Abrahamic Forum
International Council of Christians and Jews
&
Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung
Außenstelle Sarajevo

VISIONS
OF A JUST SOCIETY

FEARS, HOPES, AND CHANCES
FOR LIVING TOGETHER IN A GLOBALIZED WORLD
FROM JEWISH, CHRISTIAN, AND MUSLIM
PERSPECTIVES

International Consultation
Sarajevo (BIH), 13 – 16 November 2005

Sarajevo 2006

The present book records papers presented to an unprecedented International Consultation which was held in Sarajevo (Bosnia-Hercegovina) in November 2005. At the invitation of the Abrahamic Forum of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) and the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung – Außenstelle Sarajevo, about forty leading experts and representatives of Jewish, Christian, and Muslim communities from eleven European and Middle Eastern countries came together to discuss "Visions of a Just Society – Fears, Hopes, and Chances for Living together in a Globalized World from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives Focusing on South Eastern Europe".

The purpose of this volume, however, is not only to document the consultation that took place months ago. Recording the papers and, thus, illustrating the many facets of the topic and reflecting the variety of approaches to it, the volume also invites the reader to pick up the thread and continue the discussion on building a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, multi-cultural society that rightly may be called a just society, a society that allows, and guarantees, peaceful living together of all its members irrespective of their cultural or ethnic background, language, faith and political orientation.

Excellencies,
Distinguished Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen,
Dear Friends,

Dobrodošli. On behalf of the Abrahamic Forum of the International Council of Christians and Jews (ICCJ) I have the honour and pleasure to welcome you here in the Art Gallery of Bosnia and Herzegovina. Above all, I would like to thank you for kindly having accepted our invitation to be with us tonight and express my appreciation of your presence at the opening session of this – unprecedented – international consultation.

These days, in many parts of the world, we are witnessing outbreaks of violence, social unrest and turmoil, acts of terrorism, wars started to change existing socio-political orders and impose new ones, and wars waged to stop wars; and time and again, we experience that it is religion that plays a particular role in this context; we see that it is religion that is used or rather abused quite often as a weapon, and we learn that it is religion, religious beliefs or convictions, religious traditions of whatever origin that are exploited to serve as pretexts as well as means to justify use of power, to legitimize acts of violence against others or simply to commit crimes.

In light of these developments in national and international relations during the last one and a half decades it becomes more and more clear, that it is of paramount importance that people of religion, be they Jews, Christians, Muslims, men and women alike, raise their voices against instrumentalization of their respective religions and suggest that the potential for a peaceful living together, which is based on mutual understanding and respect, is implicit especially in those cultures which derive from the three monotheistic world religions. It is not only time, but our duty to prove that respect for the otherness of the other, for other cultural and religious identities and political orientations alike, and shared responsibility for God's creation and its preservation are not alien to our respective religious traditions, but deeply rooted in them. To uncover this potential is of particular significance in the context of the aforementioned developments as well as of the much debated globalization, a concept which should not be interpreted as establishing dominance of one part of the world over all others, and therefore, should not be allowed to lead to new dichotomy in the world, but it should be understood as a common task and effort to build together our global village, its civilization, and the societies that shape it, as well as their social structures.

To discuss matters related to this common task and effort and develop new ideas which may be regarded as elements or basic concepts of a society, that

rightly deserves to be called a just society, what means: a community which is pluralistic in terms of religious traditions and cultures as well as of political orientations, we, the Abrahamic Forum of the International Council of Christians and Jews and the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation – Sarajevo Branch, jointly invited you to take part in this international, inter-religious, and inter-cultural, consultation on „Visions of a Just Society – Fears, Hopes, and Chances for Living together in a Globalized World from Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Perspectives Focusing on South Eastern Europe ".

And we are delighted that you accepted our invitation and expressed readiness to contribute your personal as well as professional expertise and experience to our deliberations. Once again, I most cordially welcome you all.

A particular warm word of welcome allow me to extend to the high representatives of the religious communities and churches:

His Eminence Cardinal Puljić (Roman Catholic Church in BIH),
His Excellency Bishop Dr Vasiljević (Orthodox Church in BIH),
The President of the Jewish Community in Sarajevo, Mr Finci, and
The Reis-ul-ulema Dr Cerić, Grand Mufti of the Muslim Community in BIH, who will introduce us into the subject of our consultation.

We are grateful to you for joining us tonight. Your presence is a great honour for all of us.

To convene and discuss matters which I mentioned before, there seems to be no better place than Sarajevo, since Sarajevo stands for both a city where people of different ethnic, religions, and cultural backgrounds came together, and a city where these people became utterly divided.

I am sure, you all are aware of the meaning Sarajevo once had as a city famous for its multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural character, as a city, that more than once in its history served as a haven for people in need to find a refuge for themselves. Not without reason, particularly in Jewish tradition, Sarajevo became a symbol named "Jerusalem of Bosnia", since according to the words of Psalm 122 "Jerusalem is built as a city where people come together". Not long ago, however, Sarajevo, the city where people came together, experienced the opposite and turned into a city where people no longer lived together, but fought against each other. And the question is often raised: Will Sarajevo find her way back and again become a multi-ethnic, multi-religious, and multi-cultural city where people come and live together?

By bringing together people of different religious background and commitment from more than ten countries of Europe and the Middle East, we do hope that our consultation will contribute a little bit to re-make Sarajevo the symbol it was, the "Jerusalem", about which the prophet Isaiah said: It is a place from which "a light shines to the nations".

Thank you.

Prof. Dr Stefan Schreiner
Abrahamic Forum of the ICCJ

Eminence,
Excellencies,
Honorable Guests,
Ladies and Gentlemen

A warm welcome to the international consultation: "Visions of a Just Society: Fears, Hopes, and Chances for Living together in a Globalized World".

My name is Christina Catherine Krause, I am the country representative of Konrad-Adenauer Foundation in Sarajevo.

Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation recently celebrated its 50th anniversary. We celebrated 50 years of worldwide activities to strengthen democracies and support the understanding among countries and people. Since 1997 we have an office in Sarajevo and only a few years ago, my predecessor, Dr. Caroline Hornstein-Tomic, started the work in the field of inter-religious- intercultural dialogue for the Foundation.

When I came to Bosnia and Herzegovina, four months ago, I was asked to pay special attention to this inter-religious and intercultural dialogue: To protect, foster and support the valuable discussions of the past and to offer a platform for exchange in the future.

Two partners came in very handy: the Inter-religious Council, our main partner in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and the Abrahamic Forum of the ICCJ which is our partner in this consultation.

This project combines three dimensions: the country, the regional and the international dimension. It brings together Moslems, Jews and Christians. This consultation unites people – men and women, religious dignitaries and theologians – from all the world. The positive responses we received in Bosnia and Herzegovina, while planning this consultation were immense. Many of you contributed greatly – with practical advice and philosophical wisdom – and I hope this teamwork will continue.

This conference is intended to bring the focus to Bosnia and Herzegovina, to compare the situation here with other states, to find similarities in the religions, to improve the understanding among them and to enhance and create networks. Please, support us in ensuring that this consultation is not a one-time effort but an impulse-giving beginning. Make it a lasting success!

Today, Europe looks to Bosnia and Herzegovina. The countries of the European Union see Bosnia and Herzegovina as chance for a unique model of *convivencia* – the living together of persons with different religious and cultural backgrounds. This *convivencia* existed in the past and has to become full reality again! Not just for the sake of Bosnia and Herzegovina but for Europe!

The German government – through the foreign ministry and the ministry of the interior – has made this consultation possible by providing financial resources and supporting the vision of this gathering. Therefore, I am delighted to thank Ambassador von Kittlitz und Ottendorf dearly for this support and give the word to him.

Dr Christina Catherine Krause
Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation
– Office Sarajevo

Eminence,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to have been asked to open this colloquium. I must confess I am intrigued by the subject "Visions of a Just Society", even more so as it deals with conflict and coexistence among religions. I am most intrigued by the fact that this is a conference first and foremost about Bosnia-Herzegovina.

Now, ten years after Dayton, when the conflict ended, or was ended, and when the country is looking for new bearings and foundations, as do we, the international community, we know that the future - peace, truth and hopefully reconciliation - need to be built on an understanding of the past that people can agree on.

Looking, as I do time and again, for a clue to conflict and enduring tension in this part of the world, I have been reading in Robert Kaplan's *Balkan Ghosts*, which was written mostly before the wars of the 90s. Kaplan is deeply impressed by Rebecca West's *Black Lamb and Grey Falcon*, from which he quotes, and so do I:

"There is a lot of emotion loose about the Balkans which has lost ist legitimate employment now that the Turks have been expelled."

This was written in the Thirties, before war was brought to Yugoslavia, mostly, I must add, by Germany. Emotions are still loose in Bosnia-Hercegovina, and they are making a sober approach to solutions for the country's many problems more difficult, even today.

Nowhere in Europe and never since the War of Thirty Years ended more than 350 years ago, has religion been the cause of so much and bitter conflict as in the Balkans. We still try to figure out why it was so devastating, and we are aware that many people still live in fear that the potential for fresh conflict is still among us.

I must resist the temptation of straying into your agenda. But what makes Kaplan such interesting and rather unsettling reading is how he sees religion and ethnicity inseparably entwined here, by a long history but also by contemporary political interest.

Ethnicity and the concept of territory are equally entwined. As a result, religion and territory are linked in an equation that elsewhere in Europe ended some 200 years ago. I think the issue of why religion here is still finding it so difficult to deal with the individual rather than the ethnic group is a key question. Whose interest does it serve to cling to such a perception?

Once again, the Konrad-Adenauer-Foundation has taken on a controversial and challenging subject, and a very topical one. I do hope that this colloquium will end up as something more than an interesting but largely academic exercise.

This is, as usual with this foundation, ladies' work.

So: my best wishes, and thank you.

H. E. Arne Freiherr von Kittlitz und Ottendorf
German Ambassador to BIH

Eminences,
Excellencies,
Ladies and Gentlemen,

On behalf of His Eminence Metropolitan Dabrobosanski Mr. Nikolaj, and on my own behalf, I thank you for the opportunity to address and greet this honourable Assembly, the colloquium of the Abrahamic Forum and the Adenauer Foundation, which is significant not only for Bosnia-Hercegovina, but for the wider region of South-Eastern Europe as well. I view this invitation as a sign of seeking for a genuine spirit of tolerance in Bosnia-Hercegovina, as a very encouraging sign of hope for the future of peace in a *just and free society founded on truth*. With its religious colouring, the colloquium clearly indicates the fact that in a modern society, no religion can neither act nor speak isolated from the rest. That is how their contribution to the religious, cultural, and inter-national co-operation on the path towards European integrations is irreplaceable.

The Church, which, by its very nature, presents a community of love, certainly goes to all extent in order to establish an atmosphere of, not only good multi-ethnic and multi-confessional relations and tolerance, but much more than that, to establish a relationship of mutual respect and love towards near ones. This is where the readiness of the Orthodox Church to assist in the preserving and further building of good inter-religious and relationships between nationalities

in South-Eastern Europe stems from. The respect for human rights and religious freedoms is one of the foundations of European solidarity and cooperation. Today is a test of the credibility of the proclaimed readiness in Bosnia-Hercegovina.

Vision – doesn't this concept refer us to the future! Does it not anticipate a better and a more just reality than our present one? Precisely so, referred to one another in a joint hope for a better future, we should mutually share this vision. That is the only way to overcome the bad and painful memories from the past – of which, unfortunately, there lack no people on this territory, or anyone in the wider region.

With a hope for a complete success in the work of this assembly, and with a feeling of honour, I greet all of you.

Episkop Humski Dr Maksim Vasiljević
Orthodox Church in BIH

VISIONS OF A JUST SOCIETY

Reis-ul-ulema Dr. Mustafa Cerić
Grand Mufti of Bosnia

I. Hope, Love and Justice

Inasmuch as, in a general sense, one may say that *hope* is one of the main themes of Judaism and that *love* is one of the main themes in Christianity, one may also say that one of the main themes in Islam is *justice* (*'adl*). Namely, most Muslim scholars agree that the mission of the prophethood of Muhammad s.a.w. had two aims: a) the revival of Abraham's monotheism (*tawhid*) and b) the establishment of Moses' law (*shari'ah*). In other words, the Meccan period of the prophethood of Muhammad s.a.w. was dedicated to the revival of the truth (*la ilahe illallah*), which is in fact the first principle of the Ten Commandments of the Old Testament, while the Medina period was dedicated to the establishment of a just society – the adoption of the famous Medina Constitution. Therefore, there are two main themes in the essence of the mission of Islam: *Truth* and *Justice*. Today we are speaking of justice as the latter of the two main themes of the entire sense of Islam.

II. The Qur'an on Justice

The Qur'an is explicit in the demand for man to be just: *And when you speak, be just, even if it should be to a kinsman* (VI:153). *And fill up the measure when you measure, and with the balance; that is better and fairer in the issue* (XVII:37). *O, David, We have appointed thee a caliph on earth so as to judge among men with justice, and follow not caprice, lest it lead thee astray from the path of God* (XXXVIII:25).

The English translation of the Arabic word *'adl* is justice, while the active adjective *'adil* is translated as just. However, etymologically the word *'adlun* carries the following meaning: "to place something in its rightful (natural) place". The opposite of *'adl* is *zulm* or *zulum*: "to place something in its wrongful (unnatural) place". The Qur'an offers synonyms for the concept of *'adl* – justice, such as: *qist, qasd, istiqāma, wasat, nasīb, hissa, mizān,* and others; it also offers synonyms for the concept of *zulm* – injustice, such as: *tugyān* (tyranny), *inhiraf* (deviation), etc.

III. Theodicy and Homodicy

That which is in Christianity the perennial issue of the nature of 'Isa s.a.w. (Jesus), in Islam it revolves around the nature of God's names and attributes. God has ninety-nine names, one of which is *al-'Ādil* – the Just. It is in fact this name that gave way for a lively discussion on God's justice or theodicy among Muslim theologians and philosophers. Much spiritual and intellectual energy has

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been devoted to proving that God is just not only when there is good, but also when evil appears in the world. All theologians agree in this point – Jewish, Christian and Muslim – God is just in either case. God is good in every aspect. No believer disputes this point – God is always truly Just and eternally Good.

However, the debatable point is the assumption of theologians and philosophers that they may judge God's justice and allow themselves to set the measures of God's behaviour. As God's essence is beyond the reach of the human mind, therefore man's judgment of God, i.e. God's justice is beyond the reach of man's reason. Man is not responsible for God's justice, as it is not in his jurisdiction, but he is responsible for man's justice, because therein lies his ability. Therefore, it is much more useful for man to dedicate himself to the issue of man's justice.

In other words, man should invest his spiritual and intellectual energy in search for the answer to the question of how and in what way man can and should be just and good. Man is, therefore, allowed to justly judge man, if he himself is just and knows the character and reason for man's behaviour in good and evil. Of course, behind man's law, there is God's law, which man may not judge, but must adapt his law to God's, not originating from a book but from the heart.

The importance of human justice may be seen in the saying of Imam Ali: "The State may endure atheism, but cannot survive with injustice."

IV. Theocracy and Nomocracy

Since God does not rule directly over the believers (with *Shari'ah*), the enthronement of a Ruler to represent God on Earth, to whom God's authority is delegated, has become necessary to put the Law into practice and to rule with Justice (caliphs). Religion, therefore, assumes a society and a state based on the principle of God's law and justice. This form of government, often called theocracy, is not based on the principle that authority is exercised directly by God but by a representative who derives his authority not directly from God but from God's Law.[1] Therefore the rule of law is the principle that sustains a just society and state, which means that we cannot speak of a theocracy, but a form of nomocracy. Therefore, theoretically the Islamic State may be categorized under the concept of nomocracy, not theocracy. Today this is usually referred to as "the rule of law or the rule of just law."

V. Integration or Segregation

It is well known that twentieth century physics discovered Heisenberg's *Uncertainty Principle*. It confirms that it is difficult to truly know and measure everything about an object, whether it is an electron or a rabbit, because the very act of observing it changes its behaviour. Therefore, other than humans, everything else can only be known through isolation.

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[1] Majid Khadduri, *The Islamic Conception of Justice*, Baltimore / London: Johns Hopkins University Press 1984, p. 4.

We humans are completely different. We can only be known, and we can only know ourselves through interaction with the world around us. In contrast to electrons and rabbits, we come to know ourselves through the research, experiment, and modification of our relationship toward the world we live in.

Isolation is torture and destroys all awareness of self. Only relationships provide the identity that derives as a consequence of meeting people. In addition, loyalty to the society in which we live in determines our individual and collective identity. A community or society is not only a necessary choice, but also relationships are that which define us, through which we come to know ourselves and through which the world comes to know us; because people complement or live their identity through relations with the world around them. Those who spend their time in isolation or segregation thinking they will come to know themselves in that way are mistaken. Quite the opposite, man comes to know himself through contact and interaction with that which surrounds him, alive or dead.

The principle that establishes human relations in a society according to which humankind is recognized or a human civilization is elevated is what we call *justice*, because as John Rawls states: "*Justice is the first virtue of social institutions, as truth is of systems of thought. A theory however elegant and economical must be rejected or revised if it is untrue; likewise laws and institutions no matter how efficient and well-arranged must be reformed or abolished if they are unjust.*"[1]

VI. Longing for a Just State

Three historic figures, although in many aspects different, are united in the conviction that justice is the basic principle for a just society, i.e. a just state. As much as they were philosophers of different faiths in different periods, Plato (427-347 B.C.), Augustine (354-430 C.E.) and al-Farabi (870-950 C.E.), they are just as much philosophers with similar views on the organization of the society and the state. Plato believed in the power of reason, Augustine believed in God's omnipotence, and al-Farabi believed in the gift of God.

Justice – according to Plato – is necessarily a political virtue because it has to be widely practiced for the just to survive. The just have an interest in the spread of justice, in making others in the image of themselves. Wise men may want others to be wise, but a selfish man who was also wise, might well want to restrict wisdom to himself and a few friends for the advantages it brings. A just man in an unjust society would always be at risk unless he could persuade others to share his justice (…). Justice is the most difficult of all the virtues because justice is practiced by the whole man. In Plato's view of it, justice *is* the whole man.[2]

What is true for each man within himself is also true of the relations between men. The man who is himself properly self-controlled is fit to command others

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[1] John Rawls, *A Theory of Justice*, Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press 1971, p. 3.

[2] J.S. McClelland, *A History of Western Political Thought*, London: Routledge 1996, p. 23.

unlike himself. (…) Plato sees a very close connection between instability of character and political instability. An unstable character is one where the naturally ruling part is not in control of themselves control public affairs. In both cases, an inherent instability will cause unhappiness sooner or later; much better to get things properly organized at the outset. The *Republic* is largely an attempt to show how just men can be produced and how advantageous it would be if they were to rule a *polis.[1]*

St. Augustine also did not forget in his famous book *The State of God[2]* to remind us of the importance of righteousness and justice. Here are some of his interesting thoughts: - Justice is – says St. Augustine – a virtue with the task of bestowing upon everyone that which belongs to them (XIX,4.4, 21.1). – Our justice is true because of the true purpose of good (XIX,27). – All that is just is irrefutable and good (XIX,3). – Where there is no true justice there can be no rights (XIX,21.1). – Justice is different in the inalterable truth, and different in the souls of the just (XI,29). – We call fortunate those who rule justly (V,24). – A state cannot endure, and cannot be governed without great justice (II,21.1). – Love for justice should prevail the lust for fame (V,14).

