haunt the Muslim World. Muslims' collective memory of Western domination is also more recent and fresh. Specifically, the roots of their rage are found in the past three centuries of humiliation under the expansion of Western imperialism from Africa to the Middle East and to South East Asia. The creation of Israel aggravated the humiliation of the Arabs, especially when large numbers of Palestinians were expelled from their homeland. In Muslim eyes, Western military support enabled Israel to inflict defeat after defeat on Arab States. Similarly, the support of anti-people rulers like the Shah of Iran, the Gulf War, the continuous blockade of Iraq and its periodic bombardment during the last ten years, and the denial of democratic rights to "Islamists" in Algeria are some of the many irritants which outrage Muslims. The slaughter of the Muslims in Bosnia, Kashmir, Chechnya, and Kosovo, in addition to a large number of Muslim refugees leaving their homes in these countries, have been generally blind-sided by the West.

Moreover, Muslims are convinced that the US and her allies have double moral standards where Muslims are involved. The United Nations' resolutions against Israel are ignored, while those against Iraq are immediately implemented. *President George W. Bush,* in his State of the Union address on January 29, 2002, warned that the Iranian (sic) non-democratic government was harbouring terrorists and Iraq was reneging on its commitments regarding inspection of its nuclear installations. They are likely to be treated in the same manner as Afghanistan. He also declared that hundreds of al-Qaida members were spread all over the world like ticking time bombs about to go off, and they need to be smoked out of their holes wherever they are. On this pretext, any Muslim country can be attacked at any time when it falls out of favour with the US. The incarceration of *Mr. Yasser Arafat* and the indiscriminate violence being perpetrated on innocent Palestinians received no attention from *Mr. Bush.* Such double standards are substantially responsible for engendering "aggressive extremism" in some Muslim militants.

How to combat the process of 'mutual Satanisation'? History being the source of the trouble, we must call on history to redress the balance. To counter the popular impression of Islam as bellicose and intolerant, it needs to be said over and over again that conversion by force is forbidden in the Holy Qur'ān. The spread of Islam in Africa and South East Asia was largely peaceful, and the recognition of other monotheistic religions was enshrined as a basic principle in Islamic law. A contrast to Christian Europe where the choice before Jews and Muslims was conversion, exile or death. In the Middle ages, persecuted Jews and Christians often sought refuge in Muslim domains. In the brilliant civilizations of Muslim Spain and the Ottoman and Mughal courts, Non-Muslims played an important part. We have not always been on a collision course.

Having set the record straight, what more must be done? To have a real dialogue, each of us must recognize the full humanity of the other. In a world divided into 'us' and 'them' people are not treated or valued equally.

---

[1] *Sh. T. Hunter,* The Future of Islam and the West: Clash of Civilizations or Peaceful Coexistence?, Westport (Conn.) 1998, p. 12.

The life of an Afghan peasant is not worth the same as the life of an American banker. Yet God has endowed us all with the same emotions of joy and sorrow, hope and despair. Only when we regard the other as a person, not an object, can a 'you' speak to a 'you'.

The next step is to accord respect to different cultures. It has been said that the First Crusade came with the Sword and Cross; the Second Crusade ushered in the age of imperialism; the Third Crusade now brings a cultural invasion. This has been described as the disease of 'Westoxification', the uncritical adoption of alien values that undermine the Islamic way of life. Today 'development', means becoming more like the West. But is the West always best? Are nuclear families superior to extended ones? Is a particular form of democracy suitable for all peoples? Must secular and materialistic values reign supreme?

Most importantly, we must stress our common beliefs. In times of crisis in the West it is customary to appeal to the Judaeo-Christian heritage, a term that leaves Islam out. Yet we all believe in One God who is the same God from whom we have received the same moral law. The Bible and the Holy Qur'ān contain the same commandment to worship God, honour our parents, and the same injunctions against killing, theft, adultery, and false witness. We should begin to speak of the Judaeo-Christian-Islamic tradition, the solid ground on which we all stand. Although we share fundamental principles, there are real theological differences among the three monotheistic faiths that cannot be ignored. The Qur'ānic verse explains this diversity:

"[...] To each among you have We prescribed a Law and an Open Way. If God had so willed, He would have made you a single People, but (His plan is) to test you in what He hath given you: so strive as in a race in all virtues. The goal of you all is to God; it is He that will show you the truth of the matters in which ye dispute." (Sūra 5,51).

We must accept diversity as part of God's plan. The different communities are challenged to use their gifts to strive to outdo each other in good works with God as the Judge. Instead of sniping at each other from fixed positions as we have done in the past, we must face a shared world side by side and plan a joint _djihād_. The Islamic concept of '_djihād_' means 'to put an effort into something' or 'to struggle to achieve a desired objective'. The West, in particular the US, is keen to eliminate the threat posed by Muslim fundamentalism and has unleashed a systematic campaign to attack the bases and strongholds of the '_djihādis_'. Acts of terrorism do not represent _djihād_. These acts are wholly unjustifiable and perpetrators deserve to be apprehended and punished. However punitive action will not suffice. There is a pressing need for all nations and individual citizens of the world to join hands in combating terrorism. This _djihād_ should comprise not just punitive actions but also curative measures, which must be protracted as well as comprehensive.

A new vision needs to be developed in which terrorism as a means of challenging asymmetries of power may become increasingly marginal. To begin with, the West should learn to get away from its confrontational rhetoric, recognizing only civil and political rights as valid and legitimate human rights as mere ideological claims. Human rights of all kinds are interrelated and mutually reinforcing. Comprehensive strategies are required for promoting the complete package of rights. Without economic justice there cannot be genuine and lasting peace in the world. Also, the US must use its influence to bring about fair solutions to the Israel – Palestine conflict and India – Pakistan conflict over Kashmir.

A large number of Muslims all over the world, who stand for peaceful co-existence with the West and other civilizations, have either accepted modern ideas or have reconciled them with Islam. Liberal Muslim thinkers differentiate between 'modernity' and 'westernization'. According to them, modernity is the acknowledgment of 'change' as a normal process in the life of a society. But westernization is the adoption of an alien culture. It is indeed possible to remain faithful to one's own cultural traditions and simultaneously welcome change or modernity.

Liberal Muslim governments have always been involved in negotiations and dialogue with the West, in order to resolve controversial economic and political issues. They can advise the US and her allies how to remove the real cause of Muslim rage. It is a reasonable assumption that if the problems perceived by Muslims to have been created by the West (such as Israel, Kosovo, Chechnya, Bosnia, and Kashmir) are justly and equitably settled, there would hardly be anything left to be angry about. Such a breakthrough may lead to the establishment of a pluralistic world where justice can be obtained through peaceful negotiations and agreements. Numerous conventions which deal with weapons of mass destruction, international terrorism, poverty, and famine, the threat of disease and racial strife, all call for collaboration between Islam and West. _Iqbal_ has said that Islam has a unique contribution to make, in giving direction to the world to develop "a community of the middle way".

Sa'dī says: When a matter can be resolved with tact, showing moderation to an enemy is better than combat. When you cannot overpower an enemy, you should shut the door of sedition by patronising him. If you are apprehensive of suffering harm at the hands of an antagonist, tie his tongue with the amulet of kindness. Instead of thorns, scatter gold before the enemy, as kindness blunts sharp teeth.

(Thanks are due to Zoë Hersov. Major portions of this statement have been taken from her Article "An Appeal for a Joint Jehad" published in "Pakistan Observer" on November 29, 2001.)

Questions and Interventions

as a rule there were mutual invasions

GABRIEL   According to the rules of power, there were in history invasions from both sides. Although it is painful, it is important to admit this fact openly and honestly, clearly affirming at the same time that such invasions belong to the past.

no cultural development without mutual exchange

Another reference to the encounter of cultures: it is a fact that in history cultures never developed in isolation, but that there always was a more or less intensive exchange between them. Thus *Claude Lévi-Strauss* before the UNESCO once expressed his opinion that the worst that can happen to a culture is to remain alone. The actual problem in the encounter of cultures lies in the fact that there are differences in power, which do not allow a voluntary adoption of values, following careful consideration.

no selectivity in the exchange

POTZ   In the mutual exchange of cultures it seems to me to be important not to isolate things that are linked. The classic example that my colleague Luf and I often present is that it is not possible to adopt modernity without human rights. It may be that at the moment one thinks oneself able to take over one thing or another, Yet, all attempts at a selective modernization fail sooner or later, I would say: without exception. Cultures cannot isolate themselves from one another like erratic blocks, they have to be always aware of the fact that when they communicate with each other a transfer takes place on all levels.

perceiving offences of the other in the dialogue

MIHÇIYAZGAN   Listening to the lecture of Mrs. Iqbal I could not but feel the anger of the Muslims. Hence something must have happened that caused offence and which has something to do with our responsibility. We should be more open in facing this concern and listen to it more attentively. In my view here the issue is a very important factor in our living together in this society of tomorrow. When someone says, "I think our feelings have been offended", then this has to be publicly taken note of and listened to very sensitively.

Near East – an obstacle on the path of dialogue

MARBOE   In this context it strikes me that the problem of the Near East, which was also mentioned in Mrs. Iqbal's statement, was not mentioned elsewhere. Was this incidental or have we, perhaps also consciously,

suppressed it? Yet is the Christian-Islamic dialogue altogether possible and does it make sense as long as the problem in the Near East is unresolved the way it is? In other dialogue fora it always seems to be more present than it is here. Yet, do we then perhaps avoid speaking about one of the most crucial topics?

BSTEH   In Msgr. Khodr's lecture and in the subsequent contributions to the discussion this problem particularly seems to me to have played a determinant role and to have been explained from various sides [cf. above pp. 81–90].

something of hate *and* of love in the encounter of the cultures

S. MAHMOOD   When, at this point, I react after Mrs. Iqbal's lecture to some of the preceding contributions, I am not by any means responding on Mrs. Nasira Iqbal's behalf.

Ironically, cultures grow on the basis of mutual absorption, of borrowing, etc. This is the case as long as it takes place as a seeping through the underground. However, at the same time the cultures try to safeguard their territory and to exclude the other. Who ever comes as an outsider is resisted as an alien force. This is what is behind the concept of 'cultural invasion', of the intrusion of alien cultures and behind the resistance to it.

This explains the fear and the anger of many Muslim communities. They feel confronted with a cultural invasion. They want change, yet they do not want transformation. This is something like love and hate and fear of being completely overwhelmed by a dominant culture. The fear of the West, however, is of a very different kind: the West is afraid of the invasion of violence. Hence, whilst Islam is afraid of a cultural invasion from the West, the West is afraid of a 'violent' invasion from Islam.

much anger in the Islamic world

It is true that a lot of anger can be felt in Mrs. Iqbal's paper. Yet, this is the situation in the Islamic world. The Muslims are very angry that so much injustice is going on, that so much violence takes place in the world, from which Muslim communities have to suffer. The life of an Afghan villager does not seem to have the same value as the life of an American banker, so it was said at one point in the lecture. The life of the Muslims is therefore not as valuable as the life of the others, so that a great deal of injustice is felt in the Islamic world. Mrs. Iqbal explains a great deal of the terrorism of today in terms of the injustice which the Muslims suffer from and feel that they suffer from above all in Palestine, in what happened in Bosnia, and what is perpetuated in the Checheno-Ingush Republic and in Kashmir.

in Bosnia and in Kosovo, help came from the West

OTT   In this context I would like to hear from a well-informed source to what extent Muslim societies are aware that the West – more precisely the NATO – in the case of Bosnia and Kosovo helped the threatened communities of the Muslims. Is this case taken into consideration in a general assessment of the present international situation?

when relations are the problem, always both sides have to be heard

KHIDOYATOV   In face of the complexity of the problems at issue on the political level, nobody is able to consider them from one side only. Thus, the problem of Kashmir is for instance a problem between two communities and is therefore to be considered not merely from the Pakistani side, since it directly also concerns the Indian subcontinent and its population. And of course the perspective of the Indian side is utterly different.

Therefore, in assessing these questions one has to proceed very tentatively. From my own experience – from visits to the Pakistani as well as the Indian part of the country – I know about the relations of the Pakistani population with Kashmir. For me it was sometimes difficult to discuss this problem with Pakistanis, often they did not want to speak about it at all. They denied wanting to give up; however, based on the Indian constitution, Kashmir has become part of India. Facing the complex situation, in all our discussions we had to refrain from categorical assertions. Doubtless this also applies to Bosnia and the Checheno-Ingush Republic.

Thus it is very difficult and sensitive to say anything about Kashmir, because for the Pakistani population there is a painful history in the background. They lost three wars in the struggle for Kashmir and they suffered very many casualties. What for? For the peace of the country? The original Kashmiri population does not live any longer in the Pakistani part of the country, they fled very early on. And the people I met there have no idea about the future of their country. My plea therefore is to be very careful in dealing with this and similar problems.

BSTEH   Since we by no means consider it to be the task of this Round Table to discuss political problems in a political manner, I am all the more grateful for these references to the complexity of the problems mentioned, which in a similar way probably apply to all centres of political conflicts. Nevertheless it has been very valuable to have pointed out that these sensitive situations of conflict in our world are extremely many-faceted and can therefore only be discussed with a strong sense of responsibility.

KHOURY   With regard to the expositions of Mrs. Iqbal it is important to keep in mind that she did not simply want to speak about intolerance and violence, but in accordance with the title of her lecture about *terrorism,* about this extreme form of violence. Therefore it is so very important to listen to her analysis of the causes of this phenomenon. We know of course that attempts at explaining the phenomenon are no justification for it; yet understanding something does not necessarily mean agreeing with it. Thus there remains room for further analyses and reflections with the aim of finding out together how we can prevent terrorism from being used as an instrument for resolving problems. We also do not have to wait until all the problems, which were discussed here, have been resolved, before we start considering them.

Intolerance and Violence

Goga Abrarovic Khidoyatov

Terrorist acts, carried out in New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, have revealed deep changes that are occurring in the world. The brutality and dimensions of the actions show that, in the first place, powerful forces linked to world financial and economic groups, which are struggling for economic and political hegemony and a new repartition of the world, stand behind them. Globalization has enriched a small group of oligarchs. A super-rich class has been formed that turned Western power into a corporative power, globalization created new world conflicts that induce intolerance and violence, reject morals, laws, constitutions, and religions.

1. History and experience teach us that in every known age there was intolerance and violence, in one form or another, and they were always interconnected, there was always something mysterious and magic about them, and often afterwards their victims became saints and heroes, and frequently the instrumental forces torturing and executing their victims became martyrs and saints themselves. An attitude toward intolerance and violence determined the character of a nation or epoch. Each people had its own spirit, characteristic only of itself, and no violence could subdue it, for every violence provoked antiviolence expressed in craving for revenge. As a result, the instrumental forces themselves sometimes became the victims of violence. A spirit of intolerance and violence was a permanent feature of human society and no change in the society – increase in productivity, economy, education, culture, and civilization – could eradicate them. They adapted to changes, changed forms not changing their essence, not changing their qualitative specific characteristics.

Intolerance and violence form a main element in human life and represent a freedom for evil and an empire of evil. If there had not been this freedom for evil related to the main principles of human life, there would not have been any history and the world would have started not from the beginning but from the end, that is from God's perfect kingdom. The struggle between good and evil, that is the confrontation of tolerance and intolerance, violence and the grace of heaven, these are part of the roots of the historical process.

The freedom for evil, that is the combination of intolerance and violence, means the dehumanization of man, his engagement with an inhuman world and negation of his genuine destiny in history. At the same time the freedom inherent in humanism and humanistic principles of life that ennobled man, made him a central character in history that opposed it. Therein lies the tragic dual character of the entire historical process. The material progress of mankind reflects hardly at all the tragic conflict of the eternal principles of the historic development embodying the starkly opposite principles both bright and dark, evil and good, violence and non-violence, tolerance and intolerance.