Next to Plato's *Republic* and Augustine's *State of God* (*De Civitate Dei*) we should also mention al-Farabi's *Perfect State* (*al-Medinah al-Fadilah*) and see how much energy was devoted in the history of human thought in order for man to understand the need for establishing communities or societies that, as al-Farabi teaches us, derives out of man's need to associate in order to achieve many things he cannot achieve on his own. Al-Farabi says that man truly needs people who can supply him with things that are necessary to him. All people are in that sense in the same position. Therefore, man cannot achieve perfection, for which he was naturally created (لاجله جُعلتْ له الفطرة الطبيعية), except through association in communities that work and supply each other with those things that they individually need, which they acquire with the help of each other, which is as a result a contribution of the whole society and in fact serves each individual for his survival and towards perfection which he strives for.

There are three kinds of perfect society, great, medium and small. The great one is the union of all the societies in the inhabitable world; the medium one the union of one nation in one part of the inhabitable world; the small one the union of the people of a city in the territory of any nation whatsoever.[3]

True to his vision of a perfect state or society al-Farabi did not neglect to say that a just society may be achieved with the help of a man that in himself has twelve natural qualities, of which we state the eleventh which says as follows: (a man who can establish a just society) should in his nature be inclined towards

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[1] Ibid., p. 25.

[2] Aurelije Augustin, *O državi Božijoj – De Civitate Dei*, Zagreb: Kršćanska sadašnjost 1996, sv. 3, pp. 622-623.

[3] Abu Nasr al-Farabi, *Al-Farabi on the Perfect State (Mabadi' Ārā' Ahl al-Madīna al-Fādila),* transl. with commentary Richard Walzer, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1985, p. 229.

justice and just people; he should hate oppression and injustice and those who practice it, ensuring themselves and others, in that way, what they are entitled to, encouraging people to work justly, expressing sympathy for those who are oppressed and to whom injustice was committed; he should support all that is beautiful, noble and just; he should not be indecisive, he should not be indulgent if he is asked to be just; but he should be careful if he is asked to be unjust or to do anything evil[1] – al-Farabi concludes.

VII. Utopia or Dystopia

In the measure in which Plato's *Republic* and Augustine's *State of God* (*De Civitate Dei*) and al-Farabi's *Perfect State* (*al-Medinah al-Fadilah*) are conceived in the sense of an *imaginary good place*, H.G. Wells' idea in his book *When the Sleeper Wakes* from 1899, is in the same measure conceived in the sense of an *imaginary bad place* for people's lives. Namely, if utopia means *nowhere* or *no-place*, then all talk of a "just society" from Plato to Thomas Moore of utopias is that where real people cannot be seen, but ideal shadows of imagined people who live *nowhere* and are *no-place*. However, if we give up on the utopia of ideal people who live *nowhere* and are *no-place* except in our imagination, we may become, as did Wells, obsessed with the dystopia 'swarms of black and brown, and dirty-white, and yellow people', who cannot keep up with the West's place of technological advance, 'will have to go'. Quite how his chilling imperative is to be implemented, he does not say. Genocide is the most extreme of utopian methods for eliminating non-utopian types. [2]

The greatest social experiment in human history – Soviet Communism – was itself understood by its founders to be a system that could not accommodate real people and must therefore eliminate them. The 'higher' phase of Communism that will eventually dawn on a grateful world presupposes, Lenin frankly admits, a species of human being quite different from the current model. 'The present ordinary run of people' will not be able to enter the Socialist paradise. They will have been eradicated or transformed. The attentions of an armed workers' militia will aid their transformation, Lenin predicts. But there must also be an inner, spiritual change. People must become unselfish, good-hearted workaholics, laboring with no hope of personal gain. Though Lenin – and Marx – ridiculed utopias, it is clear that this vision fits precisely (and, as events have proved, disastrously) into a utopian mould – concludes John Carey.[3]

VIII. The Bosnian Society between Utopia and Dystopia

We in Bosnia and Herzegovina have also survived this model of utopia with all the consequences of which the worst is our fear of having a vision of a just Bosnian society. Therefore, from an overdose of a Communist utopia that intended to erase religious and national identities, we have come to a diseased

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[1] Ibid., p. 249.

[2] John Carey, *The Faber Book of Utopias*, London: Faber and Faber 1999, p. xviii.

[3] Ibid., pp. xii & xiv

dystopia in which the religious and national identities are emphasized to the point of genocide.

The legitimate question for all of us in Bosnia and Herzegovina is therefore: what kind of a world do we live in – utopian or dystopian? Is our country a good or bad place for the lives of good or bad people? What is better – a utopia as a good place to live or dystopia as a bad place to live? Are we real people who want, know and can imagine Bosnia and Herzegovina as a just state and a just society? Or are we people who think only of the bad place and bad people?

Is it possible to imagine our country as a state and society with just laws and just people who love truth and justice? Is it possible to imagine our country having a just constitution and an efficient parliament? Is it possible to imagine our country without the starving and unemployed? Dare we imagine our country as a country where there will be no segregation in schools on the basis of faith, nationality and language? Dare we dream of a just Bosnian society in which there will be no corruption or bribes? Can we believe that the day will come when all citizens of Bosnia and Herzegovina will love their country and will be proud of her success? Can we imagine a day when our country will be independent of foreign tutors?

Yes, this is the time when utopia makes sense to us, because only in that way is there sense to believe that we shall one day have one president, one prime minister, a strong parliament and a just legislation that will be strong before the mighty and decisive, and before those deprived of their rights humble and available

MAN AND SOCIETY –
INDIVIDUAL AND COMMUNITY

Session I:

Created in God's Image
The Image of Man in Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Traditions

CREATED IN GOD'S IMAGE
THE IMAGE OF MAN IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Bishop Dr Maksim Vasiljević (BIH)

To talk about the image of man from the Christian point of view is a task beyond my powers, as well as the scope of one such presentation. Nevertheless, I will try to outline the basic context in which, within the Christian tradition, the discourse on *man created in God's image* is conducted. Afterwards, I would point out the ethical and legal implications of what it means to be the image of God. But to start with allow me a few introductory remarks.

Judaism, Christianity and Islam do not entirely coincide in entirety, but their creative and deeper encounter is useful, if not absolutely necessary to fulfil what their great spiritual values demand, and to live responsibly which they have vis-à-vis human beings. That this encounter today is necessary, as well as possible, is evidenced by the increasing central importance that the notion of *person* is gaining in anthropology and philosophy. And person– whether it be a man or God – is the fundamental biblical and theological concept, and is very narrowly linked to our topic. Man is created upon the image of a *Personal and Holy* (*qadoš*) and not an impersonal God. This is why the sinning against a human person is sinning against God himself.

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1. In the Christian tradition, any discourse on man (anthropology) unavoidably starts from theology, that is, from understanding and experiencing God as the Creator and the Source of man and world. According to the biblical story of the creation of man (*Adam*), recorded in the book of *Genesis* (1:26-27), man has been created from God "in His very image". Through the creation "in the image of God", man is called to exist in the way that God exists. That is the meaning of the biblical phrase "*to declare the praises of Him* who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light" (I Peter 2:9). All the patristic theologians developed an understanding of the image (icon, similitude, likeness) of God and man, locating it in the various aspects of the integral human being, especially in his / her personality. What exactly does it mean to be a being, a person? What does "person" represent in our existence? First of all, we should state that Christian theology starts with the perception of the unity of man,

experiencing him as an integral, complete, psycho-physical being realized within the limits of history, but not exhausted in it, and already *here* and *now* trying its final perfect condition, which will be completely realized in the *Eschaton* (the world to come). Belonging to the transcendental and immanent, man is a being that dramatically moves across the amplitude of these two existences, which is why Grigorije Bogoslov (4th century) calls him "an animal worshipped" (*zōon theoumenon*).[1]

3. Man is created in the image of a Triune God, the "living icon of a living God", who exists as Trinity of Persons (*una substantia, tres personae*). Therefore, the model or the prototype of the person – the genuine and perfect Person – who man has been invited to support, is the Personal God himself. If the characteristics of a Christian God are: freedom, love, unity, this would automatically mean that a man is a person only when in a communion of love and freedom and when, through himself, he manifests the characteristics of such a God. In the patristic anthropology, one thing seems certain: there is no way to understand the human person without calling upon his Divine Paragon.[2] He is, according to the *image of a personal God,* a created autocratic man, that is, a person-oriented existence that joins in the union with the person-oriented God. Therefore, the fact that the *meaning of existence* of God uncovers in our historical experience the existence of God as a unity of amorous inter-imbuing of the three person-like Hypostases, is crucial for the understanding of the human being and the human community.[3]

However, what does it exactly mean to *be a person*? According to the Christian patristic tradition, the person is not defined as a self-determining individual or a reflective subject, but as an identity that stems from the *relationship* with someone else. In line with this theology (the Areopagite, Maximus Confessor, etc.), the characteristic of God is his *exaltedness*. The Biblical God is not the "unmoved mover" of Aristotle that sets in motion everything, but remains himself unmoved by anything; on the contrary, He, like love or like "eros" - steps out, exits outside of Himself, and, through the movement of love, attains a relationship that allows someone or something else to exist, in freedom, as the *other*. In that lies the secret of Christ the Son of God.

In accordance with the Bible, God created man as free. How to understand this? Man's freedom emerges in two directions: a) towards God, and b) towards

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[1] Man's *nature* is the developed infrastructure of his biological existence (zôon), while his person-oriented existence is potentially "divine", according to the uncreated Archetype and exists tanks to the relationship with him. In the patristic thought, man *is* and genuinely *exists* – due to the freedoms that define him – only when he ecstatically overcomes the reality given to him and dynamically relates towards something Other than what he is.

[2] The correlation between triadology and anthropology is not exhausted in the area of theory, but it, in a decisive fashion, determines the mean or the practice of living.

[3] Personal theology and anthropology has, in our day, among the celebrated theologians, been particularly developed by H. Janaras, J. Ziziulas, A. Jevtić, and others.

the rest of creation. In the first instance, man has the possibility of saying yes or no to his Creator, to positively accept him, or to terminate any connection with Him. *He has the right to become God.* As far as creation is concerned, man is enabled to intervene in nature, either by accepting nature as something to be subjected to, or by rejecting it and attempting to artificially create his own world. He has the right to remain a creation.[1]

4. However, in case he wishes to follow his divine Paragon, man should realize himself as a person and not as an individual. However, how can this be achieved? How to reconcile the Community and the Person (the otherness) when they, according to the words of J. Ziziulas, also mutually exclude one another? Is it not an ancient truth that, by definition, the other is my enemy and the source of my "original sin", as is stated by the French philosopher Sartre[2]. Since, in the case of an individual, freedom is interpreted as the individual's ability to establish borders around him, and to not share his existence (because he is an *in-dividuum*) with others. Contrary to the individual, the person experiences his freedom as an ability to "step out", to overcome all boundaries, to enter into a union with others, and to, finally, confirm his existence *through someone else.* It is a paradox but true that without You, who confirms the existence of I, I has no meaning, it disappears, it ceases to exist. *One person equals no person at all.*

This, therefore, is where the biblical understanding of man created in God's image leads us to. To be a Person means to be the *other,* and to realize one's own otherness freely through relations that do not destroy, but confirm your otherness. Therefore, everything that destroys otherness, that is freedom not only to feel as the other, but also to be the other in the context of relations that you confirm freely, destroys or threatens to destroy the Person. Man is taught in Church to freely and in love accept the other as his near one (neighbour), as sacred, regardless of his physical characteristics and features, racial, gender, national, and social affiliation.

II

1. Allow me now to indicate the *ethical and legal* implications of the theology of Person. Each institution, government or authority certainly on condition that it appreciates what we call here the "God' image in man", must respect the following principles:

a) not to destroy, but to respect otherness as sacred, that is, the freedom to be other;

b) not to reduce the human being to a means of achieving a goal, even if it were the holiest goal of all, such as the welfare of humanity;

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[1] This is why in our time the task of theology is to remind of the truth of *person* and to preserve his identity. Its voice should remind of the necessity of being awake so that man would not fall to the level of animals, and, in other words, become a slave of nature: to not become an individual or a number.

[2] "Hell, those are the others" (*The Being and Nothingness*, 1949).

c) not to destroy the relationships through which the Person exists as a particular, unique, and different identity – including someone's relationships with nature, through which his particularity and uniqueness are determined.

All of these are significant considerations in today's time when the governments of countries (through monitoring and keeping records on all citizens, military engagement), as well as scientific teams (through molecular screening), and others are intent on various manipulations of the person. Nevertheless, all of us believe in law. *The law* (state, institutions) is obliged to respect and protect everyone, regardless of their characteristics, seeing that each man is a compound of relationships, and, thus, a unique person who cannot be duplicated.

2. The only serious implication of the theological understanding of the creation in God's image about which the Bible tells us relates to their role in the creation. The position of man in creation is *unifying,* and that is why his role is to be the *priest* of creation, seeing that he at its core. However, from this derives a very fundamental consequence: if man is at the centre of creation, then he through his free self-determination in a crucial way predetermines the final destiny of the world (Romans 8:21-22). It is not by accident that the cause of constant controversies in modern cosmology is the so-called anthropic principle, an idea that, in the final analysis, imposes the idea of the necessary correlation of the world with the human *reason.* The presence of man is decisive for the universe to be as it is. This leads us to the fundamental truth that man is responsible towards the world and that he will have to *render account* for his relationship with the world. Without his genuine relationship with creation the ecological catastrophe will very soon become an everyday reality.

3. We have already indicated that the respect for *otherness* results from the *holiness* of the human person. If the notion of *holiness* (*qadoš*) implies being separate, extraordinary, unique, then the holiness of human personality must be understood at its deepest perception. The idea of the *holiness* of the person is deeply founded in the biblical faith and, even more particularly in the Christian Church by whom God Himself is called upon and experienced as a *par excellence* personal and Holy Being. Seeing that the biblical God is the only foundation of *genuine* holiness, only He could say, "Be holy, because I am Holy " (Leviticus 11:44-45; I Peter 1:16). But seeing that man has been created "in the image" of the *All-mighty* God, this is how the belief of the Church that any sinning against the priesthood of the human person (regardless of the aim indicated as the excuse) simultaneously implies sinning against God himself.

This inevitably leads us to saying a few words regarding the topic of *Person and human rights.* Today's society is greatly imbued with individualism. There is talk in great lengths about "individual rights" and "individual freedom". Historically speaking, it is important to know that individual rights have been established in a period of political rise of the civil order as a pretext for the protection from the arbitrariness of the monarchist and churchlike authority in the West. However, that process has lead to an understanding as the "authority of self-determining", with which any interference of the state (and not only the state)

in a certain area of free existence and action of those that are ruled over is excluded or limited. Therefore, here we have an *individualistic* and not a personalistic view of law[1]. The dominating notion of individual rights in the generally accepted value system of the West implies a notion of person as an *individual*, as it has been developed in the West.[2]

However, the biblical idea of man as an absolute unique being and absolutely unrepeatable character searches for one society and culture of person, a society that will not be the sum of individuals that are self-determined and self-defined, but a set of relationships through which the absolute otherness of the person emerges. This is where the biblical idea of person leads us.[3] In this lies the thoroughgoing pre-orientation of the classical Greek concept that has been transmitted by Christianity. Although this ideal has not been completely attained in History, it is still worth every effort.

4. Finally, our topic is unavoidably linked to the dangers that, due to the galloping rhythm of development and technology and scientific interventions pose for the image of God in man. How to reconcile *genetic engineering* with that which represents the *image of God in man*. It is evident here that the challenges to the right of a person are posed not only to the Church, but to the states as well. The questions that are imposed are as follows, and they are of a theological and bioethical nature, touching upon the issue of restricting the rights of person:

a) In an epoch where genetic engineering can reproduce people identical in everything, or people that can be utilized as a source for organs to be used for transplantation and therapy of other people – what will remain of the person as a unique and unrepeatable identity?

b) If man were to become a *thing,* an object for sale and use, even for goals which, observed from the outside, are sacred, such as the battle against disease – what would remain of the priestliness of the person, the icon of God?

c) What is more crucial in the final analysis: the welfare of society or the loss of person? For one personalistic theology, disease and death present a smaller price to pay for a man in comparison to the deprivation or the loss of his *person.*

d) Does man have the right to end his own life with a suicide assisted by a doctor (*assisted suicide* or better described as euthanasia)?

The Christian tradition experiences a problem at the very moment when the uniqueness of concrete species, as an absolute and irreplaceable existence, be-

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[1] See the distinction we previously made in I,4 between the person and the individual.

[2] This topic has been particularly elaborated by J. Ziziulas (see "Law and Person in Orthodox Christian Theology" and the "Personality of Man and More Recent Scientific Developments"). Also see E. Ch. Brugger, "Human cloning and theology of the body", in: *Theology Digest* 51 (2004), pp. 243-247.

[3] In this community it does not exist individually for the whole, as it would be desired by Plato in the 10th book of his Laws.

gins to be terminated with the creation of identical copies.[1] Therefore, the danger arises precisely when we arrive at man. If cloning were to be applied to man, then the absolute, unique, exceptional, and unrepeatable existence of human person is automatically terminated. Church, Judaism, and Islam must underline that each person is unique, unrepeatable, and irreplaceable, but also free. In any case, this signifies: "Let us make man in our image, in our likeness" (Genesis 1:26). Man is not free when he is not irreplaceable.[2] As a copy, he becomes one among many; he becomes a number, a thing, and stops being a *person*. However, person, and not nature, presents the issue of the existential primate for man. As far as man is concerned, nature can suffer unlimited interventions to the extent that not only the species, but also the person is destroyed[3]. Personal uniqueness is, primarily, the right of man, while his physical characteristics take a secondary place.

Everything that we have said in this regard contributes to the right of person to become the measure of all things *par excellence* in our epoch. The church, religious communities, and the state, instead of worrying and causing disturbances for various reasons should at this crucial moment, speed up their cooperation in facing these problems. Religion should contribute to the awakening of conscience and with its theology inject into our culture the respect for the person as the icon of God. Science can give it light and justice it protection. Only in that manner will man be preserved as an icon of God.

Conclusion

Today, three leading religions are coming together at this place: Christianity, Judaism, and Islam. In an era of crisis of all institutions, religions have proven trustworthy only when they show their existential significance for man and the

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[1] The basic conclusion that we draw from studying the biblical narrative on the creation of the world is that the *diversity of species is obviously the will of God.* God simply did not wish for the world to be created, but he ordered one "day", "Let there be light, and there was light"; " "Let the land burst forth with every sort of grass and seed-bearing plant (…) of like kind"… (..) God made all sorts of wild animals, livestock, and small animals, each able to reproduce more of its own kind (…) and God saw that it was good" (…)" Let us make people in our image, to be like ourselves (…)" (see. Genesis 1:1-31).

[2] Personal identity is interpreted as an absolute, unique, and unrepeatable act of being.

[3] As has been observed by Jovan Zizulas ("The Personality of Man and the More Recent Scientific Developments"), the danger is not posed by cloning itself, but lies in the mentality that gives advantage to and sees the *determining criterion in the physical characteristics and features.* How to change the human mentality? Church is precisely the space within which we learn to equally love those who, as far as their physical traits are concerned, are not as we would wish them to be. The fact that Church accepts into his arms the existence of differences and disparities concerning physical traits logically leads to the *relativization* of physical characteristics. On the other hand, making the issue of physical traits a primary one, science leads us to a completely opposite direction, both in terms of an intervention for their correction, as well as in terms of creating their cloned copies.

world. The message of today's colloquium on the *visions of a just society* is that three religions feel the obligation to join in order to preserve the image of God in man – that is the person of man – from the danger that threaten it. In the final analysis, all of us are loyal guardians of the sacredness of the two realities: man's person and the creation of God.