2. The Church was the most intolerant opponent of heterodoxy and in the Middle Ages resorted to the most cruel and brutal acts of violence in her fight against dissidents. The Inquisition tortured scientists and poets for their attempts to find other explanation of the universe than that of the Roman Catholics. *Giordano Bruno,* a scientist-poet, was burnt at the stake, *Galileo* was exiled. In 1992 *Pope John Paul II* declared the decision of the Court of Inquisition to be mistaken and rehabilitated *Galileo.* The Pope also repented in public of sins and crimes committed by the Catholic Church. Information about the forthcoming rehabilitation of *Girolamo Savonarola,* a Dominican monk, called "Ayatollah of the Renaissance", is rather important. That mysterious monk committed to the flames much of the cultural heritage of Florence and was at that time a creator of the short-lived republic of Florence. He accused the Church of "great crimes". By his order crowds burnt priceless works of the Florentine artists and artisans considering them "devilish creations". There went also "immoral books" such as *Boccaccio's* Decamerone, manuscripts, musical instruments, masks, and carnival costumes. The Dominican monks created detachments of youth, a sort of police of morality which wandered along the town's streets, begging, exposing gamblers, and tearing the clothes off women whom they considered indecent. In the year 1232 *Pope Alexander VI* charged him before the Inquisition. *Savonarola* had turned Florence into an absolute hell. Now he turned also against the Pope himself. The Pope excommunicated him. In his turn, *Savonarola* excommunicated the Pope and called for reforms of the Catholic Church and the overthrow of the Pope. The Dominicans' enemies, the Franciscans, began to persecute him and by the Pope's order he was seized. He was brutally tortured, children cast stones at him while he suffocated on the gallows. Before his death he confessed to heresy.

Inquisition was the Catholic Church's major fighting tool against heterodoxy for almost six centuries. It applied torture widely as a means of finding proofs. The proofs obtained as a result of torture were considered to be the most important in the conviction of heretics. Their fate ended at the stake. The Inquisition killed hundreds of thousands of innocent people; some of whom were far from having committed the sins that they were charged with. Such was the price of intolerance and violence.

In Islam there was no inquisition and inquisitors, but there were sects that were also distinguished by their intolerance of dissidents, and violence was turned in their hands into a main weapon. Such were the sects of the Ismāʿīlīs, Assassins, and Wahhābīs, "[...] ye should remain steadfast in Religion, and make no divisions therein [...]" – is said in the Qurʾān (Sūra 42,13). The disintegration of Islam into sects led to the emergence of sects that misinterpreted its genuine essence. They became the guards of order and claimed the role of genuine protectors of "genuine Islam". They demanded the restoration of the fundamental principles in Islam and were the apostles of modern Islamic fundamentalism.

The most ominous of these sects was that known as the Assassins or killers. Its creator – Ḥasan ibn aṣ-Ṣabbāḥ was able to seize the fortress of Alamūt in northern Iran and turn it into a stronghold of his power. His name inspired with horror not only the Muslim world, but Europe as well. He killed two of his sons for disobedience and the breach of his orders. He established a hierarchy of 7 grades, the first of which was *fidāʾī,* that is suicide militants ready to sacrifice their lives for the faith and *Ḥasan.* Those were the killers. They were carefully selected. They were notable for their selfless courage and devotion and knew no mercy. They had clear and strict instructions – to destroy all the enemies of the genuine faith, that is all those who did not belong to the sect of the Ismāʿīlīs or killers. Evidently there is a peculiar regularity in the fact that intolerance and violence can degenerate into killings and terrorism.

The Ismāʿīlīs and killers were defeated by Mongol troops headed by *Hulagu Khan* in 1256. Their remnants fled to Afghanistan and the territory of present-day Pakistan and later formed the basis of that menacing force that is called Ṭaliban. After *Ḥasan* the leadership passed to the dynasty of the *Aga Khans,* which became their hereditary title. He is held to be a descendant of ʿAlī, the first Imām of the Shīʿīs. A present-day leader of the Ismāʿīlīs and killers, *Aga Khan V,* lives now in Bombay and is a genuine leader of the Afghan Ismāʿīlīs and killers.

3. The victory of capitalism in Europe in the 18th century led to a new turn in social relations. Capitalist conditions led to greed when people wanted to be not only rich but the richest. The response was the emergence of many secret societies whose activity was directed against the authorities, and the rising money monster. Masonic lodges that spread in France (Frank masons), Scotland, England, and Italy were among them. At the beginning of the 19th century Freemasonry became a worldwide phenomenon. The major concern of Freemasonry was a call to work and protest against idleness, for work was considered to be the most important duty in a civil society. Imbued with the principle of brotherhood, Freemasonry advocates worldwide tolerance. Its cult was worship of the Divine and a belief in mankind.

Freemasonry taught men to oppose evil and not to submit to injustice in whatever form it presented itself. But it was surrounded with mysterious rituals and secrecy that aroused the suspicion of the authorities and the ruling establishment. That is why every government pursued it and tried to destroy it. In 1737 *Pope Clement XII* issued a decree against Freemasonry that prohibited participation in Masonic lodges on pain of confiscation and death penalty without the right of appeal. The Masons were dismissed, their lands and property were confiscated, and decrees were issued against them that proclaimed them criminals.

Intolerance and violence and the coercive measures against Freemasonry practically led to the end of Freemasonry as a system, but the spirit of the Freemasonry, its rituals, its secret gatherings and secret decisions ensured its revival in the modern epoch. In the epoch of globalization it was needed as a political force in the struggle of different opposing political groups, financial companies and corporations. Now Freemasonry itself with its lodges, rituals, and ceremonies has become a tool for intolerance and violence.

4. The second half of the 20th century is marked in the world as a transition from one epoch to another – to the epoch of globalization. The entire achievement does not correspond to those social aims that mankind expected. The establishment of financial capital has divided the whole world into rich and poor countries and peoples. Internal conflicts transformed into global ones have deepened all the previous economic and social polarities. Over and above that, in due course, conflicts with the use of violence and civil wars flared up in many countries.

An active revival of national self-consciousness and efforts made by some nations and ethnic groups for self-determination is under way in the world.

It is impossible to forget that every people wants to be not only satisfied but also eternal; no one wants to leave history without leaving any traces behind. A growth in interethnic intolerance can be observed, and on that basis bitter interethnic and regional conflicts take place. The development of various forms of religious fundamentalism and extremism rouses intolerance and efforts aimed at the forcible solution of problems. World drug trafficking, transborder criminality, creation of worldwide criminal groups, lack of resources, population growth, the rapid spread of mass deceases increase tension in the world and create a favourable ground for intolerance and violence.

5. Globalization had a deep and negative influence in the sphere of culture. Cultural globalization turned culture into an economic affair and a means of profit and loss. It fell so low in its aesthetic and moral meaning that it became simply information that is closely linked with advertisement. World export of culture is rising rapidly. If in 1980 it was valued at 47.5 billion dollars, in 1998 it rose to 174 billion and 40 % of it represents the works of English-speaking culture. That is mainly the production of printed materials, music, films, photo materials, radio and television transmissions, games, and sports goods. In the West a pop culture was created that is based on mass entertainment and pleasure. Hollywood and CNN transmit cultural signals all over the world – they destroy the moral and ethical values of other societies, forcing them not only to consume but also to imitate western values. It is not difficult to imagine how such cultural intervention affects the young generations of the world.

The terrorist acts of September 11, 2001 forced the American leadership to introduce order into their cultural milieu. American radio stations were recommended to remove from their broadcasts about 150 titles of songs by popular performers in which words such as 'ruin', 'destruction', 'death', 'murder', 'gang', etc., were used too often. The Beatles, Pink Floyd, *Paul McCartney,* and *Elton John* were put on this list. As a result of prohibitive measures, 9 Hollywood studios produced only 16 films instead 68 by the end of 2001. Films portraying mainly terrorists, explosions, destruction of cities, and doomsday were cancelled.

6. A reaction responding to cultural globalization, as to the policy of the West as a whole, was an ideology of Islamism that was spreading in all the Muslim countries. This is not a religious dogma or stream but a sort of protective measure taken by the Islamic civilization against Westernization.

Islamism expressed its disappointment over both Russian socialism and Western liberalism. Decolonization did not change much the social and economic situation in Muslim countries. An attempt to improve the situation by way of industrialization and modernization has failed. It led to a rise in poverty, corruption and unemployment. In Egypt 22 % of the population have no work, in Algeria 30 %, in Turkey 15 %. Such forms of poverty as the exploitation of child labour and child prostitution are spreading widely. Up to now most of the population has been illiterate. In Pakistan 80 % of population are illiterate, in Afghanistan 85 %. What kind of democracy and social progress can one speak of in these countries?

Islamism seeks to work out its own way of development based on Islamic values, traditions, and history. Today 40 Muslim countries are represented in the UN. They can form a huge political and economic force. They can also play a positive part in the historical development of mankind.

Although we may recognize that the political, social, and economic content of Islamism's protest may be well founded, we may none the less face another danger that can lead to global conflict – the conflict of civilizations. The ideologists of Islamism call for the eradication of all values and norms alien to Islam; some of them call for an attack to strike "Western imperialism". Perhaps it is these calls that inspire Islamic terrorists in Algeria, Palestine fighters in Israel, Pakistani terrorists in Kashmir, and others creating conditions for the al-Qaida organization. The events of September 11, 2001 in New York confirmed a gloomy truth that intolerance, violence, and terrorism are tied together by a single logic and represent a huge danger in the modern world. The world public accused Muslim extremism in the person of *Osama Bin Laden* of these dreadful events. The USA began to bombard Afghanistan, where thousands of civilians died. It might have been worse.

Intolerance is a perpetual attribute in human life, and violence is its tool. The heart of the matter is that mankind will learn to constrain intolerance within reasonable limits and will not allow it to use violence. The life of the world community becomes more and more complex. Now more than 180 countries are members of the UN and conflicts are quite possible between them. And they must not be allowed to exceed peaceful and civilized limits.

Questions and Interventions

KHODR   It is very difficult to distinguish between just a massacre in history – and they have always been because people are wicked – and an ideology behind it. Hence we are facing either concrete facts and state that this is violence, or we are also facing a certain ideology behind these facts. Behind the massacre of the Mu'tazilīs, was there also an ideology or was this just a policy? I do not think that Islamism is a new phenomenon. Thus it was *Ibn Taymiyya* (died 1328), who constructed the ideology which led to the killing of the Alawites in Syria. Thus the Shī'īs in South-Lebanon were killed by the Ottoman Turks not without an ideology. And the massacre of the Druzes in Lebanon was not carried out by the Shī'īs without a relevant ideology. There is a book which comes to the conclusion that, as long as we are not completely purified ideologically of *Ibn Taymiyya,* there will again and again be new Ibn Taymiyyas. In the 13th century, when the Sunnī Mamlūks conquered the areas, in Kasrawān, in one of the regions of Lebanon, why was all the Shī'ī population displaced?

Yet, all this is part of our history. We do not believe that the Catholic Church was the only Church that did terrible things. Whether they are called Catholics, Orthodox, Sunnīs or Shī'īs, there have always been Churches that massacred each other throughout history – in the name of God or without the name of God.

a dogmatic position needed that condemns killing once and for all

In all monotheistic religions we must have a dogma, a dogmatic position that condemns killing once and for all. In Israel *Rabbi Meir Kahane* says, "You must kill all the Palestinians!" He does not say, "You must declare war" or something similar, but, "You must kill all the Palestinians". He also put this down in writing and signed it. Why is that? This is a tragic question. Why does killing belong mainly to the history of the monotheistic religions? Why is it that in comparison the so-called pagans have behaved utterly differently?

which arguments justify killing?

KHOURY   That in the history of all religions violence and mutual killing happened again and again is a fact which we have to confront. We cannot take our eyes off this fact, saying that this is how it used to be in former times. However, if we confront our history, we also have to ask what lessons we learn from it. Above all, how do we deal with the arguments of former generations

which did such things? Having a dogma, as Msgr. Khodr demands, which forbids killing once and for all, is one thing. Yet, what goes beyond this condemnation of violence and to me seems indispensable is how we deal with the arguments which, at that time as well as today, again and again have to serve as justification for killing.

what is behind the concept 'Islamism'?

SCHABESTARI   I would like Professor Khidoyatov to explain what he meant with the term 'Islamism' and how he understood the relation between Islamism and tolerance.

ideologies – and how they develop

KHIDOYATOV   The development of an ideology is always a very long and complicated process. It starts at the prejudices, results in intolerance, gradually settles down to become a doctrine, finally becomes a dogma which then, on its part, evolves into a programme of action, which puts forward something new. However, by being intolerant towards this new ideology, one will not be able to correct it.

Today we have in mind the international events that bore the decisive imprint of certain ideologies, of those new ideas that led to a programme of action. If we have to react to these international events, we also have to react to the ideologies behind them.

'Islamism' or protest against 'Westernization'

In the case of Islamism, at issue is a phenomenon of intolerance against the westernization of a country. In many countries of Asia it was the American movies that spoiled young people; the new generation wants to live like the Americans. In order to protect the Muslims – and not only them – against this, Islamism wants to set up a barrier. There is of course much that is good in Western civilization, which is worth treating seriously. In some spheres however, in the West culture became business. And the business it became spoiled Western culture. Thus, Islamism has now set out to take the first steps towards a programme and towards an ideology.

From the perspective of the present, it is hard to predict the further development. Of course the direction will not be that of the Hisbollah or of a *Meir Kahane*, whereby the former does not go back indeed to the tradition of the Shī'a, but to that of Zoroastrianism, and the latter to the ideology of *King David* – hence in this conflict the issue is the antagonism of very old ideologies. Perhaps we will develop a new programme and a new ideology, perhaps it will be up to us to develop something new in the history of culture. As the case may be, it will be a cultural development, which will be purified of a number of new ugly examples in Western civilization. In the Islamic countries, it would for instance never be permitted to show pornography. Yet, in all these efforts towards purification, we have to be very careful and develop something that is suitable to keep very alien, ideological influences away from the young generation in the Islamic countries.

Islamic religion – Islamic ideology?

GABRIEL   For *Marx* the term 'ideology' had a negative connotation. For him it was identical with an false conscience. Professor Khidoyatov, where do you see the difference between Islamic religion and Islamic ideology?

Islam – religion and one of the great civilizations of humanity

KHIDOYATOV   It is the first time that I hear an 'Islamic ideology' being spoken of. It was however the negative side of the Marxist ideology to be intolerant towards other ideas. The Soviet state and the Communist Party respectively could never permit themselves to be for instance penetrated by the Bourgeois ideology. Hence *Lenin* taught that there must only be one, namely the Communist ideology. They therefore set up obstacles against the intrusion of other ideologies.

Islamism and Islam: in the case of Islam at issue certainly is not only a religion. It is at the same time one of the great civilizations of humanity. Why did five million Americans now turn Muslim? It is hard to explain this fact. However, in my eyes Islam is a very noble way of life, last not least as to the respect of women. Sometimes Islam is reproached for lacking in balance in its relation to women. However, the Qur'ān is inspired with a deep respect for women. Thus, the tradition says that "Paradise lies at the feet of the mothers". Therefore there are many who do not see Islam as an ideology, but as a very high culture. The first university in Europe was established in Andalusia and many people from Europe came to study at this Islamic university in Cartagena in Spain. For this reason I would not think of Islam as an ideology, but as a civilization, a new civilization. Perhaps in future a programme will develop from it for further cultural development, and it may be that some problems that are today topical on the political level will tomorrow lead to the cultural development of the Islamic countries.

Violence as a Disaster for Humanity.
Ethical and Theological Deliberations from a Christian Perspective

Ingeborg Gabriel

One of the most difficult and unfathomable questions, which have always occupied humanity, is asking what is the origin and what are the mechanisms of violence. Why do human beings suppress, torment and kill their kind? Where do those destructive impulses come from, which turn man into a wolf for man? What is the origin of those forces, which time and again endanger peaceful living together, be it between individuals, in the family, in society, within the state, and above all between states and nations? Violence shakes the foundations of human existence not only physically, but also morally. This applies to the private as well as to the political domain. At all times it confronts us with the necessity to take position in a morally differentiated manner.