The modest reminder of this common debt has been the goal of this lecture. I thank you for the honour you have shown me and the patience in listening to me.

CREATED IN THE IMAGE OF GOD.
THE IMAGE OF MAN IN CHRISTIAN TRADITION

Fra Miro Jelečević (BIH)

In order to analyze the given topic, it is necessary to move permanently through the space of two areas, which in modern science are separated from each other, but, as I believe, cannot be separated in the end. When speaking about man as a created being, one must start from theology, and we apply anthropology when we try to scientifically talk about what man is and what makes him man. In doing so, one must take into account the results of modern science, if for no other reason, then for our own pretensions to science. Thirdly, our task indivisibly approaches a wider framework in which we situate our topic, and that is the socio-cultural political context of Bosnia and Herzegovina. In my presentation, I will attempt to present what I consider important for the topic and the framework, what should not be overshadowed in the present situation, and what is often avoided, forgotten, or rejected.

Man Created in the Image of God: the Findings of Theological Anthropology

Although texts that analyze the topic of creation and createdness of man in the Image of God in the Bible are not too numerous, it should still be said that this teaching is one of the centre points of biblical anthropology.[1] Although, to be fair, we start here from the expression of biblical-Christian faith, we will still take into consideration the so-called other biblical account of the creation of man in which there is no talk about man as an image of God, but which bears some important elements for the Christian understanding of man.

However, it should be immediately said that both the original Jewish content, as well as its Christian acceptance, are mythical expressions. Therefore, the case

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[1]About this and some emphasis in the text that follows, cf. L. F. Ladaria, *Antropologia teologica*, Casale Monferrato 1995, pp. 146-165

in point is an attempt to linguistically and symbolically form one universal truth about man: man is different from other creatures; by his body he belongs to the earth, and by his soul (and spirit) to the sphere of the divine. All three Abrahamic religious traditions contain this oriental Semitic model. However, that common myth of the creation of man, which we come across in Abrahamic religions, must be subjected to a critical examination, that is in today's time it must not and cannot be interpreted literally. Otherwise, it may become destructive, as is the case with myths interpreted in a non-critical fashion with the aim of manipulation.

Man is made of earthly powder, of mud, in short, of earth (Genesis 2:7). He is "Adam» (earth, ground) and is part of created nature. With his material earthliness, he is connected to all other beings and indivisibly belongs to them. In this fashion, nature itself becomes earthly and not divine, but at the same time also confirmed as a *trace and an expression* of God's eminence. It is from there that man, as a delegate of God, also attains responsibility for nature, for the earth from which he is taken. Namely, where the thought about Creator is taken seriously any abuse of the being must also be seriously rejected.[1] And bearing in mind the problem of ecology and man's intentionally negligent relationship towards nature, that thought is more than present today. However, God bequeaths the breath of life to man: life is a gift given by God, and in that regard it cannot be freely disposed of. In that perspective, the decision on man's life, its taking or sustaining, belongs exclusively, and only, to God.

In the above-mentioned biblical story, the so-called Yahwistic account (Genesis 2:18-25), mention is also made – in some detail – of the creation of woman. The following is significant for this description: man is a creature of community. He is an individual being, but cannot exist alone; it is only with others that he can fully build his peculiarity. But others that would be his equals. Adam's naming of all animals as one of those abilities gifted to him does not satisfy man. If we are not to reflect, for the needs of justifying any historical socio-religious form, on the fact that man has been created before woman, then it is only in the creation of woman that we can observe what is crucial for a man and what makes him a man: it is neither work nor relationship with nature, not even relationship with God, but human company. Only with a woman does a man (and vice versa) find the answer to this search: generally, only in a personal relationship does a man find an answer to his quests.

Another, younger, although order-wise first biblical account of the creation (called Priests) seeks to place man in a structured world that God creates, and in that way also demythologizes it. The spatial time coordinates necessary for a man's life are established with this creation. The theological intention to sanctify the seventh day of the week with God's rest is also obvious in the account. Man is described as an image of God and akin to God (*tzelem* and *demut*, *imago*

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[1] Similarly – although from another perspective – the Second Vatican Council speaks in *Gaudium et spes* (The Constitution on the Church in the Modern World), 36 when it ascertains that the Creator's oblivion leads to the creatures' oblivion.

and *similitudo*). This biblical description of the creation has a critical strength considering the myths of the surrounding peoples: before all, man does not come out of struggle or desire for the commodity of gods, nor does the representative character relate only to kings and the chosen ones (this is also a typically oriental Semitic understanding, since the king is simply the son of divinity). Every man is the image of God. On the one hand, it relates to the complete man, and on the other, it stands up to the dualistic idea of a man: Entire man is the image of God, not just his soul. The complete outlook of the Jewish Bible does not allow the spiritual to be torn from the physical, but it leads to the conclusion that "man as a whole has been created as an image of God".[1]

Later Christian reflection on creation sees in Jesus Christ, God's eternal Son, a "means" by which all creation, except man, is made. For Christians, Christ is *the* perfect image of God, history and any being therefore are seen as created in that image. Hence, in terms of the Son and the Spirit, man is the child of God, and God is not only the Lord (Master), but also the Father. Concerning Jesus, Patristic theology makes a distinction between that fundamental divine fluid in man (imago) and the merciful possibility of growth that is directed towards Christ under the leadership of Holy Spirit. The unabatement of borders between God and man is significant for the Christian understanding of the relationship between God and man. However, another element is crucial for Christianity: God enters into human history in a human fashion and according to man's measure, without in the process ceasing to be the supreme God. Christianity lives on that paradox: God's embodiment in Jesus of Nazareth is not the abatement of the divine God, but precisely its confirmation.

There are different attempts to interpret what is concretely man's likeness to God. However, apart from man's capabilities that raise him even above angels, it seems that in that expression there is a need to observe man's relationship towards God and direction towards the world. Only a free being can enter into a relationship with God. Differently from all other (earthly) creatures, only man is God's immediate partner in dialogue. Only he is a being to whom the Creator speaks, hears him and responds to him. That relationship has been nuanced differently in Abrahamic traditions. The possibility for a relationship of love with God is certainly significant for Christianity: that love is reciprocal and goes both from God to the creature, as well as vice versa. The possibility of such a relationship distinguishes man as a unique, untouchable, and special creature. Made in the image of God, man created by God – as already mentioned – is God's representative, delegate on earth. In that sense, God is encountered wherever man is encountered. However, man's regency certainly does not imply freedom to exploit creatures, but rather a special place of responsibility for the other, a task for which man is invited and appointed.[2]

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[1] F. Courth, *Christian Anthropology*, Đakovo 1998, p. 176.

[2] The above-mentioned work of F. Courth, pp. 175-187, can be compared for this entire portion.

Man Created in the Image of God:
the Practical Contextual Application of Man's Creation

The context of this lecture and our gathering is a society that is increasingly drawing towards division as a structure and an only mean of existence (I. Lovrenović). We find ourselves in a situation when what is theoretically proclaimed as a great and beautiful concept is negated and completely rejected in practice. Perhaps we have reached the point where every Bosnian religious community is confronted with the question of honesty and credibility: How can that common fact of faith that every man, and I repeat, every man, is God's creature and his image be really practically accepted? What implications can this have for the Jewish, Christian, or Muslim relationship with regard to people who belong to other faith communities? Can a fundamental, truly fundamental concept of faith, such as creation, be viewed and interpreted from the perspective of one faith only? Dare we believe that the beginning to this world has, nevertheless, been given by *one* God, one on whom we, in our diversity, can and may call upon?

I have said that one of the fundamental problems in Bosnia-Herzegovina today is the others. It appears that we do not know what to do with the others, with our fellow beings (neighbours) in terms of space and time. In this country, the other has become a symbol of threat, a danger that is approaching, or is permanently crouching right here besides us. Imperilment is our everyday vocabulary. I believe it is not necessary to particularly stress how great the responsibility of religions and religious people for that condition is. Rather it seems necessary to ask: Can the other, and I am paraphrasing Levinas's words, with his face really become an encounter with God? Can the face of the other teach us that hands which guarantee individuality, integrity, and holiness, have created this face, too? Or will we rather continue to envelop the universal truth into a myth in order to secure an arsenal against others and those who are different? Is it not possible that the other shares a privileged position of responsibility and growth with each of us, be it individually or of society as a whole? Or will we sadly continue to harbour mistrust, suspicion, avoidance, and hostility? Can we honestly say that the other man, regardless of his religious affiliation, is a person before whom we should stand in awe and modesty?

Interestingly it would appear that our religious affiliations limit us more in our relationship, a genuine, humane relationship towards others, than free us for encounter and engagement when others are concerned. In saying this, I do not mean that the alternative is a denial of concrete religious forms, but rather that they need to be critically assessed. We need not fear that the divine reality would fail us if some form of our behaviour, that negates that reality in man, were to be questioned. In this country, freedom as God's immense gift to every man as His creature has still not attained a value to be jealously guarded as something sacred. Bosnian society, imbued with religious element up to its tiniest pore, must also respond to the question of freedom of man as a creature of God, freedom that can stretch so far as to negate itself. Man's dignity, as a creature desired by God, at least from the Christian perspective, stands and falls

on the issue of freedom, which is also the assumption of obedience towards God.

In theological reflection, the issue of our religious demand for absoluteness must be examined. The question remains how to reconcile a demand underlining each of our traditions with what already proposed to be fundamental and larger than each of our different religious forms. How do we, by accepting others precisely on the basis of God's creation, arrive at respecting of difference of others? How despite own feeling of superiority, can we create a common space with others? How can we seek out the others precisely when we are not in need of them?

As the last problematic point, although not unrelated to the problem of man as a God's creation and His image, I would also mention the relationship towards the environment. Bosnia and Herzegovina is among those countries where this question is barely even considered. If as we stated man has been taken from earth then he must care for the earth. Any destruction of the earth, nature and environment is not only a destruction of our own capacities but also a profound disrespect of God's creation.

Perhaps we could give several theologically practical responses to these questions that arise from an insight into the common faith in creation and uniqueness of man as God's creature:

1. Unless we want our society to implode, we have to seriously accept the other as God's creature.

2. We have to refuse every mythization and instrumentalization of the expression of faith; man as God's creature invariably surpasses existing socio-religious frames.

3. We have to build a society in which everyone is free in his/her expression and action, since that freedom has been given to him as a gift from God.

4. It is necessary to affirm that God creates man and that this truth of faith is set before us as a practical obligation primarily in regard to the relationship with other people.

5. It is imperative to create an atmosphere in our society and communities so that will enable us to regard the other as an equal, as well as our responsibility.

6. Only if we attempt to build a society of respect for what we hold in common, yet as God's, we can also build a just society, a society of special concern for others, a society ready to open itself up for some new, better, more humane and more divine forms.

7. God's creation is both a gift and an obligation to man: therefore, we cannot delay our engagement in preface of increasingly stronger and careless destruction of creatures to which – according to biblical tradition – man is related.

Only if this society finds the strength not to fill its frames with impenetrable walls, only if this society is to be one in which every man can feel protected as a creature of God, only if we build bridges instead of gaps between our differences and our traditions, then our homeland will become a country with a vision. Thank you.

Session II:

Divine Commandments:
Common Ethical Values and Moral Obligations of Man

DIVINE COMMANDMENTS:
COMMON ETHICAL VALUES AND
MORAL OBLIGATIONS OF MAN

Dr Vilmos Fischl (H)

The title of this International Consultation is: "Visions of a Just Society." First of all the main question is, whether we talk about a "just society". Is there a society in the world, of which it can be said that it is really just? Can it be said in the West or in the Middle East, that there is a "just society"? I don't think so. All societies are struggling with a lot of problems which are bound together because of our globalized world. In the globalized world there are no distances. A disaster or infringement of lawful rights in one part of the world can be viewed within a short time in another part of the world. Jews, Christians and Muslims live together in this globalized world. The main question is whether these three religions can live together or not?

The title of this presentation is: "Divine Commandments: Common Ethical Values and Moral Obligations of Man". If we compare the three religions and traditions (Muslim, Jew and Christian) an interesting picture emerges. There are common views and moral rules in these religions, but of course there are special ethical values in which our opinion differs. I will talk about this later.

Divine commandments in Christian and in Jewish theology are the Ten Commandments. In the Torah of course there are more Divine injunctions regulating life. These injunctions form the ethical values and moral obligations of man. Nowadays the important question is, how we can live a better life without violence or let us be realistic how we can live with less violence.

In every country there exists the problem, of how we can pass inherited values from the past to the new generation. I'm not thinking only about new ethical codex or rules, I mean that the values which can be religious, humanitarian, behavioural or cultural values have influence only if they become incarnate in society and its members' action, behaviour, communication system, life-culture and mentality. In Europe there also exists the big question, what should be the leading value system of the European Union, the so-called "leading, presiding culture". There are religious approach efforts, which talk about and search for the values of the three "Abrahamic faith" Jewish, Christian and Muslim. Against these frequently in a deterrent mode stands the mass culture, drawing

the attention of the group to the "chosen stars", many of whom also have negative features.

The so-called American self-consciousness forming and nation-building mentality and patriotic, national religiosity "to form one people out of many" have been the instrument of the education and teaching. We can recall the so-called McGuffey Readers first published in six volumes between 1837 and 1857. The last edition was published in 1920. This six volume school book was for decades taught in 37 states and was published in 122 million copies. It was a "Civil Catechetic" which left an ineradicable imprint on the people. This book showed American history in romantic form. It stressed the importance of national heroes like George Washington, Benjamin Franklin. It discussed individual and social ethical propositions in biblical mentality, but without confessional character. The grandparents of the present generation studied these books and lived in this mentality until the end of the First World War. This kind of educational program was meant to integrate many cultures and people.

When speaking about Muslim, Christian, and Jewish religions, we must speak about the point of intersection of their teaching. Faith in God as the creator of all is inherent in all three religions. Ethically it demands respect for God. Likewise, love of God and reverence of God appear in the three religions. Man is conceived of as sinner, so there should be a salvation says Christian and Jewish tradition. Muslim tradition does not speak about salvation. Muslims speak about personal action to get to heaven. We all believe that our fate is in God's hand. God can control our everyday life.

Ethically there are some contradictions between Christians and Muslims, such as polygamy for example. There is also an interesting difference between Muslim, Christian, and Jewish so-called the love of the enemy. Christianity is the only religion where the love of the enemy is mentioned. I know that Christian history shows us a different way than the love of the enemy, but anyway it is in the Christian teaching which should be taken seriously.

However, the question must be asked in the 21st century, why are we Christians, Jews and Muslims in an ethical and moral crisis? It is small wonder, that religions, especially their fundamentalists, feel that their religion is endangered. From this follows, that their ethics and morality are also endangered. I see sometimes children fighting in primary schools. When asking one why you are fighting, the answer is, "because he hit back". The same logic lies behind religious, political, problems, and that is the reason why conflict management is so very difficult. Conflicts and prejudice can be inherited. So it can happen, that without any reason one people hates another people, one race hates another race, one religion hates another religion, one ideology hates another ideology, even one man hates another man. Therefore, education and teaching are important in restraining prejudices and conflicts.

Man's feeling of law is based on a sense of justice. It is a permanent and basic law independent of any kind of religion or social system, that when justice fails, peace comes to an end. So in any situation restoration of peace happens when

justice is restored. "An eye for an eye (and a tooth for a tooth)" – retaliation based judgement not only in Jewish, but in almost every society can be observed at the beginning of its development. They aimed at penalty to be exactly judged in proportion to wrong caused. In today's European practice the law punishes all common criminals by fine or imprisonment. Basic to the repeal of the death penalty was to do away with retaliatory laws and to punish every thing by imprisonment. In that case even the most brutal murder can be really satisfied, if for the taken life the penalty is "only" imprisonment.

Legitimate civil order not only has the possibility to punish crime, but is in duty bound to do so. The question arises whether worldly (secular) law can be or should be considered to be of equal value with the law of God. Among Jews and Muslims this is no problem: Divine law and secular law are considered to be the same, they form an inseparable unity. In today's European law and order the two are strictly separated. One of the consequences of this is, that today in the mind of Christian people in this separation God's law has been pushed to second place.

When Jesus laid down the rules of ethical behaviour to his disciples, it was no accident that he began with the Beatitudes. He offers another way of life for his followers. The retaliation principle changes when Jesus appeared. Until then if you are beaten you had to hit back, because there was no other alternative. The Old Testament is based on this retaliation principle too. This is where Jesus talks about the love of enemy. The ethics laid down by Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount is a personal ethics (individual ethics) and it is not at all social ethics, or particularly not basic to a social system. There is no society that could be based on the Sermon on the Mount. E. g. taking the rule "don't judge and you will not be judged" literally would imply to abolish the function of judges, uproot the administration of justice, and thus lead to chaos in the society. However, taking the rule seriously teaches the followers of Christ that they should do things which go beyond reciprocity. They are not only obliged to reciprocate and counter the bad, but are given the possibility to do good without expecting kindness in return.

By reciprocity man actually accepts the situation that who ever hits, is my enemy. By the very fact, that I hit back I'm going into a game where I accept that we consider each other enemies and in this way we behave according to the norm. On the other hand, if I don't hit back, I emphasize that I do not regard the other as an enemy, but treat him as my brother. Because to be on bad terms with someone (inimical relation), requires two facing opponents, enemies, and if I don't hit back than it makes no sense to the others to hit, because he is not hitting an enemy, but a fellow-man (friend). This situation should not be seen, as someone making every effort not to hit back. Jesus says, love your enemy and this is why you don't hit back. In the same manner as a child is not thinking of slapping a parent's face, because basically between them there is not an inimical relation, but love. Through denial, in a civil sense, justice may not be done, in fact, it may seem unjust. But without it there is no peace.

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"If someone forces you to go one mile, go with him two miles" (Matthew 5:41) I'm not going with him one mile because I am forced to, but because I consider him my friend, I love him, and so if for some reason it is good and necessary to go with him one mile, doubtlessly it will be much better for him, if I go with him two. In this case, there is no force nor he is controlling our relation, but I do. A forced relationship becomes a love relationship. Force will loose its meaning, as soon as I will accede to his plan voluntarily and gladly.

One may say that the Sermon on the Mount applies to those only that were present, when Jesus gave it, its validity and binding force, however, may be questioned by others, e. g. by me. It is left to us individually whether we want to follow him or not.

In the area of social relation, the ethics of Jesus cannot be applied literally. I cannot say to other people, if someone hits you, or want to kill you, then turn your other cheek, because you know that Jesus said it. In such a case the meaning of following Christ is that I have to protect other people even by risking my life. Here, however, we arrive at a new problem, i. e. the question of dilemmatic situations.

We call situations dilemmatic, when we do not have the choice between good and evil, but we have to take decisions between two evils. When there is no good solution, but only a bad one or worse, it is evident that in this situation of decision making we will come into conflict with Divine law. We face this problem in all three religions. How can we solve it? The logical answer is that we have to choose the lesser evil. But who decides which one is the lesser?

Dietrich Bonhoeffer gave the following comparison to elucidate this: If there is a person running amok on the street with a gun in his hand killing everyone who is on its way, and I have a gun, than I have to shoot that person. In this case this is the lesser evil. It is true that I became a killer but it is worse if the person running amok will kill other innocent people.