In Europe the wars in the Balkans and the civil wars in the former Soviet Union struck people with horror. After all, there had been the hope that after the breakdown of communism in Eastern Europe, peaceful times would finally arrive. Cold War, nuclear intimidation, and the armaments race were to be replaced by a peaceful development of the world. However, these hopes were rapidly ruined. The old demons reappeared in new garments. The wars of the 1990s were fought in the name of national ideologies, which knew how to make use also of religion. Their target was to expel those whose nationality was different, there were the so-called 'ethnical cleansings', even the extinction of the opponent. Extreme forms of intolerance, denying the right of life to the others, led to any kind of cruelty and violence imaginable. Through the events of September 11, the destructive power of intolerance and violence revealed its horrors on a global level. When in June 2001 we decided in the Steering Committee on this year's topic, we did not know how sadly topical it would be half a year later. Yet, this also means: what responsibility falls to us in this respect.

For, other than in former times, we know today that we belong to one humanity. Globalization is not an economic process only. It is the awareness that people are linked with one another beyond the barriers of race, religion, and nationality. This however requires mutual recognition as well

as searching for forms of peacefully living together. It is the task of the monotheistic religions, in this respect to play the role of forerunners. Particularly because in the past – and unfortunately also today – the name of God has (repeatedly) been abused in order to justify violence, the time has come to glorify his name in this way.

My deliberations will comprise three points: the sources or causes of violence, the ethical evaluation of violence, and finally: how to deal with the dilemma of violence from a Christian perspective.

1. The twofold source of violence: human person and social conditions

It is interesting to find that the great religions and the modern philosophies and therewith also the modern view of the world give different answers to the question focusing on the causes of human violence and by that also on the way to overcome or to reduce them. The religious traditions proceed from the fact that the origin of violence lies in the human heart itself. They start out from the individual, his attitude of mind and his actions. The Pastoral Constitution of Vatican II *"Gaudium et spes"* formulates this as follows: "The truth is that the imbalances under which the modern world labors are linked with that more basic imbalance rooted in the heart of man." (Art. 10). Accordingly, violence and destructivity are outward manifestations of disorder within man. Their most important forms are greed, wanting to have more, in principle rejecting the other, thus intolerance, revengefullness, distrust, and envy. Fighting against these negative attitudes of mind directed against one's fellow men/women is the task set for every believer. No religion allows or promotes these dispositions. They contradict their own moral claims, have destructive effects on people's living together, but also on the moral and therewith equally on the religious integrity of the individual. In the monotheistic religions, to attitudes that promote life a special dignity is attributed, because their origin lies in God himself. For the revelation of God as the holy one, the just one, and the merciful one obliges the believers to conduct themselves in this very way towards their human fellows. Thereby revelation of God and ethical responsibility of the individual believer are inseparably related to one another. This high moral claim has frequently been minimized by restricting its scope to the followers of one's own religion respectively. Accordingly, within the domain of one's own religion, injustice, violence, and intolerance were forbidden.

Concerning outsiders however, there were other laws. Yet – this is the question of today – does this restriction take seriously the universality of God's salvific will, which is true for all human beings?

Yet, the approach that starts out with the individual and his responsibility has its limits. Looking at the political reality reveals that violence, hate, and injustice almost necessarily generate further violence, further hate and injustice. Thus the individual is caught in a network of violence. He applies counter-violence, in order to save his own life or that of others. Exactly here European political philosophy gains its point: the social and political conditions under which people live promote violence and therefore have to be adjusted for peace. It is the task of philosophers, jurisprudential theorists, and politicians to establish social systems and to enforce their regulations, which stop violence of people against people. In comparison, the moral quality of the individual ranks second, one can even do without it. Thus *Kant* once formulated pointedly that the establishment of a good state would even be possible for a nation of devils, if they only had enough intelligence to set the right regulations. By means of laws the citizens are to be obliged and if necessary forced to live together peacefully. Something similar is to be applied to the relations between states. In his work "Vom ewigen Frieden" [On everlasting peace], *Kant* demands that nations should unite in a league of nations, whose rules should be based on equality and mutual recognition. Its goal would be to overcome war. As is generally known, this idea was first taken up in the 20th century by the League of Nations and later by the United Nations and politically realized, however without so far reaching the original goal.

A second cause of violence in the social domain is the lack of justice in the distribution of chances in life and material goods. This applies to the order within the state as well as between states. The violent revolutions of the 19th and 20th centuries advanced with the hope of establishing just social conditions and in this way peace. Historical experience however showed that the governments established on the basis of these revolutions could not fulfill their promise.

For the present situation two conclusions may be drawn from this: in an interdependent, globalized world more legal structures and regulations than ever are needed, which help to prevent wars as well as to realize also more social justice among nations. Hence it follows that the representatives of the religions have to actively work to ensure that the existing structures are strengthened and improved.

Yet, in addition to this, the traditional understanding of the religions has to be taken seriously again, that violence, intolerance, and injustice have their origin in the heart of individual human beings. In this perspective, great importance is due to education, above all also to religious education. It has to be its aim to reduce distrust and envy between nations and religions, to promote mutual respect and educate people to be just.[1]

Thereby one has to proceed from the fact that the establishment of just structures that promote peace is mutually conditioned and an education of the individual that teaches him to give "the good eye" (M. Walzer) to the citizens of other nations and to the followers of other religions and to acknowledge them in their being different.

2. Violence as a dilemma:
"For what could be done against violence without violence?" (Cicero)

The German term 'Gewalt' contains two meanings. On the one hand it is etymologically related to 'Macht (walten)', for instance in the sense of 'Staatsgewalt', on the other hand it denotes any form of physical and/or psychical destruction and suppression. Other European languages differentiate more clearly between 'Gewalt' as 'Macht' (potestas, pouvoir, power) and 'Gewalt' as destruction (violentia, violence).

Yet power and violence are different from one another as well as linked. For every political power needs violence to enforce its claims effectively. The realistically resigned word of Cicero, the Roman philosopher and statesman, says exactly this: the human leaning towards violence can only be restrained by violence.

For this very reason Christian theology has maintained that the state originates in sin. Violence by the state (be it against offenders of the law or in the case of war) is also an evil. It is legitimized, when it is the minor evil. This perspective brings to the fore the fact that, like any other power, the power of the state is always in danger of becoming destructive to life. This applies to the domain within the state, inasfar as power monopoly and modern technical possibilities provide the state with the means of power, which former times did not know. The totalitarian regimes of the 20th century showed in a dreadful way to what extent the power of the state can degenerate and to what contempt of man and destructivity it can lead. The lawful state and human rights, also for minorities, are the answer to this threat of violence through the state.

Something similar however also applies to the interstate domain. The absurdity of a martial law (ius ad bellum), which was, particularly in the 17th century, considered to be the characteristic of state sovereignty, became apparent through the world wars of the 20th century. Already in antiquity there were ethical deliberations, under which conditions it was justified to wage wars: the so-called theory of the just war. After the experiences of World War II, modern international law, more concretely the statute of the United Nations, further restricted these reasons and limited them to a subsidiary right of defence in case the security system of the United Nations was unable to act.

However, the efforts to limit violence within the state as well as between states by law will always be endangered. The violent enforcement of one's own political claims, also in the name of religion, is also a reality nowadays. And this in domestic as well as foreign policy. In domestic policy wherever religious and other minorities are discriminated or even persecuted. In foreign policy where politics make use of national-ideological and religious motifs in order to enforce their claims of power. In addition, there is today, as a new threat, the fact that non-governmental groups, including sects, are an increasing potential of violence.

The history of humanity presents itself as a history of conquests, of subjection, of exploitation, and of intolerance. This is in itself horrifying. Yet, more horrifying is the fact that the religions themselves became sources of conflict, because they held the opinion that violence is justified for the sake of the one and only truth.