Finally, I am aware that in my presentation I could not give an answer to all sorts of ethical questions, but I hope that some shared questions were raised, so that we will have a good discussion in our session.

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THE TEN COMMANDMENTS:
RELIGIOUS SANCTION OF ETHICAL VALUES AND OBLIGATIONS

Msgr Prof. Dr Mato Zovkić (BIH)
Vrhobosanska Catholic Theology in Sarajevo

This round table is, to a certain extent, the continuation of the motion that has been intensified in Sarajevo with the translation of Karl-Josef Kuschel's books: *Abraham: Sign of Hope for Jews, Christians and Muslims. The Abraham Dispute. What separates Jews, Christians and Muslims – and what divides them* (Svjetlo riječi, Sarajevo 2000.) and *From Denial towards Competition of Religions. Lessing and the Challenge of Islam* (Svjetlo riječi, Sarajevo 2003). I have attended the presentation of the first Kuschel book and I look back with content upon that event at the Franciscan Theology Faculty in Sarajevo, in which one Muslim theologian from our city also participated. I also remember a lecture given by the author at a public event in our city to mark the publication of the translation of his second book.

Upon the invitation by Professor Dr. Stefan Schreiner, I have gladly agreed to present, for this round of our reflection, the religious sanction of ethical values and obligations in the spirit of the Ten Divine Commandments, according to the holy book of Jews and Christians. This is because as a Catholic theologian and librarian, I have researched and written about the "Ten Words", as the rabbis say (cf. Deuteronomy 4:13), and human rights.

Let me remind you that according to the Book of Exodus chapter 20, the Ten Commandments are related in the context of the exodus of the Children of Israel from Egypt, as well as their entering into a covenant and an alliance with God prior to their settling in the Holy Land where they would live in freedom and peace. The faith in God the Creator and Liberator is the foundation for the common respect of ethical values and fulfilling of obligations towards God and men. The second version of the Ten Commandments is found in Deuteronomy 5:6-21, with a slight expansion of the third and fourth commandment that reveals the experience of slavery in Babylon. That is why, in accordance with each of the Ten Commandments, the introductory formula should be that: "I am the Lord, your God, who has led you of the land of Egypt, out of the house of slavery" (Exodus 20:2; Deuteronomy 5:6). God, the Creator and Liberator, sets down the commandments so that the people could live in freedom and peace following religious provisions and respecting ethical values. Christian and Jewish interpretations of the Ten Commandments share the conviction that their core originates from Moses, who, around the year 1250 B.C., lead the Jewish people from Egypt, but the literary formulation had been developed between the year 722 B.C., when the Northern Kingdom of Israel, fell under Assyrian slavery, and the year 622 B.C., when the Davidian king Josiah in Judea conducted a religious and social reform.

Here, I recall the brief, catechistic version of the Ten Commandments (according to the Christian tradition):

1. I am the Lord your God: you shall not have other gods before me!
2. You shall not take the name of Lord your God in vain!
3. Remember the Sabbath (Lord's Day) to keep it holy!
4. Honour your father and your mother!
5. You shall not murder!
6. You shall not commit adultery!
7. You shall not steal!
8. You shall not bear false witness against your neighbour!
9. You shall not covet your neighbour's wife!
10. You shall not covet your neighbour's goods!

According to Christian tradition, the first three commandments bear on the relationship between man and God, whose supremacy is accepted by the believers, while the fourth to tenth commandments regulate man's obligations towards his / her fellow beings, from family members to neighbours, to older members of the society and state.

In the New Testament, Jesus, on various occasions, restates the Ten Commandments, as e.g. is the case in the Sermon on the Mount, in the so-called antitheses with which he interiorizes the moral provisions of the Old Testament (Matthew 5:17-48). Then, in the story about a rich man who sought instructions on what he must do to inherit eternal life (Luke 18:18-27), Jesus in response quotes some of God's commandments, in the following order: fifth, sixth, seventh, eighth and fourth. According to Mark's version, he also adds, "do not defraud" (Mark 10:19) and in Matthew's: "Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself" (Matthew 19:19). From this text, we understand that according to Jesus these Old Testament ethical norms, as included in the Decalogue, are obligatory for his believers as well, but he reinterprets them in the light of man's love of God and his fellow beings (neighbours), which is the greatest commandment, learnable and conductible in every age of life and in all circumstances of life. With the parable of the Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37), Jesus responded to the question: "And who is my neighbour?" In that parable, the cult officials, the priest and the Levite, passed by and avoided any contact with the wounded man in order to keep themselves ritually pure for the next cult service, and only the stranger, a merchant, had pity on him. When the enquirer responds that the neighbour of this wounded man is precisely the stranger who helped him, Jesus instructs him: "Go and do likewise!" From the context it becomes clear that a neighbour (fellow being) is every person whose misfortune we see and whom we can help him.

This kind of strengthening the Decalogue has been superbly interpreted by Paul in Romans 13:8-10 within the framework of the moral lesson to the Christians of Rome who were to live as an insignificant minority among their pagan fellow citizens. He says that those who love their neighbours fulfil the Law of God and the laws of the state, and then he quotes the sixth, fifth, seventh, and

tenth commandments as contained in the commandment to love one's neighbour. Then he concludes: "Love does no harm to its neighbour; therefore love [is] the fulfilment of the law." Elsewhere, Paul underlines the precedence of diligent love towards neighbours. (Galatians 5:14; 1 Corinthians 13).

In the 13th century, Thomas Aquinas interpreted the Ten Commandments as the natural law engraved in the human hearts. This means that they contain fundamental ethical values and norms that the people can attain through an analysis of personal and communal experience, but God has proclaimed them as well, and ordered that the believers sustain them. This is a path for living wisely in a family, social, and state community. The *Catechism of the Catholic Church* from 1992 also teaches that: "The Ten Commandments belong to the Lord's proclamation. At the same time, they teach us about genuine humanity. They underline significant duties, and thus indirectly basic human rights linked with the nature of a human being also. The Decalogue is a privileged statement of the natural law" (no. 2070). This is a *religious sanction of ethical values:* God the Creator and Liberator asks people in their family and society, to support the values that make individual and common life humane. At the same time this is a product of experience and human wisdom: we are all better off if we respect the transcendental dimension of a human person, help elderly parents and other members of society, do not kill one another, do not abuse our own sexuality, and the sexuality of other persons, respect one another's property, do not give false testimony in Court, and do not yearn for the values of neighbours.

One of the Christian theologians studying the Ten Commandments in light of the need to respect human rights and humane living in the human society is Walter Harrelson, who wrote the book *The Ten Commandments and Human Rights* (Fortress Press, Philadelphia 1980, second edition Mercer University Press Macom, Georgia 1997). He underlines that the Ten Commandments are historically connected to the Jewish and Christian understanding of living in a community with the acceptance of God's supremacy, but that the values they protect are present in the 1948 Universal Declaration on Human Rights. He interprets the introductory formula as a permanent duty and need for one supreme subjected loyalty, and then he reinterprets God's commandments into universal speech:

1. Do not give ultimate loyalty to any earthly reality.
2. Do not use the power of religion to harm others.
3. Do not treat with contempt the times set aside for rest.
4. Do not treat with contempt members of the family.
5. Do not do violence against fellow humans.
6. Do not violate the commitment of sexual love.
7. Do not claim the life or goods of others.
8. Do not damage others through misuse of human speech.
9. and 10. Do not lust after the life or goods of others.

The Qur'an also commands universal ethical values. The foundations on the faith in God one and only who is the Creator of the world and a just judge of

all people, while man is God's servant and representative on earth (*khalifa*) – Qur'an 2:30; 7:74; 38:26). Human life, helping the powerless, private ownership, discipline in the sphere of sexuality, truthfulness in speaking – these are values that their worshipper's conscience commands to Muslims. I trust that the Muslim participants of this round table will become involved into our common reflection on this issue.

Those among us who are actively involved in inter-religious dialogue and religious contribution to world peace are familiar with the Declaration on Universal Ethics that has been proposed at the World Parliament of Religions held in Chicago in 1993. It proposes that universal ethical values be taken over from world religions and be made a foundation for world ethics. That ethics (*global ethics, Weltethos*) will be founded on humane behaviour towards each person, culture of non-violence, the respect for living beings, living in truth, partnership of men and women, genuine internal conversion. The Declaration calls upon the principle of positive reciprocity, or so-called golden rule: treat others and those who are different the way we want them to treat us when we are in difficulty or need. Hans Küng, with his associates at the *Weltethos* Foundation at the University in Tübingen, is engaged intensively in the Project of world ethics.

In his lecture on the 12th of December 2003 in Tübingen, Kofi Annan underlined that we particularly need universal values at the time of globalization: "Globalization has drawn us even closer in the sense that we are all affected by actions of one another, but not in the sense that we all have a share in the same benefits and difficulties. On the contrary, we have allowed it to further separate us, to increase the differences in wealth and power between certain societies, and within those societies. This is a mockery of universal values. Therefore, it is no wonder that, in return, those values have come under attack at a moment when we need them the most ... We have seen what devastating consequences particularistic value systems can have: ethnic cleansing, genocide, terrorism, spreading of fear, hate, and discrimination. Therefore, it is time to once again strengthen our universal values». In continuation, he objected to the judging of individual religions or ethical systems due to moral failures of some of their followers. Then he continued: "Values do not exist to serve philosophers and theologians, but to help people live and organize own societies. That is why, on international level, we need cooperation mechanisms that are strong enough to insist on universal values, but also flexible enough to help people attain these values in a way that they can apply to their own, specific circumstances." He, with professor Küng, is firmly convinced that there do exist universal values, but that they are not in themselves comprehensive; we need to attentively reflect on, justify, and strengthen them. I hope that this meeting of ours in multireligious and multicultural Sarajevo is also one stage in that reflection, justification, and intensification.

Proposal for discussion:
- Can we, *different ones,* respect universal ethical values although there (still) does not exist *one code* of such values?

- The chances of religious communities in BIH to contribute to the common good and the temptation to serve primarily the interests of one's own religious and ethnic group?

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Session IV:

You are the Best Community:
Individual and Community according to Jewish, Christian, and Muslim Traditions

IN THE NAME OF GOD:
THE BEST COMMUNITY ACCORDING TO ISLAM

Ms. Bibi Fatemeh Mousavi Nejad (IR)

I have been asked three questions to answer in this seminar. These questions are regarding the verse 110 of the *Surat Aal-i Imran* (Surah 3) in the holy Koran:

"Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors"

The questions are: (1) what does community (*umma*) mean and what makes the *umma* the best community according to Islamic tradition, (2) what does Islamic tradition say about the individual and its place within the *umma*, and (3) what is the relationship of the individual with the *umma*, i.e. community?

To clarify the issue we first study a translation of this verse and then with some explanations, I answer the three raised questions. God states in the previous verse: "To Allah belongs all that is in the heavens and on earth: To Him do all questions go back (for decision)." And then he adds, "Ye are the best of peoples, evolved for mankind, enjoining what is right, forbidding what is wrong, and believing in Allah. If only the People of the Book had faith, it were best for them: among them are some who have faith, but most of them are perverted transgressors".

1) According to Allameh Tabataba'ee in *Al-Mizan*[1] these verses were revealed to the uncultured primitive society before Islam that observed none of the morality standards acceptable to human kind. Commitment to moral principles of the previous prophets was also forgotten in that period. . This society is invited to a religion the main message of which is to refrain from moral and social immoralities and to adhere to what human conscience considers right.

2) God presents arguments and reasoning for the excellence of this community. The first characteristic of such community is that they invite others to *Ma'roof* (the known and commonly accepted good). It is natural that the basic

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[1] *Al-Mizan*, volume 3, p. 377.

human conscience acknowledges common good deeds among which we can mention avoiding betrayal, dishonesty, slander, unlawful relationships, separation from God and other common human principles. The second characteristic of the "best" is avoiding *Monkar*, and that means what is unlawful or wicked and therefore unacceptable to human conscience. This avoidance is also among characteristics that can be shared by all humans. The third characteristic, which according to Koran makes them the best community, is their belief in God. Today, after centuries from the revelation of this verse, belief in God is considered a very high power in society and the relationship with God is one of the most important yardsticks of good personality. Those who do not believe in God and remove God from the general environment of human life and believe that human beings do not basically need God, face the severest spiritual crises. Contemporary psychologists also acknowledge that belief in God is one of the best ways of achieving mental stability which leads to a more moderate society. Therefore, in keeping with this Koranic argumentation, "the best people" are those who live by commonly accepted human standards that have remained fixed from the beginning up to now, and are committed to them.

Seyyed Ghotb (Qutb)[2] also interprets this verse as follows: "It means everyone who meets the qualifications accepted by human conscience, falls into the community of the best".

3) At the end of this verse, this fact is pointed out more clearly that this being the best does not mean that other religions are ignored and that the division is made based on the religions. And there says God that if people of the book, meaning followers of other religions, genuinely believe in God, and not necessarily the details of Islam, it is better for them. It means that there are grounds for them becoming the best community by observing the commonly acknowledged good.

4) And in the end God speaks of a historical fact in the time frame this verse was revealed in which most people of the book and followers of other religions defied the belief in God and spaced themselves from this concept. This is just a historical reference which means all believers can fall away from human values or come close to them. And in fact this verse implies that followers of other religions can come closer to God or Muslims can fall away from this reality and be considered wicked. The criterion of these verses is a series of principles, which are acknowledged by human conscience and everyone who observes these principles is considered a member of the community of the best.

5) Evidently, this verse is from a heavenly book. This book is addressed to the religious. In today's world also inter-religious dialogue and unity of deeds of religious is considered a virtue against the wave of irreligiosity. The important thing is to translate religiosity as adherence to social and moral principles and believe that religions have come to revivify human principles. As stated in this verse, naturally, any conflict, war and bloodshed which are themselves the most

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[2] Seyyed Ghotb (Sayyid Qutb), *Tafsir fi Khelal el-Koran*, volume 4.

non-human unacceptable things, cannot be accepted by religion and be counted in *Ma'roofs* and those who do such sins are certainly out of the circle of "the best".

Among non-Muslims who pay attention to the interpretations made from Koran, this fact is accepted. George Khodhr, the head of Beirut Church writes on this verse as follows: "I have read a lot of books by Muslims on this verse. They all believe that God is not granting any special glory for Muslims here, but this is a way to make human beings better".[3]

With this explanation the answer to the first question that sought to know what "community" is meant in this religion becomes clear; "The best Community" here means the most faithful to invitation to what is good and avoiding what is wicked and belief in God.

The meaning of the best society in Islam's vision is therefore clear and i.e. a society which meets these standards.

In my opinion, even with today's yardsticks of the world, those who believe in God and invite humanity towards what is good and guide them away from what is commonly considered wicked by human conscience constitute the best in any society.

In other questions the Islam's vision on individuals and their standing in a community were inquired about. It is natural that individuals are the constituents of a society. In Islam, human beings are addressed disregarding their religious or intellectual orientation. One of the most frequently used addresses of the Koran is *Ya Ayyoha al-Nas* (O ye people).

Of course, invitation to good and recommendation against evil is the right of human beings themselves. Imam Ali says in this regard that "I would never have accepted to rule if not majority of people had come to my door and had asked me to do so". According to Shi'a, even if anybody considers himself the most deserved person to rule and deems it his divine right, he is not a legitimate ruler unless the majority of people approve this will. Therefore, Imam Ali, the first Imam of Shi'a, despite believing himself to be the most deserved person to rule, did not take this position years after the Prophet joined the majesty. Thus, it can be concluded that individuals are granted rights in Islam and by the choice they make they can approach being the best

Regarding the standing of individuals in society, it should be said that human beings are the axis of the society and therefore according to our understanding of the holy Koran, seculars by the token of being humans should be free without being subject to any pressure or attack. Since human beings are free, adherents of any religion should be also free to act according to what they think or believe.

Just as Muslims are obliged to observe social rules in societies where Muslims are in minority, they should receive a treatment respectful enough to meet hu-

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[3] *Al-Nahar* (Newspaper) 22 March 2003.

man standards. In return Muslims are also obliged to observe their rules to be considered organized members of the global community. Social discord for any human being whether Muslim or non-Muslim is criticized by Islam.

The biggest disasters of the world came about when human beings were classified according to their beliefs, power and wealth. Bosnia, the country we are in, became the big historic victim of genocide by those who instead of respecting human conscience were dependant on their race and generation and deemed nothing other than themselves as humans. Therefore according to Islam, the best society is made of the best individuals.

I decorate the end of my word with a verse from the holy Koran:

"We created you from a single pair of a male and a female, and made you into nations and tribes, so that you may know each other, verily the most honourable among you in the sight of God are the most pious".

It means no human being is better than the other and the pious are honourable before God.

Related Verses of the Koran (Surat 3: Aal-i Imran):

111. They will do you no harm, barring a trifling annoyance; if they come out to fight you, they will show you their backs, and no help shall they get. **112.** Shame is pitched over them (Like a tent) wherever they are found, except when under a covenant (of protection) from Allah and from men; they draw on themselves wrath from Allah, and pitched over them is (the tent of) destitution. This is because they rejected the Signs of Allah, and slew the prophets in defiance of right; this because they rebelled and transgressed beyond bounds. **113.** Not all of them are alike: Of the People of the Book are a portion that stand (For the right): They rehearse the Signs of Allah all night long, and they prostrate themselves in adoration. **114.** They believe in Allah and the Last Day; they enjoin what is right, and forbid what is wrong; and they hasten (in emulation) in (all) good works: They are in the ranks of the righteous. **115.** Of the good that they do, nothing will be rejected of them; for Allah knoweth well those that do right.

Session V:

Good and Evil
Impact of Religious Traditions on National and International Politics (fundamentalist worldviews and how to counter them)

WASHING BLOODY LINEN IN PUBLIC

Dr Konstanty Gebert (PL)

We have spent the last two days describing out respective faith traditions – Islam and the Orthodox, Catholic and Protestant variants of Christianity – as religions of peace, tolerance and goodwill. Had I been one of the speakers during these two days, I would have gladly joined in, making a similar presentation for Judaism as well. Obviously, all of us were right: our religions, stemming from revelations given us by God – Who is One, regardless of the names we ascribe to him, and of the languages we use in our prayers, and Who loves all of His creatures equally – could not be anything but that. Furthermore, while as monotheists we might have problems with polytheistic religions such as Hinduism, or religious traditions such as Buddhism which do not fit out Bible-educated spiritual sensitivities, we would be hard pressed to deny the religious truths they also contain.

   In sum, it does seem that women and men of religion, regardless of their different traditions, can easily agree on the most basic tenets of what seems to be a universal faith teaching: respect your fellow humans, for we are all created by the Creator, abhor violence, for it destroys God's creatures and disfigures those perpetrating it, and though our words and – especially – acts, give testimony to the ethical and spiritual improvement that faith brings into our lives. Our diversity cannot be seen as an impediment to achieving this perspective. Clearly, had God wanted us to be all the same, He would have made us all the same. We are different the way He wanted it, and we should cherish this difference, love each other, obey our Creator and contribute together to the betterment of the world. Right?

   I am sure we would all agree with that statement; it is in fact self-evident. There is only one problem with it: the real world. In the real world, we continuously encounter people who, claiming to act in the name of the same Revelations which have led us to this conclusion, say – and do – things which are completely contrary to it. We have all seen preachers of our faiths bless the weapons of murderers, preach hate and justify it, and consider the diversity that we cherish an aberration. We have all seen our co-religionists follow their teachings and commit unspeakable crimes. In martyred Bosnia all have suffered

from such acts, the Muslims most of all. Having lived in Sarajevo during the siege, I have had some first-hand experience of the horror. During my many stays in Israel, I have at least once barely escaped being blown up by a bomb set up by someone who believed Islam instructs him to murder Jews. And I have spoken to deeply religious Jews who believe their faith justifies the oppression of non-Jews. In other words: if it is so good, then why is it so bad?

Of course, we all can reply that hatred in the name of religion is not only morally, but cognitively wrong. That those people not only are committing crimes, but are in fact dramatically misreading the faith traditions they pretend to represent. Had we not talked ourselves hoarse over the last two days, proving this point time and time again? Yet I am afraid this will not wash. The hate-mongers and murderers can quote chapter and verse just as well as we can, and they can align impressive arrays of religious leaders, teachers and sages who explicitly support their readings of the tradition.

Well, yes, maybe – we are tempted to reply – but these are issues of interpretation, which are best debated between women and men who truly know their tradition, and for whom it is evident that jihad does not mean jihad, a crusade is not a crusade, and the chosen people are not the chosen people. At least not in the meanings ascribed to those terms by the hate-mongers, and then distorted out of all proportion by the genuine enemies of each of our religions, who are ever on the lookout for pretexts to attack them. And since these enemies usually happen to belong to one of the other religions, do their venomous attacks not constitute provocation which absolves us of the responsibility of squarely facing the issues which they attack? In other words, should they not first desist from denigrating our faith, before they gain the right of criticizing possible lapses and misinterpretations on our side?

Sadly, again, this will not wash – not only because it would not be fair to ascribe evil intention to all our critics, or indeed to any of them a priori. More importantly, it should not import to us, women and men of faith, that the intentions of some of them might be dishonest and evil. What should import to us is whether the evils they see in our traditions do in fact exist. And if they do – and who would be as brazen-faced to deny it? – denouncing and fighting these evils should be our topmost obligation. Not because of the impact they have on how others see us, but because they disfigure and distort the traditions and values which are at the core of our identities. To put it very bluntly: if one preaches evil in the name of God, then either the preacher, or God himself is evil. What we are dealing with here is not a public relations issue, but the ultimate blasphemy.

Well – yes, most of us would be willing to acknowledge. In fact, I am certain that all of us are quite actively engaged, within our respective communities, in the struggle against this blasphemy. Yet we often are often strangely reluctant to say the same things in public, when speaking, as it were, outside of the faith. And when we do, we usually stress that the evil we condemn is in fact foreign to our tradition, a result of horrible misconceptions. We are understandably

reluctant to wash dirty linen in public. And yet this linen is not just dirty. It is bloody. And there is no way any of our faith communities can avoid responsibility for that blood. For while the hate-mongers who spill it do, in fact, distort our traditions, they do not make them up. Roots of evil exist in every religious tradition I know. This is why it is not enough to confront and denounce them. Unless we acknowledge that, in fact, the hate-mongers can make a legitimate claim to elements of the same tradition which makes us denounce them, our efforts will be half-hearted at best.

And this is where much of the dialogue stands now. While we denounce the hate-mongers as illegitimate when speaking to the outside world, they denounce us as illegitimate when speaking within our communities of faith. From a strictly methodological point of view, both approaches are flawed, for both fail to take into account the multi-faceted nature of each of our traditions. And by not tackling the issue head on, we risk loosing credibility both within and outside, for we fail to account for the chapter and verse the hate-mongers quote.

It would be easy for me to demonstrate this using current examples from other faiths: the reluctance of spiritual authorities of Islam to engage those who preach killing Jews, or the half-hearted, at best, attempts by Orthodox and Catholic clergy in Bosnia during the recent war to distance themselves from men of the cloth who blessed murder. But though easy, it would be dishonest and thus ultimately self-defeating – for how could Muslims and Christians present here be sure that I only denounce the elements of evil which I see within their perfectly legitimate traditions – and not that I see these traditions themselves as evil? Therefore, tonight I choose to badmouth my own religious tradition: Judaism.

Not that I believe that Judaism has more to answer for than the other Abrahamic religions; to the contrary. Devoid of temporal power for almost two millennia, the Jews had much less opportunity to practice evil than their Christian and Muslim brethren, and our charge-sheet is incomparably lighter. Yet our track record for the brief period since the State of Israel was established shows that we are no more immune to that temptation than other traditions are. Again, the point I am making is not that Israel is somehow tainted with evil, as its accusers claim: the Jewish State is no worse than other democracies involved in protracted conflict or war, yet it is obvious that it is not much better either. And though much of the evil committed in its name has precious little to do with the faith most of its inhabitants profess, and everything with the unavoidable contingencies of warfare, the fact remains that Israel has not fulfilled the prophetic requirement of being *or goim*, "a light onto the nations" (Isaiah 49:6). This alone should be enough to give us pause.

Yet there is worse: acts of unspeakable violence have been committed by religious Jews who believed that they are justified – in fact, mandated – by their faith. True – and hardly irrelevant – these acts were not many, and had been condemned with horror by the overwhelming majority of Jews, both in Israel and in the Diaspora. Yet these acts have been committed, the religious mandate

established, and those whose teachings had led the murderers, still preach and teach. For all our expressions of horror and dismay, we cannot deny that this evil was spawned in our midst. Worse: "The womb is still fertile the monstrosity had crept out of" – as Berthold Brecht, in a different context, had said in "The Career of Arturo Ui". I refer here to the murders committed by Baruch Goldstein and Igal Amir.

Let us briefly recall the facts. On February 25, 1994, Baruch Goldstein, a deeply religious Jew, descendant of a prestigious rabbinical family, who had made *aliyah* from the US several years earlier, used the machine gun he had as a reservist in the Israeli armed forces to murder 29 Muslims at prayer in the Cave of the Patriarchs in Hebron. He was then himself killed by the survivors in self-defence. On November 5, 1995, Igal Amir, another deeply religious Jew and a student at Tel Aviv's religious Bar Ilan university, assassinated Yitzhak Rabin, the Israeli prime minister who wanted to make peace with the Palestinians. He was captured and then sentenced to life in prison (Israel has no death penalty). The fact that religious women or men commit murder despite their religion is unfortunately hardly uncommon; yet these two committed murder nor despite their religion, but because of it.

As in the case of many other terrorists, Goldstein and Amir do not fit the simplistic image of the killer as a primitive fanatic, who commits his vile act in a fit of blind rage. Both were very intelligent and educated, well-liked and respected; both committed their crimes with premeditation and preparation. And both drew inspiration for them from their understandings of Jewish religious tradition, and were supported in this by religious luminaries. Let us examine their cases more closely.

Hebron, in the West Bank, is possibly the oldest settlement with a continuous Jewish presence in all of Eretz Israel. The Bible relates that Abraham bought there the cave of Machpelach to bury his wife Rachel. That site is known, and holy both to Jews and Muslims, who revere Abraham (Ibrahim) as one of the prophets. A major mediaeval mosque stands over the cave. The Jewish community of Hebron, always a minority, but living in peace with Muslim neighbours for ages, was decimated in an Arab pogrom during the riots of 1929; the survivors fled. Jews returned to Hebron only in 1967, after the Six-Days War, and established a settlement there. Recovering their original houses proved mainly impossible, and most settlers now live in Kiryat Arba on the outskirts of the town. The ancient centre of the town is divided in a Jewish and Arab section, with frequent acts of violence committed on both sides. In 1993, an association of the descendants of the original Jewish inhabitants officially distanced itself from the militant nationalist and religious new settlers, one of whom was Baruch Goldstein.

Like many other Kiryat Arba residents, Goldstein was an activist of Kach, an extreme right party set up by US rabbi Meir Kahane, which sought to deny to non-Jews equal rights in Israel, claiming the land belongs to Jews alone. Kach was eventually outlawed in Israel as racist, while Kahane was earlier killed in

New York by an Arab assassin. When serving as a doctor in the Israeli armed forces, Goldstein stated he would refuse to treat non-Jewish patients, even including fellow soldiers. When threatened with court martial, Goldstein declared: "I am not willing to treat any non-Jew. I recognize as legitimate only two [religious] authorities: Maimonides and Kahane" (as reported in *Yediot Ahronot,* Feb. 28, 1994). Maimonides was a major mediaeval Jewish legal authority, whose rulings are considered binding by contemporary Orthodox Jews. In several rulings, he did in fact condemn extending medical services to non-Jews – unless it is done for payment, under duress, or "to avoid ill-feeling between Jews and non-Jews" (*Yad, Akkum,* ix. 16). Maimonides, who was himself a physician, served as the personal doctor of Salah el-Din, the great Muslim military leader. His rulings were intended not to prevent giving medical assistance to non-Jews (though he certainly would have preferred to live in a Jewish-only society in which the issue would not even arise), but rather to find ways of permitting it without violating *halakha*, Jewish religious law. *Halakha*, in fact, systematically differentiates between rights of Jews and of non-Jews, for two fundamental reasons: the fact that Jewish legal rulings could not, for lack of secular authority, be imposed on Jews (while the reverse was true), but also because it assumed that Jews, as God's chosen people, should enjoy privileged status.

   Goldstein therefore systematically misread Maimonides' intentions (incidentally, in the Israeli investigation following his crime, it was discovered that he himself had, at least once, given medical assistance to a detained Palestinian militant). There can be no doubt Maimonides was opposed to Jewish intercourse with non-Jews (as were Christian and Muslim legislators of his time), and that the reasons for this cannot be seen today as anything but racist. We must also bear in mind that such a judgment, projected into Maimonides' 12th century, would be just as anachronistic as accepting the reasons for his rulings today. This has to be stated clearly, in order to avoid any hypocritical dodging. However, under the circumstances he lived in, in which interactions with non-Jews were unavoidable, Maimonides sought to legitimize them, while Goldstein took the opposite approach. Incidentally, Goldstein's hatred of Arabs would have struck Maimonides as bizarre, since the sage considered Islam a true monotheistic religion, as opposed to Christianity, with its problematic dogma of the Trinity. Most rabbinic authorities, though, ruled that Christianity is also a true monotheistic faith.

   The cave of Machpelach, the site of Goldstein's crime, could have been a place for mutually enriching Jewish-Muslim religious dialogue, as it is sacred to both faiths. Political tension between Israel and the Palestinians made this impossible: to avoid clashes, the Israeli army had allotted separate prayer spaces and times to faithful of both faiths. After the murder, it seems understandably extremely unlikely even for the most open-minded Muslims to contemplate this kind of dialogue at that site. Goldstein had murdered not only people, but a hope they could have cherished.

The date he chose for his terrorist act was not accidental. In the Jewish calendar February 25, 1994, was Purim – the annual carnival-like festival in which Jews celebrate their deliverance from the evil Haman, minister of king Ahasverus (probably Xerxes) in ancient Persia. As related in the Biblical Book of Esther, Haman had tried to trick the king into exterminating all Jews in his realm, but the king's Jewish wife Esther, under the influence of her uncle Mordecai, interceded in their favour, and eventually it was the Jews who exterminated Haman and his entire male offspring. Though a long-persecuted people can perhaps be excused in celebrating the one rare occasion during which they had managed to turn the tables on their oppressors, the final massacre is hardly uplifting. It is therefore probably not coincidental that the Book of Esther is the only book of the Bible in which God's name is not mentioned even once: all it describes is a political plot, with an unexpected ending. Purim, a religious festival established by Mordecai and confirmed by rabbinic injunction, joyously celebrates the deliverance without dwelling on the deaths of Haman and his sons. But the rabbis were aware of potentially dangerous interpretations of the meaning of the festival. The Talmud, which otherwise is extremely critical of all excess, and in particular of getting drunk, on this one occasion rules in the opposite direction: it states that on Purim it is laudable to become so intoxicated, as to no longer see the difference between "Blessed be Mordecai" and "Cursed be Haman". Rejoicing over a rare victory is acceptable; getting bloodthirsty is not.

But Goldstein apparently thought otherwise. Murdering 29 Muslims at Machpelach on Purim, he seemed to believe that the Book of Esther teaches us that it is legitimate to kill Gentiles who are hostile to Jews and plot their deaths. There had been violent Palestinian anti-Israeli demonstrations in Hebron in the previous days, with chants of "Kill the Jews", and the town was rife with rumours that Hamas is planning yet another bloody terrorist attack in the immediate future. And so the physician who, out of his reading of the religious tradition, had decided he would refuse medical assistance to non-Jews, drew his ultimate conclusions from that reading – and went to a holy site to murder them. He must, of course, had known he too will eventually be killed; it is legitimate co consider him the prototype of the suicide terrorist – a figure which fills the hearts of all people with horror.

But not that of the rabbi of Kiryat Arba. In a eulogy given at Goldstein's funeral, rabbi Dov Lior said: "Goldstein was full of love for fellow human beings. He dedicated himself to helping others. Goldstein could not continue to bear the humiliations and shame nowadays inflicted upon us; this was why he took action for no other reason than to sanctify the holy name of God." While it is obvious to me that I believe in the same God that Goldstein's victims had been praying to, I find it impossible even to imagine the entity that rabbi Lior believes was thus sanctified. And yet I cannot deny that this rabbi is a legitimate member of my community of faith.

A veritable cult grew in Kiryat Arba around Goldstein and his tomb. Pilgrimages went there, and religious studies were organized nearby, by rabbi Lior and

others like him. A book on "Goldstein the martyr" was published, under the title *Barukh ha-gever* – in Hebrew: "Baruch the man". But *barukh*, Goldstein's name, means "blessed", and the title is a direct quotation from the Bible: "Blessed is the man who trusts in God, then God will be his security" (Jeremiah 17:7), used in the daily prayers said after eating. The author, rabbi Itzhak Ginsburg of the yeshiva in Nablus on the West Bank, argues that Goldstein was a saint, who martyred himself "for the glory of God". One year earlier, when a student of his yeshiva opened indiscriminate fire on Palestinian labourers near Tel Aviv, rabbi Ginsburg said, in his defence, that "Jewish blood and gentile blood are not the same". Again, trying to imagine rabbi Ginsburg's idea of God, I hit a blank wall. And yet again, like rabbi Lior, he is a legitimate Jewish religious teacher.

To be sure, the Israelis, secular and religious alike, almost unanimously condemned Goldstein's terrorist act. This consensus included even leaders of the religious settlers, such as rabbi Yoel Bin-Nun, who, for instance, had demanded that rabbi Ginsburg's yeshiva be closed down for teaching hatred. In his eyes, the praise that some rabbis gave to Goldstein's act was "a desecration of the Almighty and a disgrace of the Torah". Prime minister Itzhak Rabin spoke in the Knesset of his outrage and shame. And yet it took years, and a special act of the Knesset, for Goldstein's grave to be destroyed. In the meantime, rabbis Lior, Ginsburg and others continued to preach. And one young man in Tel Aviv was greatly impressed by Baruch Goldstein's "martyrdom": Igal Amir. At his Bar Ilan University, according to a fellow student, Shlomi Halevi, "the majority said they were against the murder, but that they understood Goldstein".

Goldstein's terrorist attack took place after the signing of the Oslo accords by Itzhak Rabin and Yasser Arafat in 1993. These accords, which recognized the legitimacy of the Palestinian aspirations to independence, were widely condemned by the Israeli right as treason. The shock of the Machpelach killing soon dissipated, when Palestinian Goldsteins, in ever growing numbers, started indiscriminately attacking Israelis on buses, in coffee-shops, on the streets. As Israel retaliated, both sides grew bitterly disillusioned with the peace which supposedly was at hand. For Israelis, the aftermath of Oslo was terror on an unprecedented scale. Many believed that Rabin must be stopped, before his policies lead to even worse disasters. Igal Amir took this belief to what he decided was its logical conclusion. He resolved to murder Itzhak Rabin.

Amir grew up in a spiritual climate not much different from Goldstein's. The same rabbis were his religious and moral authorities. He diligently studied Jewish religious law, and became intimately familiar with the concepts of *din moser* and *din rodef*. Both legal categories justify pre-emptive murder: the first in the case of someone who intends to turn Jews in to non-Jewish authorities to suffer an unjust fate, the second – in the case of someone who is about to kill someone else. In both cases, both historically and morally, such acts can be eminently justified under certain circumstances, but it is the circumstances themselves that demand deliberation and analysis. In both cases, furthermore,

pre-emptive murder is justified only as an extreme and final resort, when no other means can be taken.

Testifying during the investigation and the trial, Igal Amir confirmed that he had consulted with rabbis he respected and trusted (he refused to give names), posing them the supposedly hypothetical question whether the murder of Rabin could be justified under either or both legal categories. According to him, no-one gave him a clear yes – but neither a clear no. During these conversations, his conviction hardened, however. Rabin was willing to give up a part of Eretz Israel, given by God to the Jews, to the Palestinians – clearly a case of *din moser*. And Palestinian rule would mean an immediate threat to the security and lives of Israelis, as proven by the ongoing terrorist campaign – clearly a case of *din rodef*. And when in October 1995 a group of rabbis performed in front of Rabin's house the ceremony of *pulsa de nura* – an ancient Kabalistic curse, which is supposed to bring death on the person it targets – his mind was finally made up. The murder which followed shook the nation, and changed the course of Middle Eastern history.

It is unclear if the rabbis Amir consulted knew exactly what they were doing. Debating abstract issues – some arcane, some fascinating, some absurd and some shocking – is staple fare in Talmudic discourse, education and learning. This is one of the beauties of the text, which brings us, e.g., a debate on air warfare 1500 years before the first airplane took off the ground (an analogy involving the siege of a fortress was then tested in the context of a sea battle, and someone pushed the argument further). Yet a debate over murder, even hypothetical, is a different matter. A responsible teacher cannot leave such a debate open-ended – unless he understands that the question is, in fact, not only hypothetical, and secretly agrees with the unspeakable conclusion.

The shock caused by the first political murder in the history of the State of Israel was incomparably greater than that caused by Goldstein's terrorist attack. For a time, the fanatical fringe of the religious Israeli public was cowed into silence. At a meeting of prominent leaders of the Religious Zionist movement, convened four days after the murder, rabbi Yehudah Amital, himself a West bank settler, but a partisan of peace with the Palestinians and a critic of national-religious fanaticism, spoke in no unclear terms: "We must truly prostrate ourselves for this terrible desecration of God's Name… The murderer came from among us, out of Religious Zionism and Judaism, and we cannot say that 'our hands have not shed this blood' [Deut. 21:7]… Political extremism has been dressed up as religion. Not only did the prime minister's murderer come from among us, but Goldstein, the murderer in the Cave of the Patriarchs, did too. That the religious community brushed off that murder… shows that its moral sensibility is flawed… The decline begun when the rabbis chose to turn a blind eye to the attacks on Arabs that eventually led to acts of murder."[1]

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[1] Michael Karpin & Ina Friedman: *Murder in the name of God*, London: Granta Books 1998, p. 196.

Rabbi Amital was obviously right – and yet the spiritual reckoning that should have followed did not, in fact happen. Rabbis Lior and Ginsburg, as well as their disciples, continue to preach. For, the sad truth remains that the murderers came not only from our community, but indeed from within a strand of our religious tradition. True, the vast majority of religious Jews reject that particular aspect of some of our ancient teachings. This is certainly right, but hardly sufficient. It is not enough to reject. One needs to oppose.