3. Biblical-theological approaches and their universal relevance

Origin and consequences of violence are one of the great themes running through the Bible like a red thread. At the beginning of Genesis there is the fall and the murder of Abel by his brother Cain. Breaking up with God and murdering one's brother are thus two sides of the same medal. In what follows, on many levels of the Old Testament, violence and war are accepted, even approved in a way that was a matter of course for the environment of that time, which is for us, however, most scandalous. Only when Israel had

---

[1] As in the communiqué of the first Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table, published in: A. Bsteh – T. Mahmood (eds.), Reading the Signs of the Time. Contemporary Challenges for Christians and Muslims (Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table; 1), Mödling 2003, p. 157.

lost its independence as a state, did the understanding develop that it is better to be the victim than to exert violence oneself. This is to be found for the first time with the *Prophet Isaiah* in the so-called songs of the servant of God. It is interesting that a similar thought comes across in the "Dialogues" of *Plato*. This is informative, since the dilemma, which violence prepares for man, led to similar answers, based however on different reasons. *Socrates,* as philosopher, also rejected justified retaliation, because it does not improve the perpetrator, but undermines the moral integrity of the avenger.[2]

In the biblical texts the right of revenge is transferred to God. The believer, however, should renounce violence and revenge and actively promote peace, even face to face with injustice suffered by him. This is the ethic of Jesus, as it is presented in the Sermon on the Mount (Mt 5–7) as the central text of the New Testament. *Paul* summarizes this position in the Letter to the Romans, when he writes, "… never avenge yourselves, but leave room for the wrath of God; for it is written, 'Vengeance is mine, I will repay, says the Lord.' No, 'if your enemies are hungry, feed them; if they are thirsty, give them something to drink; […].' Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good." (Rm 12:19–21). Revenge is yielded to God because – as the last sentence shows – even the enemy has to be respected and because whoever pays back evil with evil is always in danger of being drawn into the uncanny spiral of violence. Here it is obvious that the philosophical and the biblical position approach each other. The ultimate foundation for the obligation to accept all human beings – the opposite of which is represented by violence – lies in the all-embracing mercy of God himself who, as it is said, "causes his sun to rise on the good as well as on the bad, and sends down rain to fall on the upright and the wicked alike." (Mt 5:45).

It is distressing that one has to say that since Christianity became the religion of the state, i. e. since the 4th century, this message had been banned into the private domain, its fulfilment being restricted to individual groups of Christians, like monks and nuns. Only in the 20th century was the attempt made – and this above all also by non-Christians like *Gandhi* – to translate it politically into a theory of non-violent resistence. Two conclusions may be drawn from this:

Firstly: only the secularization of the state created that free space, within which it was possible to renounce violence altogether. Retrospectively this thereby proved to be the promotion of Christianity as a religion, by setting it free from the burden of representing positions of the state, which necessarily include violence.

Secondly: however, this must not be understood in the sense of a political abstinence, a privatization of the Christian religion. It needs rather the courage to take up a critical position, to demand the reduction of violence, to promote peace, tolerance and justice in every possible way.

4. A summary

The problem of violence presents itself at all times, even though it appears in different forms. Faith in a merciful God, who wills the life of his creatures, again and again challenges the believers anew, to testify this faith by a practice, which rejects violence in principle, helps to diminish potentials of violence and promotes peace. This applies particularly also to the secular world, for which religiously grounded violence is offensive and which obscures faith in God. I would like to end my lecture by quoting a theologian: "The authentic relation to the absolute as such is in no respect violent, rather the opposite: it gives rise to fearless courage towards realizing more humaneness in all domains of life."[3]

---

[2] *Plato,* Politeia (335b/c).

[3] *E. Schillebeeckx,* Menschen. Die Geschichte von Gott, Freiburg etc. 1990, p. 12.

Questions and Interventions

MARBOE "For what could be done against violence without violence?" This question, which was already posed by *Cicero*, was exposed in the lecture above all as a dilemma within the state. How can this theory also be applied to the international field? And: how does this stand in view of international terrorism and the problems discussed today?

GABRIEL When quoting *Cicero*, my intention was to show that there is a tension between the claim of the New Testament to renounce violence and the political necessity of making use of violence. The state cannot renounce violence. Yet it should make as little use of violence as possible. Since state authorities always tend towards using more violence than necessary, critical voices are needed. They should be above all the Churches and other religious communities. However, in order to be able to fulfill this task, they must not be too closely linked with the power of the state.

To deal with the question of the legitimate use of violence between states would need a lecture of its own. Therefore just the following brief remarks. The fundamental question is: which are the ethical and legal criteria for assessing when the use of military violence is justified? The traditional doctrine of just war gives three criteria for a legitimate war: it has to be declared by the authority responsible, there has to be a just reason for waging the war, and: its target has to be the re-establishment of a just peace. Later these criteria were in many ways differentiated and refined. The statute of the United Nations, which was ratified after the horrors of World War II and represents the established international law, takes a further step. In accordance with it wars are only legitimate to defend one's own territory. In view of the events above all in former Yugoslavia, there arose the question of the legitimacy of a military intervention from outside, if a state seriously violates the human rights of its citizens. I think there is such a right of humanitarian intervention, which however has to be structured in such a way that political abuse is excluded as far as possible.

MARBOE The theory of just war was developed in the field of constitutional and international law, today however it is considered to be outdated and surpassed. Should religion distance itself from it in order not to be involved in processes of political decisions, or are there for the religious domain criteria which are different from those which develop on the level of the state and within the framework of the United Nations? In other words, are the categories of international law about the prohibition of violence, self-defence, and humanitarian intervention in keeping with religious claims, or do the latter exist alongside them, or are they of a totally different kind?

GABRIEL It is the task of the Churches – I cannot speak about the religions – in the respective concrete situations to represent positions that reduce or prevent violence. What this means in the individual case essentially depends on the assessment of the political situation. This can lead to diverging opinions among Christians, as this was the case in the Kosovo-war and recently also in the Afghanistan-war. It is important however that there are moral authorities altogether, which speak of the legitimacy of a war independent of power interests.

POTZ In the discussion about religious freedom during Vatican II, the opponents of this concept held the opinion that tolerance had to suffice. Under certain circumstances however, it does not seem to be enough ·for the state and for the Church, if they are only tolerant.

As to what has been said last about the topic of humanitarian intervention, it is, as I see it, utterly unacceptable if a state, in accordance with its monopoly of power, says: they are my citizens and what I do with them is nobody else's business. With the concept of humanitarian intervention we have made a determining step beyond the power monopoly of the state. To me this seems to be the only way possible today. The only question is how one can promote this as quickly as possible and in a way that is acceptable for all.

Finally about the role of the Churches: when in the wake of globalization not only economic affairs are globalized, when thereby also a global civil society comes into being, then the position of the Churches, as well as that of the religious communities in general, is exactly there. Thus, they must not leave globalization to the others, but have to make contributions of their own, so that the former does indeed lead to a global civil society. Here they are challenged to participate and actively make their contributions.

S. MAHMOOD   I have been grateful for Dr. Gabriel's valuable lecture, in particular for hearing that above all we have to see violence in the context of the individual human being and not simply put the blame on religion or on the state. Hence violence is something that is inherent in human nature. On the Christian side this is probably explained with the meaning of the concept of original sin, whilst in Islam we do not acknowledge this concept. However, for us as well, there remains the fact that the human being is by nature violent and that here the root causes of all the problems have to be sought.

violence is built into human nature

At the same time I have lately been wondering how actually to define violence. Is it a quality of actions themselves or is it a result of defining the situation, as we say today in sociology. This means that in one situation killing a human being is a criminal act; in another situation it could be considered as an act rendering justice.

how to define violence?

GABRIEL   Quite generally, I would say that acts are violent whenever they destroy or seriously damage the life of people. Yet, violent acts can also be justified. This is shown by the example of self-defence. I exert violence against another person because he/she attacks me. If I hurt the attacker, perhaps kill him, then this is violence, this violence however is legitimate. This leads to the question of ethical criteria which establish, under which conditions and to what extent etc. private (or political) violence is legitimate.