It is a sad certainty that the picture I have drawn above could be applied, with the necessary changes in facts and dates, names and quotes, to any of the traditions represented at our meeting, or indeed to any religious traditions anywhere. Obviously, religion is not a supermarket where one can choose and pick at will – but neither is it a vacuum cleaner, passively absorbing all that happens to fall in its way. It is important for us to believe in God. But it is just as important for God to be able to believe in us. To trust us to tell right from wrong, and give testimony to the truth. In this, all our traditions are sadly lacking.

Imagine us as seen through the eyes of an honest unbeliever. One who holds religion neither in hatred nor in contempt, but simply did not have the spiritual opportunity to experience its inner beauty. All he knows of women and men of religion is what they say – and what they do. And now imagine that person trying to make an honest assessment: has religion – all religions – brought more good or more evil to the world? And if we shudder in fear of what his verdict might be, should we not be even more concerned of the verdict which will be passed on us by the One and True Judge?

No longer can we pretend not to notice that the face of religion is ever more that of a fanatic, screaming hatred and blessing murder. We are giving our Creator a bad name.

SECULAR AND RELIGIOUS FUNDAMENTALISM

Fra Prof. Dr Mile Babić (BIH)

The greatest danger for the humanity of today is called secular fundamentalism, because that fundamentalism is present, as an inner temptation, in all people of this world. Today, that fundamentalism has become most dangerous thanks to global capitalism, or, better said, thanks to global capitalism that turned into an ideology, which is, in fact, the most powerful ideology of today's humanity. That fundamentalism is present in the souls of the people of today; it is, therefore, a psychological fact and a fundamental belief, a basic life stand of today's people, and it is, at the same time, a socio-political fact and a socio-political philosophy of today's humanity.

What is secular fundamentalism? The word *secular* means secular that is *secular fundamentalism*. The word fundamentalism comes from the Latin word *fundamentum*, which means foundation. If we call something or someone of this world the fundament of our life, and if we make an absolute ('fundamentalize') that foundation, then we have *secular* fundamentalism, which leads man and the humanity to a general catastrophe, seeing it leads to the destruction of everything, and to own self-destruction. That secular fundamentalism is not capable of dialogue with others, with those who are different, because it does not recognize values of anyone outside of itself; it makes itself an absolute and imposes it upon others. It is aggressive. Secular fundamentalism forgets that all great philosophers and theologians in the history of mankind argue the following: *there cannot be more gods,* there is just *One* absolute, only God is *absolute.*

Secular fundamentalism is visible at every step in today's world, especially in developed Western countries, in which the socio-political order is divided into a *private* and a *public sphere. Morale* and *religion,* moral and religious principles, fall under the private sphere. Briefly said, the *freedom of conscience* falls under the private sphere, because the freedom of conscience is the foundation of both morale and religion. The differentiation between the private and the public sphere has come to pass as a great accomplishment after the horrific confessional wars in Europe between the Catholics and the Protestants. I consider this differentiation (and separation) positive. However, the problem lies in the fact that we in the West have become indifferent (apathetic) towards that which is found in the private sphere, therefore, towards morale and religion, and towards the freedom of conscience. For the secular people of today, morale, religion, and the freedom of conscience are so unimportant, so insignificant that one cannot be either tolerant or intolerant towards them. Towards that which to us presents no value, that which to us is insignificant, trivial, we are completely indifferent. The public sphere of life is completely secularized; neither morale, nor religious principles can be applied to it. And not just that! Secularization progresses in the private sphere as well, so that morale and religion no longer apply in the private sphere either.

The secular fundamentalism has proclaimed morale and religion completely unimportant for the human life, and can, therefore, without a guilty conscience worship and make *secular things* an absolute*:* its capital, its economic and political power, its glory, its way of life, etc. Today, individual persons and peoples wage war – cheat, rob, and kill one another – for material goods, for the purpose of increasing their economic and political power. This secular fundamentalism has imbued the people of today and today's socio-political order to such an extent that people are not aware of it at all; they are so "ill» with it that they view it as something completely normal and good. In the West, the public sphere of life is so secularized, so freed of morale and religion that in those countries – in which public sphere morale and religion still apply – religious fundamentalism arises as a reaction to secular fundamentalism. Religious fundamentalism is the mirror image of secular fundamentalism, because it worships, makes its *own* religion an absolute, forgetting that only God, and not religion, is absolute. For

the members of secular fundamentalism, God is absent, and not at all present in their mind, while the members of religious fundamentalism directly negate the God they call upon, because they make their religion an absolute, again something of their very *own*, as is the case in secular fundamentalism, forgetting that only God is absolute.

How to disenable two of today's leading fundamentalisms in the world: *secular* and *religious fundamentalism*? First of all, the relationship between the secular and religious fundamentalism should be examined. It is visible that secular fundamentalism negates and rejects certain aspects of religion, certain religious truths. Precisely that which secular fundamentalism negates in religion is defended by religious fundamentalism and proclaimed the very essence of religion, and that religious fundamentalism defends the very essence of religion. One is under the impression that this mutual negation implies a life or death conflict: either one or the other, either secular opinion or religion. With that mutual negation, both fundamentalisms are mutually supported, reinforced, and produced. Secular fundamentalism gains its meaning in the negation of religious fundamentalism, which also applies vice versa. None of the above mentioned fundamentalisms are sustainable without their antipodes. Mutual exclusiveness and aggressiveness keep both of these fundamentalisms alive. Mutual negation is, at the same time, mutual affirmation.

Seeing that I am a Christian, I will present Christian fundamentalism as an example. In the history of western Christianity, western culture and civilization, we have the greatest conflict between religion and enlightenment that appears in the 18th century. That conflict has been present from the very beginning of western Christianity and western culture, and it continues to be present today. This is a conflict between the *faith* and the *mind*, between *religion* and *science*. That conflict reaches its peak when the educating mind makes its autonomy an absolute, and when religion makes itself an absolute. Those two 'absolutizations', those two false divinities, those two idolatries are the source of violence on this earth, are the source of destruction and self-destruction.

Both 'absolutizations', making religion an absolute and making human mind under the garment of science an absolute, presume that they possess all the truth, both of the 'absolutizations' turning the truth into their own private possession. Both forget that it is impossible to own the truth, and that truth is none's private property. Both absolutisms are aggressive, both impose truth, which they have turned into their own private possession, that is, both impose their own *false absolute* (their idol) onto the entire world, either peacefully, or by force.

How to overcome religious fundamentalism? We cannot overcome religious fundamentalism calling upon arguments of the educating secular mind, because the religious fundamentalism a priori does not accept the arguments of the secular mind. We can overcome religious fundamentalism by a deepened and intensified religion and a deepened and intensified theology. The *true foundations* of religion need to be discovered. Religion exists for the faith. Religion assumes

faith and serves faith, develops out of faith and serves the faith. Religion includes trust in God and trust in other people, and in the entire reality. When we say faith, then we mean faith, trust, love, and hope. Religion originates from faith, love, and hope, and serves faith, love, and hope. *Religion saves man,* which means that the human life can only succeed in faith, love, and hope. Religion is the mean of salvation. To make religion an absolute means to negate God and people; it implies the negation of trust in God and people. The essence of religion is faith.

How to overcome secular fundamentalism? We cannot overcome secular fundamentalism calling upon religious truths, which the secular fundamentalism a priori does not accept, but with a deepened and intensified mind. The mind is truly a mind when it is a *critical mind,* when it is critical towards *everything* and towards *itself,* when it destroys idols (false divinities), when it searches for truth, when it is aware of its faults, its ignorance. Only a mind aware of its ignorance is open to knowledge, as it has been shown by philosophical tradition, from Socrates to Nikola Kuzanski.

How to prevent the emerging of religious and secular fundamentalism? The response is: through a dialogue of faith and mind, religion and science. However, the assumption of dialogue is the *recognition of difference*, the affirmation of difference between the faith and the mind, religion and science. The dialogue of faith and mind assumes *mutual recognition,* in which the faith recognizes the value of mind, and the mind of faith. This *mutual recognition* of the faith and the mind is not present today. Secular fundamentalism emerges when the secular mind negates the value of religion, and religious fundamentalism emerges when religion negates the value of secular mind.

Today, in western societies, *religion falls under the private sphere, and the mind and science in public sphere.* The recognition of importance of the one and the other sphere is the assumption of dialogue. Without dialogue, there is no peace in the world. Significant thinkers point towards the necessity of that dialogue. I mention two of them.

Hermann Lübbe, a philosopher who sharp-wittedly researched the relationship between religion and enlightenment, argues that religion – seeing that it has emancipated from the state and become free – falls under the assumptions of our modern culture. Once, religion and enlightenment had been in conflict, but now they are referred to dialogue, since the freedom of our culture can be founded only in free religion. Lübbe argues that universal values are found in religion, since religion speaks about that which we humans cannot dispose of, about the *Unavailable*.[2] Ernst–Wolfgang Böckenförde, who legally and philosophically writes about the relationship between religion and modern society, argues that the modern society (and modern democracy) is founded on values

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[2] Hermann Lübbe, *Religion nach der Aufklärung*, Graz-Wien-Köln: Styria, pp. 149.176-177.279-281.

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that *it assumes.*[3] These values are found in religion, and, therefore, in the private sphere. That is why Europe and the world need equal respect of the public and private sphere of life. There is a need for dialogue (and balance) of the faith and the mind, religion and science. Radical extremism, under which all ideologies, idolatries, and fundamentalisms fall, leads to mutual destruction. Life cannot succeed in a freedom that negates the other, but in a freedom that attains its peak in love towards others and the Other. Life can only succeed in faith, trust, love, and hope.

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[3] Ernst-Wolfgang Böckenförde, *Recht, Staat, Freiheit,* Frankfurt am Main: Suhrkamp, 1992, p. 112.

RELIGION AND STATE: RELIGIOUS STATE, STATE RELIGION AND SECULAR SOCIETY

Session I:

Separation of Church and State:
Meaning and Role of Religion in Secular Societies

RELIGION AND THE SECULAR STATE

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Separation between Church and State is one of the main features of modern secular and liberal societies. As occurs in the public/private divide, the idea of separation comes as the result of a long process of individual and social emancipation, mainly based on the Enlightenment's ideas of the autonomy of human reason and its capacity to build a just society based on equality, fraternity and freedom from all kinds of oppression (ideological, social, economic, etc).

   In order to grant justice and equality to all their members, modern societies, which are becoming increasingly differentiated and pluralistic, have to adopt the framework of a secular state. Since the beginning of modern liberal political thought this secular framework has been considered the best, if not the only way to attain social peace, which is one of the principal bases needed to implement the equal treatment required by a just society. This idea has progressively permeated modern and secular societies, where the necessity of a frontier between religion and the public sphere has gradually become an accepted convention, finally being translated into law. But changing circumstances, especially those related to globalization, have blown down the neat, theoretical boundaries between the religious and public spheres. The political and social consequences of this situation in a sense touch on some of the theoretical foundations of the accepted model of modern western and democratic societies, leading to an urgent need to look towards a more accurate differentiation of the conceptual frameworks and definitions. From the social and political point of view as well, it is necessary to make a more precise distinction between sociological concepts and political-normative ones.

   This is of particular relevance in the case of the *secular* concept, frequently used in an undifferentiated way to talk about a *secular society* or about a *secular/laic state* (see infra n. 3) without taking into account the fact that the first concept is a sociological one, while the second belongs in the political-normative domain. In our opinion, the inappropriate mixing and confusion of these two kinds of concept is one of the main sources of conflict as regards the role and meaning of religion in secular societies.

Secular society is a descriptive concept of a society in which the secularization process has been accomplished and where the main social framework and references are laic, both in day-to-day life in the community and in the social agenda and projections of the future.[1] When we refer to the State, as is the case when we talk about a *secular state* or about a *laic state,*[2] it is to the political and normative domain which we are referring.

For the purposes of this exposition I will limit the *secular* label to the constitutional, liberal and democratic States under the Rule of Law. Those totalitarian States in which religion has been banned from political and social life – as was the case, among others, of the former Soviet Union –, could not been considered as secular, even if they define themselves as such.

Another question arises from the fact that the constitutional treatment of religion is not exactly the same in every constitutional, liberal and democratic state. Among the secular states we can find states with established churches, as is the case in Denmark, Finland, Greece, Sweden, and the United Kingdom (only in England and Scotland), all of them members of the EU. There are states which do not have an established church, but which recognize some religions as official (Protestantism and Catholicism in the case of Austria and Germany, Catholicism in the case of present day Spain). There are, finally, states in which laicism and a strict separation between Church and State is one of the essential features of the Constitution, as was the case in the Republican Spanish Constitution of 1931 and, since the 1905 law, continues to be the case in France where *laicité*[3] is an essential feature of the Constitution of the Republic.[4] The most accurate definition of these particular cases of secular states is to label them as *laic states*.

Democracy and Separation of Church and State

A State needs to fulfil some necessary conditions in order to be qualified as democratic. Among the basic ones are citizens' equality and the Rule of Law.

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[1] In a literal sense, secularization is the transformation of religious into non-religious forms, but it also refers to a decline in religious observance and it has in the end come into use as a synonym for assimilation, the absorption of religious institutions into general culture.

[2] For the sake of accuracy we differentiate between the two concepts, secular and laic, which are not always exactly the same in meaning.

[3] The French concept of *laïcité,* presented as an integral part of the identity of the French Republic, -"a pillar of the republican temple" in the words of President Jacques Chirac- is under debate and re-evaluation today, after the riots of November 2005. Since those events the recognition of the discrimination and poverty suffered by immigrants and their descendants, many of them Muslims, has prompted calls from across the political spectrum for a looser interpretation of the 1905 law.

[4] See Alfred Stepan, *Arguing Comparative Politics*, Oxford Univ. Press 2001, as well as his article "Religion, democracy and the 'Twin' Tolerations", in: *Journal of Democracy* 11/4 (2000), pp. 37-57.

1. Citizen's equality and dignity

1.1 A democratic state must ensure that all of its citizens are treated equally. The only way for a democratic state to put this equality into practice is by being neutral.

1.2 Separation between Church (institutional religion) and State is the direct outcome of the State's neutrality.

1.3 This separation is the condition necessary to guarantee religious pluralism, that is, respect and freedom for every religion. In fact, religious toleration was one of the first political steps in the long path leading to democracy. Today the role played by religion in Locke's seminal ideas is beyond discussion. These ideas form one of the main bases for the liberal approach to religion and religious toleration.[1]

1.4 Equality is a must in democracy. Without citizens' equality, a political regime cannot be labelled as democratic. Therefore toleration, of a religious or of any other kind, is something which has to be left to the pre-democratic regimes. It is not toleration, but respect, which is consistent with a democratic regime.[2] It is the separation between religion and politics that guarantees citizens' equality, as well as its actual expression - religious pluralism.

2. The separation of Church (institutional religion) and State and the question of Laicism

Separation is a political concept which means that religion cannot interfere in State politics and agenda and that the State cannot interfere in religion as such.

Separation of Church and State does not mean confrontation, but different and distinct domains of action and thinking. It is important to make it clear that secularism and laicism are political concepts relating to the democratic state, not to its citizens: it is the State, not the citizens, who should be free of religious symbols and links.

But religion is not limited to institutional religion. The religious domain is both individual and social: on the one hand, religion is a personal and individual relationship with God and the Sacred and, on the other, it is something which has social expression in the life and the social relations of the believer's religious community (to which he or she belongs). Therefore, a secular and democratic state cannot ban religion from the public sphere without contradicting

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[1] There is impressive literature on this particular topic. See, for example, the influential and much-debated book by Jeremy Waldron, *God, Locke, and Equality: Christian Foundations in Locke's Political Thought*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2002, or, among some recent articles on the subject, Micah Schwartzman, "The relevance of Locke's religious arguments for toleration", in: *Political Theory* 6.2 (2005); R. Williams, "Convictions, Loyalties and the secular State", in: *Political Theory* 6.2 (2005), pp. 153-164.

[2] Although this particular subject would need a separate and more in-depth discussion, in our opinion it is a contradiction in terms to talk about toleration in an open, free and democratic society. Insofar as toleration means an unequal status, it is inconsistent with equality, which is one of the essential features of democracy.

the State's democratic principles. Neither can it reduce religious life to the strictly private sphere, to the privacy of the believer, without breaking the essential bases upon which a democratic state is based.

The Rule of Law

The Rule of Law is another necessary feature for a state to be labelled as democratic. The question of rights makes it very clear. The individual, as a human being, has some inalienable and universal rights.[1] The relationship between the concept of universal human rights and religion is a matter worthy of discussion, but one which is not to be addressed here.[2] The relevant question here is the real applicability of those rights. To be real, those rights have to be implemented. This requires not just a general declaration, but also an executive power which will secure their fulfilment.

Without the Rule of Law any declaration risks being transformed into a dead-letter. The Rule of Law (normally in the form of a written constitution) sets up the rights, and the duties, of the citizens. The 1948 Declaration, as well as the international treaties and accords concerning human rights, are commonly included in the democracy's constitutional text (as is the case in the 1978 Spanish Constitution, § 10.2). In order to secure its implementation, and accountability towards the sovereign citizens of the State (normally represented through its parliamentary representatives), political powers (the legislative, the executive and the judiciary) have to be separated.

The citizen in a democracy has a series of rights, which the State has to guarantee and implement. Freedom of religion, of thinking, of speech, reunion and association, are amongst those rights. The only limit to the free expression of religion, both in the case of the individual as well as of collective and social expression, is the commitment to and respect of the Rule of Law, (to the Constitution). The same limit applies equally to the rest of social, political, cultural and other types of expression, both in the individual and the associative domain.

Some Practical Conclusions

In the political domain there are some practical conclusions to be deduced from what already has been said:

(a) Expression of religious opinions and behaviour must be allowed, both on the part of the individual and of the group, as long as they do not contradict the Law. They have to be allowed to be expressed, not because they are religious, but because they are individual or social. The only reason for condemning these manifestations, if so, is if they should break the law. Because it is actions, not

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[1] Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted 10 Dec. 1948, G.A. Res. 217A (III).

[2] For an interesting discussion of the possibility of conflict when human rights norms conflict with requirements of religion or philosophy, see Michael Freeman. "The Problem of Secularism in Human Rights Theory", in: *Human Rights Quarterly* 26 (2004), pp. 375-400.

ideas, that have to be condemned or permitted.[1] To quote an extreme example: the law forbids killing people. It condemns the act, not the ideology behind this act. The judge has to be indifferent to the 'reasons' of the murderer. The crime is the killing, not the observance of a religious commandment, a personal 'eye for an eye, a tooth for a tooth' code, or any other motivation. The same argument could be applied to the various ways of eating, dressing, or praying, characteristic of religious communities.

(b) It is a contradiction in terms for a state to proclaim itself secular and, at the same time, to try to interfere in the internal life of the religious community. The same can be said if the state draws political conclusions (and translates them into prohibitions) from texts which are sacred for the believers. The democratic state should not play the theologian.

(c) Financial help given to the religious institutions by the State for educational purposes, etc. should be granted, if at all, on a basis of equality and social interest, as with any other social organisation, religious, cultural, scholarly and so on.

This is the theory so far, but sometimes the real developments are far from it. Not just from a practical point of view but, most importantly, from an ideological-philosophical one, linked with the crisis of the Modernity model and the phenomena derived from globalization.

The impact of globalization

One of the most relevant developments linked with globalization is the crisis in many aspects of the Nation State. This crisis has coincided in time with the use of religion as a political tool by emerging local and ethnic nationalist groups, in some case very violently, in which religion has been used as the main argument for genocidal wars in the very heart of Europe.[2] Leaving this aspect aside, we can look at three other main issues related to globalization:

1. The question of multiculturalism (a kind of closed ghetto produced by more 'toleration' than respect and dialogue) and the as yet unresolved difficulties with integration and/or assimilation models.

2. The growing fear of the 'other', more evident if this 'other' is a Muslim, especially after the terrorist attacks of September 11.[3] Social and political fear is

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[1] There is no need to point out that, as occurs in the case of freedom of expression, thinking, etc., there are a series of political or social ideas and ideologies – as is the case with racism- which contradict human rights and are, therefore, forbidden by democratic laws. In the case that this ideology is publicly expressed or put into action, it must by all means to be judged and, finally, condemned.

[2] See, for example, Dr. Mitjha Velikonja with Zelkko Mardesic (alias Jakov Jukic), Paul Mojzes, Radmila Radic and Esas Zgodic, "The Role of Religions and Religious communities in the wars in ex-Yugoslavia 1991-1999", in: *Religion in Eastern Europe* 24/4 (2003).

[3] See "The Challenge of September 11 to Secularism in International Relations", in: *World Politics* 55(1):66 (Oct. 2002), pp. 66-95.

intertwined with a biased and oversimplified interpretation of this other's religious beliefs, and this sometimes receive clear encouragement from the preaching and declarations of various religious and political leaders who have not condemned the terrorist attacks committed in the name of religion, or who have called to the wiping "off the map" a State member of the United Nations.

3. On the other hand, religion has been increasingly used as a legitimating tool by the political leaders of the most prominent democratic regimes. The wrongs done to religion through its utilisation as a political tool are beyond doubt. I do not exaggerate when saying that in a sense it is a real tragedy for democracy as well, because democracy is not something static. Democracy is a living process. Its forms are but instruments to achieve the real goal of promoting human rights.

All this developments linked with globalization – growing ethnic nationalisms, use of religion as a tool in political warfare, not to mention the increasing economic and social inequalities between rich and poor countries – are leading towards a crisis in the whole Modernity project.

Crisis of Modernity

From the beginning, Modernity has been based on the human Reason and the capacity of human beings to build up rational links of solidarity and empathy though dialogue. But Reason has not yet fully achieved its task. Modernity is in crisis. For some, in the so-called 'post-modern' school of thinking, it is not just a crisis of growth but a real breakdown of the whole model of reason as the main basis for the human life. For others, as J. Habermas has put it, Modernity is still a process in the making, in which the capacity of human reason and communicative freedom could build up a real democracy on a new basis, that of constitutional patriotism.[1]

As the great Spanish painter, Francisco de Goya, drew in one of his best known etchings, *El sueño de la Razón produce monstruos*.[2] *Sueño* has a double meaning in the Spanish language: dream and sleep. "The dream/sleep of reason creates monsters" says Goya. I think this phrase, in its ambivalent Spanish meaning, is a good diagnosis of the present situation.

Reason, as the sole foundation of social and human life, is on trial. Reason is not able to give an answer to all human questions, neither can it give the necessary motivation, without which solidarity would not be as strong as is required for a democracy to stay alive. Solidarity is partly beyond the cognitive realm and

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[1] As J. Habermas has explained in depth it is convenient to note that this "constitutional patriotism" is not just based in the communicative reason, but in the culture and history as well.

[2] The etching is part of a series, *Los Caprichos*, in which Goya makes a sharp satire of superstitions. In *Los Caprichos* Goya shows a very critical vision of the Spanish Catholicism, with an special emphasis put on the role of the Spanish Inquisition as one of the main enemies of the Enlightenment and the religious tolerance.

needs to be connected to values and roots which are not necessarily expressed in this cognitive way.

The condition of the believer is something free. Faith, as every believer would admit, is a gift and cannot be forced upon the individual. But religion, and its presence throughout the religious community, can be an example of solidarity and compassion. Religion can be a way to address some core questions which, as far as we know, do not have a rational answer. In this capacity to create human links of solidarity and compassion, religion can be a positive way to enrich democratic regimes and their citizenry, both believers and those who do not have a religious faith.

To play this positive role, religion should accept the secular character of democratic regimes. That means not interfering as an institution in the political realm. It is beyond discussion that believers, in their role as citizens, have the right, and the duty, to participate and play an active role in political and social life.[1]

Inter-religious dialogue within pluralistic and secular societies is another important condition for religion to play this positive role. To this end, the dialogue must have a real projection, both in dialogic and in practical terms, in the society as a whole, transcending the borders of the religious strata of a particular society. If there is freedom and openness on both sides, the religious and the societal, religious people can help to build a strong and open democracy committed to human rights and the common good of every member of the society, both believers and non-believers, just because they are no more and no less than human beings.[2] Let's hope so.

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[1] This political participation brings to the fore the question of religious political parties and its role in state building. Although this is out or the reach of this article it is worth to note that only Portugal, in the EU, has openly forbidden the religious political parties (Alfred Stepan, "Religion, democracy and the 'Twin' Tolerations", *op. cit.*). For a defence of the positive political role that religious parties could play in liberal regimes see, for example, L. Rosenblum, "Religious parties, religious political identity and the could shoulder of liberal democratic thought", in: *Ethical Theory and Moral Practice*, 6, pp. 23–53, 2003.

[2] This role can be, as it is in fact, extended to conflict resolution. See, Marc Gopin *Between Eden and Armageddon: the Future of World Religions, Violence, and Peacemaking*, New York: Oxford University Press 2000.

CHRIST OR SECULAR POWER
CHRISTIANITY FACING THE TEMPTATION
OF THE SECULAR POWER

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Introduction

Today, the discourse on the significance and the role of religion in contemporary society, regardless of whether the persons in question are theologians or sociologists, should not be a facultative academic discussion between self-satisfied intellectuals. It should, rather, be a responsible discourse motivated by poverty and hopelessness, to which an increasing number of people are falling victim in a world, in which - as a result of globalization - the distance that once allowed eyes and ears to close to other and different peoples without consequences is dying away.

Emerging from the decency of both scientists and believers, this response, freed from ideological extremes, should be directed towards concrete action, which requires an in-depth transformation of both religions and societies. It should, above all, be shown in the capacity for *tolerance* and *mutual co-operation.*

Keeping this in mind, as a contribution to today's topic of our gathering, *The Separation of the Church and State: the Significance and Role of Religion in Secular Societies,* I have come to the conclusion that it would be productive to share with representatives of the other religious communities the Christian (and, here, primarily Catholic) historical experience that resulted from the relationship between the State and the Church or, formulated differently, the relationship between the secular (political) authorities and the Church, since it is precisely this relationship that has strongly shaped the face of the Church, from its origin up to the present day.

The Paradigm of the Church

If modern states, societies and religions want to respond jointly to the challenges that humanity is facing in this time of globalization - which needs to be rapidly shaped for the benefit and good of all people - then these modern states, societies and religions must, above all, adopt the wisdom invested in the history of their mutual relationship, remembering that genuine wisdom is present in the courage to recognize and learn from mistakes which have been made.

Three events are of crucial importance for Christianity and Europe – firstly, the significant imbuing of the Church and the State at the time of Emperor Constantine; secondly, religious wars between Christians within Europe, after which – on account of the Enlightenment – there was a separation of the State and the Church, which in itself implied a worldview neutrality of the State and the privatization of religion as a fundamental condition for the existence of a

pluralistic state entirety; and thirdly the Second Vatican Council – which symbolize three distinct relationships between the State and the Church and, at the same time, three different paradigms (faces) of the Church as well.

The consequence of the complete imbuing of the State and the Church was the *paradigm of the Church's rule and power.*

The consequence of a radical and unproductive separation of the State and the Church after religious wars in Europe was the *paradigm of the Church, enemy and scornful of the world, the paradigm of the Church closed within itself and turned towards an irretrievable past.*

The consequence of the Second Vatican Council, directed towards the transformation of the radical and unproductive separation of the State and the Church into mutual co-operation for the good of all people, was the *paradigm of the Church of goodness and servitude, the paradigm of the Church, friend of the world, open to the future.*

It is important to mention that, in all of the above-mentioned periods, other paradigms of the Church have also existed amongst Christians, in parallel with the dominant paradigm of the Church at that time, so that each period has been marked, to a greater or lesser extent, by tensions between the various paradigms of the Church and by different understanding of the relationship between the State and the Church – that is, secular (political) authorities and the Church; the situation is the same today, so all Christians are, above all, invited to resolve within themselves which paradigm of the Church they will realize in their own life of worship.

The Church of Rule and Power

The complete imbuing of the State and the Church has, in the end, been fatal for both the State and the Church.

Emperor Constantine, who became a Christian more for state-related benefits than for his religious beliefs, opened up a path for the *manipulation of the Church and Christianity for secular purposes.*[1] Christianity has experienced a deep transformation since it accepted a church State as a framework for the activity of believers in society, Roman law as a general code of behaviour in the Church, and Greek philosophy as the first-choice method for the perception of truth in theology. Since then, statehood has come before Church, Law before community, and philosophy before theology.[2] The newly-emerged secular victory of Christianity has been a defeat for the evangelist Christianity of goodness *because with the strengthening of rule, the serving of man has been missed out on.*[3] The alliance of the sword and the cross has become a permanent betrayal of Jesus, since the

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[1] Cf. Željko Mardešić, Crkva između dviju oprečnih nostalgija, in: *Crkva u svijetu*, no. 2/36 (2001), Split, pp. 133-134.

[2] Cf. *Same*, 133.

[3] *Same*, p. 134.

forgotten Evangelist concept of *serving man and the world* in the Church has been replaced by the concept of *ruling and the condemnation of the world and man.*

From the long list of abuses of Christianity for secular purposes, it is sufficient to list as an example, on a reflective level, the theory of a *just war*, which is contrary to evangelist peacemaking and, on the practical level, the crusades, the destruction of Constantinople, the conduct of Catholics at the time of Francoism in Spain, or the placing of Christianity in the service of the secular religion of nationalism, which is a particular temptation for religion in countries that have recently thrown off the cape of Communism, and not without the help of religion.[1]

Christian experience irrefutably demonstrates the fatal consequences of the falling of religion into the embrace of the State, since in the intertwinement of religion and politics, *politics loses the designations of reasonability and ends up in the madness of a frenzy, while religion is deformed in fanaticism and evil,*[2] becoming an officer of devious political struggles for power, an advocate and a justifier of murder, hate, and wars. In that fashion, it is deformed from the bearer of life and meaning for all religious people into a bearer of hopelessness and death.

For such deformations and abuses of religion, it would be unfair to blame only the representatives of secular power, who have often seen in religion a means of easier conquering or of strengthening of power, but rather the representatives of religion as well, many of whom foster within themselves a yearning for secular power, no less than that within the secular rulers.

All this indicates that a complete imbuement of the State and the Church should be excluded as one of the possible paths for the future.

Church the Enemy and Scornful of the World

A confirmation of the fatality of the imbuement of the State and religion was shown in a particularly strong fashion at the time of the European religious wars between the Catholics and the Protestants. The emergence of confessional pluralism within European states has caused conflict between confessions, since each one of them argues for itself that it is the only genuine one, and that only it is the foundation of the State. Used as an instrument for territorial power interests, confessions cannot offer people a path to social peace.[3]

Salvation has come from with religious communities themselves, and it has been founded on the notion of tolerance, which to this very day contains within itself a critique of religion. Relying on the human mind, the conclusion has been reached that *religious disagreement can be tolerated if it is limited to the area of pri-*

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[1] Cf. Jakov Jukić, Kršćani i suvremena civilizacija, in: Jakov Jukić, *Lica i maske svetoga*, KS, Zagreb, 1997, pp. 424-427.

[2] Jakov Jukić, Političke religije i pamćenje zla, in: Jakov Jukić, *Lica i maske svetoga*, KS, Zagreb, 1997, p. 286.

[3] Cf. Mile Babić, *Tolerancija u ime vjere*, pp. 8-9.

vate practising of religion, and if the basis of social life is not brought into question[1]. Thus, the foundation of social life was no longer to be determined religiously, since the enlightened mind was required as the founding of a general consensus.

The State has become religiously and worldview-wise neutral, taking over responsibility for that which is common to all citizens – *human dignity* – while the responsibility for that which makes the citizens *special*, under which fall confessional and religious affiliation, has been taken over by society.[2] In parallel, this has also meant that the Church has lost its former secular power to shape all aspects of life completely independently, as a decisive authority in people's lives.

Although, up to the present times, there have been those in Christian circles who have looked back on the old times of secular power of Christianity with regret for their loss, a space has opened up with the separation of the Church and the State for the return to a Christianity of the original evangelist message. By giving up on political power, Christianity gains the possibility of acting on the basis of the Gospel, independently of secular influences. Through this separation from the State, an opportunity arises - if truth be told - for Christianity to get rid of its external appearance of power and false numerousness, and to gain in intensity, depth and seriousness.[3]

In the future, any rebellion against the separation of the Church and the State will actually be a *mask,* behind which regret for the loss of political power and secular influence within the Church will be concealed. Believers have, up to now, been able to rely only upon themselves and the Gospel, and not on the seeking of help from the State, while the fact that a dialogue on tolerance, as the precondition for common life in religious worldview pluralistic societies, has come from the area of the secular - that is, not in the name of faith, but in the name of reason - is a permanent critique of religion that, thus, calls them to take responsibility for tolerance in the world.[4]

Unfortunately, the Church has not coped well under these new circumstances.

Orientation towards the past has lead the Church to a conflict with *the modern* (the condemnation of democracy and socialism), while its desire to once again reclaim secular power has lead it to a flirtation with *authoritarian regimes* – in some cases, such as in Spain, even to open alliances (Franco's regimes) with authoritarian regimes.

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[1] Christoph Schwöbel, *Tolerance out of Faith – Identity and Tolerance in the Horizon of Religious Certainty of Truth*, in: Jukić, no. 32-33 (2002/2003), Zbor franjevačkih bogoslova «Jukić», Sarajevo, pp. 90-91.

[2] Cf. Mile Babić, *Tolerancija u ime vjere*, p. 9.

[3] Cf. Željko Mardešić, *Sekularizacija i pobuna religija*, in: *Kana* 6 (2005), KS, Zagreb, p. 14.

[4] Cf. Paul M. Zulehner/Regina Polak, tolerance: *The Key of a Good Future for the Church and the Society,* in: Jukić, no. 32-33 (2002/2003), Zbor franjevačkih bogoslova «Jukić», Sarajevo, pp. 76-77.

Both intentions of the Church – to bring back the past and to regain secular power – have resulted in disappointments and frustration, which have gradually turned the Church from an insulted madam, who did not wish to converse with a world undergoing change, into an old fortress without access. Pushed to the rim of society, without the former admiration and respect that it once enjoyed, the Church has been transformed into an enemy and scorner of the world, in which it sees nothing else but sinners who need to be punished mercilessly.

Secular circles have, to a great extent, contributed to this atmosphere in the Church. The Enlightenment separation of the State and the Church was radical to the outmost limits, turning into an unproductive and radical separation, which finally grew into open hostility towards the Church and in general towards religion, as a source of all that is backward and evil in human history. This still exists even today in the form of secular fundamentalism. A hostile attitude towards the Church in the world has only solidified and strengthened those circles within the Church who view the world as an enemy, and the past as those times that need to be regained at any cost.

The vicious circle of hostility and mistrust between the world and the Church and, thus, between the State and the Church, has been brought to an end by the Second Vatican Council.

The Church of Goodness and Servitude

With the acceptance of the notion of freedom of human conscience, as an inalienable right in the selection of religious worldviews in a pluralistic society, and the autonomy of earthly and temporal things, which was expressed by the Council for Secularization, the Second Vatican Council had also accepted the separation between the State and the Church, but along with it a correction of the Enlightenment model, which had been directed towards ideological extremism – an increasing and unproductive separation of the State and the Church.[1]

Instead of that, wishing to bridge the mistrust and reticence which had emerged between the State and the Church, the Second Vatican Council talked about *dialogue* and *mutual enrichment*. The Church also wishes to learn from the world. Where dialogue rules an unproductive and absolute separation of the State from the Church cannot exist, rather co-operation between them, for the general good of all citizens.

Today, when the Church has become a part of civil society, it no longer has the right to ask for assistance from the State, rather it is invited, along with other charity associations, to confirm its credibility by offering meaning and hope to people.[2] It is instructed to act, above all, in those areas where legislation and judiciary cannot resolve everything. There will always remain uncovered areas of life open for moral and free behaviour of a responsible person, and it is precisely there that the Church and religions belong, seeing that they

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[1] Cf. Željko Mardešić, *Sekularizacija i pobuna religija*, pp. 14-15.

[2] Cf. *Same*.

should act in civil societies as the *motivators of free appreciation for the promotion of the general good and care for individuals in need.*[1]

It has been shown that, despite the disappointment of Christians looking towards secular power, the separation of the Church and State has been a life-saving occurrence which allows Christians to live out the evangelist goodness of Jesus of Nazareth, for the benefit of all people, in an atmosphere of dialogue and openness towards the world, instead of their former triumphal conceitedness and condemnation of the world.

Everyday choice

The opposition between Christianity orientated towards secular power and Christianity looking towards the evangelist calling to goodness and servitude to the world is present in Christian communities even today. Just like wheat and corn cockle grow together, the three different paradigms of the Church which we have talked about in the text above and which are, above all, the consequence of the different relationships between the State and the Church, are all present in various ways in Christian communities.

Believers are faced with everyday choices which will realize the paradigm of the Church in their own life.

If they accept inspiration by the evangelist calling, directed towards the inheritance of the goodness of Jesus of Nazareth, they will undoubtedly experience the *paradigm of the Church of goodness and servitude to the world,* which has been confirmed by the Second Vatican Council, a strong advocate of dialogue.

If they accept being inspired by disappointment and bitterness due to irretrievable past times, when the decision to be a Christian brought with it privileges and secular power, they will undoubtedly live the *paradigm of the Church, the enemy and scornful of the world,* convinced of their own righteousness and of the incorrigible wickedness of the world.

If they accept being used by secular rulers along the path of achieving secular power, they will undoubtedly try in vain to revive the *paradigm of the Church of rule and power.*

As always, there is only one blessed path – the one that is more difficult than the others – the path of goodness of Jesus of Nazareth, which withstands every ideology. The shadow of the cross always hangs over it, but only that path leads to the dawn of resurrection, and only on it can Christians be reminded, repeatedly and credibly, of the original calling of politics, which should be the art of winning people over for the greater good, even when it requires a sacrifice, and not the art of multiplying one's own benefits at the expense of others.

Conclusion

I believe that similar observations can be reached through an examination of other religious traditions, since in each one of them believers are faced with a

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[1] Željko Mardešić, *Sekularizacija i sekularizam*, in: *Kana* 4 (2005), KS, Zagreb, p. 15.

selection between two opposite nostalgias within their own tradition – *the yearning to experience and reach the primordial sacred that has been proclaimed at the beginning of time (in Christianity, in Jesus of Nazareth), and the desire to renew the former secular power of the organized sacred.*[1]

The realization of the first desire in any religious tradition ennobles believers and the society in which they live, while the realization of the other desire in any religious tradition repeatedly leads to bloody conflicts.