SCHABESTARI   It is inherent in the nature of religious texts that they can be interpreted in the sense of 'for violence' or 'against violence'. There is no hermeneutical principle which makes it possible to interpret a text in one or the other sense only. Yet, if it is inherent in the nature of the texts that they can be interpreted in this twofold way, why do we again and again go back to these texts? Should these texts not be transcendentalized in the sense I already tried to expose here? [cf. above pp. 95–97]. For, if the texts remain on the horizon of today and we are trying, as this has been done many times today, to interpret them in a sense directed against violence, for the above-mentioned reason this will perhaps not amount to much.

religious texts remain ambiguous

GABRIEL   Religious texts are the basis of the Christian (and the Islamic) self-understanding as religions of the Book. Therefore it does not seem possible to me to disregard them, yet it seems possible to interpret them in a way that does not promote violence. Christian writ-

transcending certain texts through their symbolic interpretation

ers have always done this with the texts of the Old Testament. Belligerent concepts were interpreted symbolically. The fighting should not be directed against outward enemies, they symbolize one's own sins and passions etc., which should be fought against.

Yet, such a hermeneutical interpretation for its part presupposes a hermeneutical pre-understanding. This lies – as I see it – in the concept of God itself. I can ask: how can the God whom we as Christians (or Muslims) worship, approve of violence against humans? If I take it seriously that the God of the revelation is a God who wills the life of man and not his death, then certain assertions about violence will necessarily appear conditioned by prevailing circumstances. For former generations wars were as normal as epidemics. We try possibly to avoid wars and epidemics. In the Old Testament orders to eradicate whole peoples are put in the mouth of God. Are they really orders of God or do they correspond to an understanding of God and the world conditioned by prevailing circumstances, which is outdated today? This also applies to other statements, which call for or approve of violent actions. In my view, the key for the hermeneutical interpretation therefore has to be the concept of God itself.

hermeneutical pre-understanding is inherent in the concept of God

KHIDOYATOV   In my view we have to avoid categorical definitions in our attempt to define the relation of violence and tolerance more precisely. In certain situations one would also have to speak of a positive role of violence and intolerance in history. Can we for instance be tolerant against fascism, national socialism, colonialism or imperialism? In the case of the violence exercised by *Bismarck* to make one single state out of 39 different small states, would one not in a similar way also have to speak of a positive role of violence? Even though he had to wage three wars against the opponents of unification and for ten years had to exercise violence and intolerance in order to reach the target of unification? As I see it, the historical processes nevertheless do not allow us to define violence and intolerance in a categorical sense.

to define violence and intolerance not in a categorical sense

GABRIEL   I think that in the context of what has just been said an important differentiation would have to be made: the differentiation between the error and the person who errs. This means that, facing the error, the position one takes has to be clearly a rejection. Of course I would not like linguistically

differentiating between error and the one who errs

to link the 'No' spoken with great emphasis against these wrong positions with the term 'intolerant' – if one thinks for instance of the great ideologies of the past century. In principle rejecting the former would not mean that one is intolerant towards this or that person who holds this position.

by exercising violence also to reach something positive?
What Professor Khidoyatov as a historian, and perhaps a little also as a dialectical historian, said in the second part of his intervention, namely that through the exercise of violence something positive can also come about, seems to me to be a justification that may imply a certain danger, which one can at best mention retrospectively. Yet, one may raise the question under which conditions a revolution is justified. In fact, in the course of the past centuries there were very different kinds of revolutions and from them one could gain very different criteria to answer this question. I would however insist on the fact that it is not violence that brings forth the good, but that this violence has to be justifiable by the circumstances and the targets.

is man structurally violent?
OTT   Both lectures, that of Professor Khidoyatov and that of Professor Gabriel opened up a wide range of alternatives. In practice, this is the impression one has, a history of mankind without violence is not possible. Do we therefore have to be fatalistic and say: it is a fact that structurally – through sin – man is violent? How much do we have to bear, how much can we avert? When we for instance think of the globalized form of violence today: do we support a worldwide war against terrorism? or would this make the burden even greater and the situation worse? Yet, what really are the alternatives that we have now?

violence must not be glorified
After the lecture of Professor Khidoyatov, the glorification of violence is a further point I would like to take up. Here I am thinking above all of the pertinent presentations of these topics in the mass media, which according to Khidoyatov are closely linked with the Western 'export of culture'. Violence must not be glorified and through the continuous presentation of violent processes in the media – which often wants to present itself as information only – we must not let ourselves be made insensitive and indifferent. There is a way of presenting this topic, which motivates some to imitate it – the terrible events in American schools may come to mind here – which makes others forget about reflecting altogether on what in fact means doing violence to another. Even though this was a partial aspect of the lecture only, I would like at this point expressly to go back to it again.

bearing in mind the contents of tolerance and its limits
KHOURY   So far we have not said enough about the contents of tolerance and thus about its limits. When does tolerance actually become counter-productive or even dangerous for the living together of people? Although sofar many valuable statements have been made about this topic, I feel ill at ease in this respect for, if one does not sufficiently bear in mind the contents of tolerance and with them also its limits, one is not sufficiently mindful of the complexity of the problem. After all, in the context of 'tolerance' not only are personal questions concerning the relations between individuals at issue, but in a determining sense also political and juridical questions, which have a great impact on the living together of people.

not overlooking the positive aspects of globalization
MARBOE   In our discussions the cultural side of globalization has up to now almost always been mentioned only negatively. Here however the danger that arises is overlooking the many positive aspects which are also linked with this process of our world growing one. To pick out one aspect only, I am thinking here of the exchange in the field of music, that for instance it has become so easily possible today to invite to Austria an orchestra from an Asian country and vice versa. Inherent in this cultural exchange on the different levels of science, of the fine arts, but also of the religious values, there is a wonderful possibility of encounter and mutual fructification in our times.
In my opinion one should similarly in the field of the media also see the present developments not too negatively. In other words, in view of the many sides of the global exchange of information which are also positive, one must not keep on emphasizing the necessity of a 'protective wall' against 'Westernization'. The medias' communication of whatever happens today on all levels of our world is a new, important aspect of the freedom of information, which has to be protected and defended in future.

the law and education to overcome violence
GABRIEL   Do we have to be fatalistic in view of a history of mankind full of violence? Obviously, confronted with human violence, we are dealing with a structural anthropological problem. Yet, people have never given up contesting violence. The two main instruments were and are: the law and education in order to minimize violence. The law limits violence by establishing the rules for living together and to punish their violation. In the international field the problem is that the body of

rules is weak and partly ineffective. Education, above all also self-education, minimizes violence by demanding that the answer to violence should as far as possible not be violence or if so, then by using as little violence as possible.

to define the contents of tolerance is essential

The question taken up by Professor Khoury concerning the contents of tolerance and with it also its limits would certainly once more have to be made a subject of careful deliberations. In my lecture I did not deal with the topic tolerance, but with violence. Yet, for instance as to the phenomenon of the National Socialist system mentioned in the preceding discussion, I mentioned in th is context the differentiation made by Vatican II between error and the one who errs. One certainly has to reflect how far this can go. I think, however, that this would be another topic.

cultural globalization has also its positive sides

The question about cultural globalization was rather addressed to Professor Khidoyatov, but I would also say that in this respect one should not only see the certainly existing negative sides, but also the positive possibilities opened up therewith, which are surely also partly used in the interest of a very positive worldwide exchange on the cultural level.

Communiqué

The main objective of the founding of the Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table (VICIRoTa) in 2000 was to bring together concerned individuals from the Christian and Islamic faith traditions, to address issues that confront humanity as major challenges on the way to its future. In pursuit of this objective, the Second Plenary Meeting of the Round Table was held in Vienna, from 21 to 24 February 2002, on "Intolerance and Violence. Manifestations - Reasons - Approaches" – a theme which was selected out of various other topics as identified in June 2001 by the VICIRoTa Steering Committee.

After three days of deliberations on the subject of intolerance and violence, the Round Table agreed on the following:

1. Manifestations

We are deeply concerned about increasing intolerance and use of mental, verbal, and physical violence world-wide to serve religious causes, political agenda, and economic objectives.

2. Reasons

We have identified, *inter alia,* the following as the main reasons behind the phenomena of intolerance and violence:
- abuse of historical factors and collective memories of religion-based conflicts;
- selective and manipulative interpretation of religious texts and tenets to serve particular interests;
- the breakdown of social structures and cultural patterns threatening identity;
- inequity and disparity in the distribution of resources leading to hunger and poverty;
- application of double standards in the assessment of situations of violence, creating anger and frustration;
- the feeling of despair and hopelessness, resulting from oppression and other causes, that afflicts a vast portion of humanity.

3. Approaches and measures

- We appeal to all governments to implement principles of equality and equal protection of laws, to combat inequalities and injustice at national and international levels, to do everything in their power in order to achieve peaceful resolutions of conflicts, and to actively promote a culture of conflict prevention;
- we urge all those concerned with education, especially in religious learning, to enhance understanding and inculcate norms and values of mutual respect and religious tolerance;
- we appeal to all those who work in the field of history to present a balanced and peace-furthering view of our histories, free of lopsided guilt attributions;
- we call upon the scholars and followers of all religions to share and disseminate the texts and teachings containing messages of peace, tolerance, and mutual respect;
- we call upon the media to realise and fulfil their increased responsibility in the present global context and promote understanding and mutual respect through effective means.

Participants to the Round Table
All data referring to the time of the Round Table (2002)

Professor Dr. Andreas BSTEH
Director of the Institute for Theology of Religions St. Gabriel, Chairman
Mödling, Austria

Professor MMag. Dr. Ingeborg GABRIEL
Institut für Ethik und Sozialwissenschaften
der Katholisch-Theologischen Fakultät der Universität Wien
Wien, Österreich

Ms. Nasira IQBAL, LL. M.
Judge High Court & Supreme Court of Pakistan,
Professor at Pakistan Law College
Lahore, Pakistan
[unforeseen, prevented from participating personally]

Professor Dr. Goga Abrarovic KHIDOYATOV
The University of World Economy and Diplomacy, Tashkent
Taschkent, Usbekistan

H. E. Metropolitan Georges KHODR
Archbishop,
Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of Byblos and Botrys (Mount Lebanon)
Broumana, Libanon

Professor em. Dr. Adel Theodor KHOURY
Katholisch-Theologische Fakultät der Universität Münster /
Religionstheologisches Institut St. Gabriel
Münster, Deutschland

Prof. Dr. Saleha S. MAHMOOD
Director and Chief Editor, Institute of Muslim Minority Affairs
Jeddah, Saudi Arabien

Professor Dr. Tahir MAHMOOD
Professor and Ex-Dean, Faculty of Law, University of Delhi
Former Chairman, National Commission for Minorities, India,
and Member National Human Rights Commission of India
New Delhi, Indien

Univ.-Ass. Dr. Irmgard MARBOE
Institut für Völkerrecht und Internationale Beziehungen
der Universität Wien
Wien, Österreich

Dr. Ursula MIHÇIYAZGAN
Lehrbeauftragte, Institut für Soziologie der Universität Hamburg
Hamburg, Deutschland

Professor em. Dr. Heinrich OTT
Theologische Fakultät der Universität Basel
Basel, Schweiz

Professor Dr. Richard POTZ
Institut für Recht und Religion,
Rechtswissenschaftliche Fakultät der Universität Wien
Wien, Österreich

Professor Dr. Mohammad Modjtahed SCHABESTARI
Professor für islamische Theologie und Religionswissenschaft,
Universität Tehran;
Great Islamic Encyclopaedia Center
Tehran, Iran

NAME INDEX

In the index below CAPITAL LETTERS set off the names of the *participants to the Round Table*. To these names the pages in the book are added in *italics* if contributions to the Round Table were made (paper and contributions to the discussions), in standard print if the name, as well as all others included in the index, is given for another reason.

SOURCE INDEX

References to the Qur'ān and the Bible are printed in *italics*. In the respective line below, the corresponding pages of the book are given in <standard print>.

Qur'ān

Quotations are generally made according to: The Glorious Kur'an. Translation and Commentary by *Abdallah Yousuf Ali,* Beirut ³1938.

Bible

Exodus (= Ex)
20:17
83

Leviticus (= Lv)
19:18
12

Deuteronomy (= Dt)
6:5
12

Matthew (= Mt)
5–7
150

5:28
83

5:45
150

Luke (= Lk)
1:52
85

10:25–37
107

10:27
12

John (= Jn)
1:12
97 f.

6
85

11:50
84

Romans (= Rm)
12:19–21
150

1 Corinthians (= 1 Cor)
1:25
97

11:2 ff.
54

Galatians (= Gal)
3:28
17 f. 21

Philippians (= Phil)
2:5–11
97

Documents of the Church

Vatican II (1962–1965)

„Dignitatis humanae":
Declaration on Religious
Freedom
15. 82. 153

„Gaudium et spes":
Pastoral Constitution on
the Church in the Modern
World
Art. 10
146

Paul VI, *„Populorum pro-
gressio"* (Encyclical 1967)
20

John Paul II,
Homily of the Holy Father
on the Day of Pardon,
12 March 2000
89. 136

Terms and dicta from the Islamic tradition

ahl al-kitāb
110. 113

asbāb an-nuzūl
54

dār al-'ahd
43. 54

dār al-amn
52

dār al-ḥarb
42. 52 f.

dār al-islām
42. 52–54

dār aṣ-ṣulḥ
43. 53 f.

dhimmī
43

djihād
39–41. 50 f. 55. 69. 89 f.
128 f.

al-djihād al-akbar
90

djihādis
128

djizya
42

fidā'ī
137

fiqh
50

ḥuqūq al-'ibād
113

'Id al-aḍḥā
33

lā ridda fī l-islām
54 f.

kāfir (kāfirūn, pl.)
82. 113

madrasa (madāris, pl.)
28–30

maqāṣid ash-sharī'a
54

muslimūn li-llāh
110

mushrik (mushrikūn, pl.)
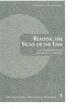41. 89 f. 113

naṣṣ
54

al-qadīr
97

al-qahhār
97

*as-salāmu 'alaykum
wa-raḥmatu llāhi wa-
barakātuhū*
71

sharī'a
49 f. 82. 88

tarbiya
37

ta'līm
37

umma
44. 58

Reading the Signs of the Time.
Contemporary Challenges for Christians and Muslims

1st Vienna International Christian-Islamic Round Table,
October 19 to 23, 2000

Mödling 2003, 168 pp.
ISBN 3-85264-600-6

Mödling 2003, 187 pp.
ISBN 3-85264-599-9

Jounieh 2003, 266 pp.

Topics and authors:

The Contemporary Value Crisis as a Threat to Human Life
(M. Modjtahed Schabestari, Tehran)

Justice as a Main Challenge for the 21st Century *(Ingeborg Gabriel, Vienna)*

Education as a Key to Overcome Poverty *(Saleha S. Mahmood, Jeddah)*

The Problem of Violence – and No Solution? *(Georges Khodr, Broumana)*

Right to Religion: Law and Practice Dichotomy *(Tahir Mahmood, New Delhi)*

Humaneness Has to Grow by Direct Human Encounters *(Heinrich Ott, Basel)*

Problems Facing Humanity in the Third Millennium *(Nasira Iqbal, Lahore)*

Justice and Peace: the Decisive Questions for the Future of Humanity
(Irmgard Marboe, Vienna)

Conflict Resolution and Reconciliation. As a Preliminary Stage towards a Positive
Peace and a Healthful Togetherness *(Adel Th. Khoury, Münster/St. Gabriel)*

On the Necessity to Re-define what is Human *(Ursula Mihçiyazgan, Hamburg)*

Year of Dialogue among Civilizations *(Goga A. Khidoyatov, Tashkent)*

Politics of Open Space as a Challenge to States and Religions
(Richard Potz, Vienna)

With the discussions rendered by *Andreas Bsteh*