Due to new forms of post-modern religiousness, *the paradigm of the Church's adaptability without identity* can be added to Christians' selection, alongside the paradigms of the Church already mentioned. This paradigm will try to impose itself on the world market of religious products with cheap adaptability to current human urges and desires for commodity, and this is equally as fatal for the Christian faith as is rigid introversion without dialogue with the world.

Little wisdom is required in order to see that a deep fear and lack of depth in one's own identity is hidden behind both positions, which is why the other is viewed as a threat to one's own purity and survival.

Like Christians, the believers of other religious traditions will – lead by the mercy of God – have to find a narrow path between fundamental reticence and immensurable adaptability to the world market of religious offers, and are equally facing new temptation.

This is a path towards the intensification and deepening of one's own religious identity, as the precondition for dialogue, joy, and confidence in freedom.

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[1] Cf. Željko Mardešić, *Crkva između dviju oprečnih nostalgija*, pp. 127-130.

The Islamic State:
Alternative to Western Democracies?

THE ISLAMIC STATE:
AN ALTERNATIVE TO WESTERN DEMOCRACY?

Dr Mohamed Mosaad (ET)

Introduction

This question, like all questions, is formed and proposed within a specific historical milieu; and it is through the understanding of this specific socio-cultural, economic and political context that one can comprehend the question, read its unwritten but implied premises and understand what answer is especially required and perhaps how to seek it out as well. The text of the question is no less important however. The selection of the words, their order and the internal relationships this order creates reveal much of actively interacting ideological structures, social imagination, political powers, cultural biases and more. In this paper I decided to respond to, not to answer, the highlighted question, no matter how provocative the question could be. Instead of replying it I will rather reflect on the complex process of its reading, and then propose some approaches of answering it.

The Problematization of the Question

1. The Context

This question is raised in an Abrahamic dialogue forum that its meeting is sponsored by Konrad Adenauer Foundation, a foundation that belongs to the German Christian Democratic Party. Dialogue, democracy and religion are, therefore, three welcomed, in fact required, values. Locally the meeting is held in Sarajevo, Bosnia, a place that witnessed one of the fiercest sectarian national and religious wars in human history only a few years ago. Regionally, the participants come from both European and Middle Eastern countries. In other sessions, as well as in formal and informal discussions, European participants reflect concerns of Islamophobia, immigration, cultural diversity, social integration and sometimes Turkey's joining the European Union. Middle Eastern participants come in with a different set of concerns. They mostly think of the Arab Israeli conflict and the Euro-American agenda of reform and democratization of the Middle East, and the role Europe plays or does not play in both of them.

Globally, this specific question could be traced back in history to the French invasion of the Orient. From a Southern perspective the question has, thus, passed through successive historical contexts of Orientalism, post-colonialism, neo-liberal globalism and finally post-September eleventh American war on terrorism. In its first round the question aimed to objectively situate the Islamic politics in its right place on an evolutionary path of human civilization, its political most advanced epoch was Western Liberalism. We, Orientals, had to receive the challenge and see, in answering this question, how to conform to the unquestioned modern standards. There were those who sought the conformation by rejecting the history, by modifying the present through some developmental and progressive changes, or by going back to some pure fundamentals of the history, which were claimed to be in essence conforming to modernity. No matter which alternative you may take you had already premised a necessary rupture between an aspired modern and a disgraced traditional.

After the long years of Orientalism had passed, Muslims, in a post-colonialism fashion waged a counterattack to tackle the same question. An "Islamic State", a political, social and cultural trans-historical meta-structure, was emphasized as the Islamic "alternative". In a Cold War context the alternative was meant to distance and distinguish the Muslims' reality and future from the two conflicting camps and to stop the hopeless conforming process by a dramatic turn to a genuine and authentic self. Oil money soon flowed in to support and propagate this authenticity (or fundamentalism?) project. With neo-liberal globalism succeeding the previous wave the pendulum swiftly swing away from authenticity to openness. The great structure shattered into a plethora of cultural symbols, which frequently became a sort of "flowing signs that search for a meaning", in Best and Kellner's words.[1] The production and recycling of cultural symbols were aimed to integrate them in and to decorate a global mosaic socio-cultural and to, in the name of building a cultural identity, satisfy a nostalgic local consumer.

Now, in a post-September eleventh era the Islamic State has still to be interrogated, perhaps more than ever. In The New Democracy Imperative, Thomas Carothers and Marina Ottaway wrote,

"The issue of democracy in the Middle East has erupted in Western policy circles. U.S. officials, policy experts, and pundits, very few of whom gave the subject more than a passing thought in decades past, now heatedly and ceaselessly debate how democratic political change might occur in the region and whether the United States can help bring about such change. Similarly, in many European capitals the Middle East's potential democratic evolution is the subject of a rapidly growing number of meetings, conferences, and discussions in both governmental and nongovernmental circles. This new Western preoccupation with democracy in the Middle East has a clear source. The terrorist attacks

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[1] Best, Steven & Douglas Kellner, *The Postmodern Turn*, The Guilford Press, 1997, p. 274.

against New York and Washington on September 11, 2001, threw into question a long-standing pillar of Western policy thinking in the region – the belief that the political stability offered by friendly Arab authoritarian regimes is a linchpin of Western security interests. In the process of post-September 11 review and reflection, many people in the U.S. and European policy communities reversed their previous outlook and now see the lack of democracy in the Middle East as one of the main causes of the rise of violent, anti-Western Islamic radicalism, and as such, a major security problem. And it follows directly from this conclusion that attempting to promote political reform and democratization in the region should be a policy priority— one of the key methods for eliminating the "roots of terrorism." The new democracy imperative for the Middle East, at least on the part of Western policy makers, is thus driven not by a trend toward reform in the region, but by the West's own security concerns."[1]

The Middle East creates violence and terrorism, therefore, because it lacks democracy; this is the rationale of all this interest in democracy. The quoted piece, however, explains why democracy is prescribed, but falls short to explain why Islam is addressed at all. The latter question is rooted in two more assumptions. First, there is a radical heterogeneity between the Middle Eastern Islamic culture and democracy. This medieval incompetent culture is incompatible with, if not hostile to, Western liberal democracy. Second, what makes it even worse is that any invitation to democracy will most probably bring the least democrats whom no one wants to invite: Islamists. Of course they are the least democrats because they are the most holders and advocates of that incompetent culture.

What makes the solution so difficult is that the West can not simply gift its achievements to the Middle East. Middle Easterns, and especially their Islamists, must walk themselves all the way along from Renaissance, to Enlightenment to safely reach the shores of Modernity. To politically be democratic they must economically adopt capitalism and free market strategies, and culturally pursue secularism and religious reformation. Free meals are not offered; Middle Easterns must cook it for themselves. The authors of the 9/11 Commission Report, Ten Commissioners, five Republicans and five Democrats, wrote,

"The small percentage of Muslims who are fully committed to Usama Bin Ladin's version of Islam are impervious to persuasion. It is among the large majority of Arabs and Muslims that we must encourage reform, freedom, democracy, and opportunity, even though our own promotion of these messages is limited in its effectiveness simply because we are its carriers. Muslims themselves will have to reflect upon such basic issues as the concept of jihad, the position of women, and the place of non-Muslim minorities. The United States

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[1] Thomas Carothers & Marina Ottaway, The New Democracy Imperative, in: Thomas Carothers & Marina Ottaway (eds.), *The Uncharted Journey*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 2005, pp. 3-4.

can promote moderation, but cannot ensure its ascendancy. Only Muslims can do this."[1]

Worthy to mention here is that these successive historical contexts never completely cease off. Traces of earlier contexts intermingle with the contemporary that their showing up is frequently contingent in the discussion.

2. The Text

The question starts with the perplexing word *the*, which implies the existence of a one known "Islamic State". It treats "the Islamic State" not as a discursive and ever changing formation of socio-political relations that mediates and regulates political power, but rather as a static a-historical structure. The word *the* essentializes the relative and extremely diversified historical experiences, which stretched over three continents and covered long centuries. We are left with a feeling that we stand before a rather established system that one needs only to read its guidebook to understand how it works.

The second word *Islamic* is no less perplexing. Why does the questioner attribute *Islamic* to that structure? Is it Islamic because it is rooted, in design and practice, in Holy Scriptures? Is it Islamic because it was run by Muslims, in other words, by people whose religion was Islam? Is it Islamic because it had been created by a Divine instruction or because the objectives it seeks out are those instructed divinely? All these questions deserve much reflection and elaboration and are susceptible to a wide range of perspectives and views. In other words, "Islamic" is a convoluted word that invites interpretations and controversy, not a word with a for-granted meaning.

The third word *state* instantly recalls the notion of the modern national state. Accordingly, *The Islamic State* turns into a sort of theocratic central state. The hegemonic and overwhelming central political power of the modern national state obscures and distorts the very nature of the pre-modern discursive, pluralized, complex, decentralized and highly differentiated socio-political formations that are now collectively dubbed up as "the Islamic State". There is no longer any room to recognize and comprehend the considerable independence of the social from the political, the social sovereignty, if you may, over a wide variety of socioeconomic activities like education, health service, agriculture, transportation and trade among others. There, diffused power, legislation and organization are regulated through, and supported by, an extending social nexus of discourses and institutions, all of which are not under the direct control of a central political power.

That is certainly not to say that a political authority had never existed before the creation of the modern national state, or that this authority was left out completely helpless or functionless. A decentralized political authority did exist and thrive for long centuries. In addition to its important symbolic function, as a symbol of unity, it basically maintained the security function, both internal

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[1] Kean, Thomas H., Chair, The 9/11 Commission Report, the National Commission on Terrorist Attacks Upon the United States, p. 375-376.

and external. It counted on taxes and Zakat, obligatory alms, to carry on this responsibility and to manage a range of executive functions that served the public in general. Nevertheless, at all levels, executive, legislative and judicial, this authority was greatly and continuously contested, negotiated and compromised.

It is no question that the political authority has to appoint the judges to their posts. Nor is it a question that this authority is required to build schools, hospitals and mosques. Nevertheless, judges, wherever they go, will rely on an uncodified law that is continuously growing, multiplying and changing through the works of unlimited number of non appointed scholars and local Muftis. Consequently, this law, even in the same time and place, has many schools and so different "opinions", from which the judge picks up or makes his verdict. If the concerned litigants are not satisfied they can simply move on to the next judge seeking a different verdict that meets their expectations. On the other hand, schools, hospitals and mosques are built not only by the political authority but also, and more importantly, in a sense of their number, size and diversity, by the people themselves. If the political authority counts on Zakat and taxes the people count on voluntary charity and well-organized and socially-managed endowments, over which the political authority has no control. Scholars, physicians and Imams who work in these and those institutions observe no specific curriculum or doctrine instructed by the political authority. They simply observe their conscience[1]. It is people, not a decentralized political authority, who decide for themselves to whom they want to go and whom they prefer to leave.

Likewise, police forces or commissions of the political authority could be deployed in the marketplace or all along the travel ways. Nonetheless, trade and daily economic transactions are conducted through customs, laws and organizations, which are all created, developed and regulated through vibrant social processes. For instance, there are specific ways for boys to start their apprenticeship and get gradually promoted to a number of sequential professional levels through a specific hierarchy. There are oaths one must give to join this or that craft, in which one vows the commitment of the specific basic etiquettes of the concerned craft. Besides, each craft or trade has its own professional organization that puts the regulations of the practice, solve the internal conflicts, coordinate the external relations with other professional leagues and organizations, pursue the interests of its members and select their representatives.

An essential point that is frequently missed by those who approach the "Islamic State" is that we can not talk in this context about a "society" or claim all these activities to an imagined "civil society". The society is a very modern concept, a direct result of the erection of the central national state, before which a civil society is simultaneously created. The social there, in the premodern Muslim context, refers to overlapping spaces filled in by a great num-

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[1] See for instance Al-Mawardi, Abu al-Hassan Ali Ibn Mohammed, *Al-Ahkam As-Sultaniya*, Cairo: Al-Maktaba al-Tawfikiya, 1978, pp. 214-215.

ber of intersecting social and cultural formations, which are partly based in ethnic, tribal, religious, denominational, ideological, linguistic, professional, etc. identities. It is through these socio-cultural formations that power is mediated and regulated.

The plurality of these discursive formations, which cover the majority of the human activities like trade, education, arbitration, medicine, literature, traffics, religion, clothing, sports, domestic relations, agriculture, cities designing, entertainment, etc. made it possible to accommodate the diversity of communities. The decentralized and not infrequently marginalized political authority would be recalled only when there is a conflict of power. An early attempt by the political authority to create and install a unified legal system was instantly rejected by the very scholar, Imam Malik, who was nominated for the mission. That certainly does not mean a harmonious relation has always flourished between the political authority and the different sociocultural institutions and their representatives. However, as I said earlier, power was greatly and continuously contested, negotiated and compromised. The political authority had, of course, every interest to play power. It had, nonetheless, to play it through those sociocultural formations, not against them, and as a one actor among competing others.

That is being said, one still wonders to which Islamic State the questioner refers? Is it the historical state that unfolded historically through thirteen centuries and geographically over three continents, the one we have just glimpsed in the above paragraphs? Is it the theoretical state, which medieval scholars, like Al Mawerdi, sketched out in books, which aimed to outline the structure and basic functions of the political authority? Is it the ideological state, which modern Islamists have been portraying and preaching for a century now? This later state is a sort of adopted modern nation state, in structure, which is masked by or decorated with a display of Islamic rhetoric and symbols carefully picked up from a selectively read history. Unfortunately this essential question has always been ignored and accordingly debaters, researchers and writers have used to jump off from one domain to the other without recognizing the ontological differences between the addressed domains.

The fourth word *alternative* reveals a presupposed political position, a specific understanding of global and local socio-political realities, in which these realities are precisely classified and demarcated into a number of well-distinguished cultures, civilizations, or ideologies belonging to specific societies or groups of people. The interrelationship between two given realities could be one of juxtaposition, understanding, cooperation, or clash. This is not the point. The point, which the semiotic of the question betrays, is that you must choose only one of these alternatives. If you take Islamic State you drop out Western democracy; if you take the later you forget about the earlier. In the world of global politics it turns into a zero-sum game.

The whole situation is a reminiscent of the Cold War environment. One can not help but remember The Socialist Alternative of the late Predrag Vranicki,

the Yugoslavian Marxist. Under Alliance Politics, the Encyclopaedia of Marxism wrote:[1]

"The current 'Anti-Capitalist Movement' is an example of Alliance Politics, with a very wide range of political and social groups coming together to protest against the big, supranational institutions of capitalism, hated alike by farmers, small business people, trade unionists, the religious, socialists, communists, and environmentalists. It should be self-evident however, that until this movement has an alternative to a world run by transnational capitalist organisations it cannot constitute any fundamental threat; but as soon as the movement agrees on an alternative vision, it is no longer alliance politics."

The above piece is quite interesting as it echoes the logic of the main question of this paper. Here, "capitalism" is used in the same way "Western democracy" is used in our question: a comprehensive, demarcated construction that is well-distinguished from other constructions, or alternatives. The only way to threaten capitalism is to found another alternative. All micro-politics, practiced daily through alliances, which are probably specific-issue based, can not constitute any genuine way of political participation that could lead to a real change. In this ideological and simplistic analysis we can not see the layers of capitalism. Nor can we see the conflicting currents within it. Nor can we comprehend "capitalism" as merely an arbitrary intellectual concept that was coined to conceptualize an ever extending and changing complex corpus of socioeconomic, political and cultural transactions, dynamics and changes. Both the Chinese capitalism and the French social welfare system are downplayed for they may distort the clear intellectual image of the socialist alternative versus the capitalist alternative. One may adopt a clash of civilizations or a dialogue of civilizations view; one may embrace an orthodox ideology, like Islamists' Caliphate, or a modified ideology, like George Bush's democracy, which takes different forms in different places to adapt to different "cultures". In all cases the core of these and those visions is that we talk about different alternatives.

The above quotation inspires reflections that deal with the fifth word: *Western*. According to the Encyclopaedia of Marxism "farmers, small business people, trade unionists, the religious, socialists, communists, and environmentalists" must unify in an alternative vision, not ally in tactical movements, so that they can thwart a supposedly unified capitalism that its supranational different corporations are portrayed not as competing political actors but as merely its means and manifestations. Here a unified Other is displayed against a unified self. This is the same picture drawn by putting the word "Western" after "the Islamic State" separated from it only by the determining word "alternative". After proposing a one unified Islamic State "Western" comes now to emphasize its antagonist: a one unified West. I do not think we need to prove how mythical this idea of a one West is, but is it less mythical to talk about a one

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[1] *Encyclopaedia of Marxism*, Alliance Politics, produced as a CD and published on the internet by Marxist.org, last checked on April 29, 2006.

Western democracy. Which one does the question refer to when it says "Western democracy"? Is it the Athenian direct participation democracy, the one party Eastern European democracy or the liberal multiparty democracy? Suppose it is the latter, are there no differences, significant differences, between the democracies of England, Switzerland and France?

Interesting in the semiotic of the question is the posing of "Western" versus "Islamic", an awkward selection of words that invites some reflection. As odd as it is, the arrangement is not uncommon. One comes frequently across it in the media, as well as in the academia. It is not Islam versus Christianity; nor is it East versus West; it is Islam versus West, the religious versus the geographical. The only possible explanation puts the question square in the debate of secularization. Spontaneously the replier slips into centuries-long European debates and arguments of the Church State relationship. The framing is emphasized when the debate is simultaneously encountered by Islamist ideologues' rhetoric of the Islamic State and Islam as religion and life. The debaters use politics, state and life, and religion, faith and Church interchangeably and the resulting confusion we have already witnessed for a century.

Next to the odd opposition of Islamic and West we are struck by a second and no less odd opposition of state and democracy, which leads us right to the last and sixth word *democracy*. To compare state with democracy is to over-credit the latter by reducing the enormous modern Western national state experiences into one of its processes. This over-simplification and over-centralization of democracy is a relatively recent phenomenon. Liberal democracy has, no doubt, been preached continuously. Nonetheless, it is only since 1989, the fall of the former Soviet Union and the democratic changes in Eastern Europe that democracy, not capitalism and free market, has been so much privileged and centralized. It is only recently that a controversial mechanism of running governments by electing representatives became that important in solving a wide range of life problems that includes among others, social injustice, environmental degradation, exploitative work relationships, cultural conflicts, global terrorism, religious violence, wars, marginalization of ethnic and religious minorities, and gender inequality. I do not have, Heaven forbid, any doubt about the value of democracy in solving all these problems and more; I am only questioning its overemphasis, over-centralization, this absolute faith, if you may, in democracy. In The 1989 Revolutions and the Triumph of Liberalism David Held wrote,

"It is one thing to accept the arguments concerning the necessary protective, conflict-mediating, and redistributive functions of the democratic state; quite another to accept these as prescribed in existing accounts of liberal democracy from J.S. Mills onward. Advocates of liberal democracy have tended to be concerned, above all else, of the proper principles and procedures of democratic government. But by focusing on "government," they have attracted attention away from a thorough examination of the relations between:
1. formal rights and actual rights;

2. commitments to treat citizens as free and equal, and practices which do neither sufficiently;

3. concepts of the state as, in principle, an independent authority, and involvements of the state in the reproduction of the inequalities of everyday life;

4. notion of political parties as appropriate structures for bridging the gap between state and society, and the array of power centres which such parties and their leaders cannot reach.

To ignore these questions is to risk placing "democracy" in the context of a sea of political, economic and social inequality. And it is to risk the creation of, at best, a very partial form of democratic politics -one in which the participation f some bears a direct relation to the limited or non-participation of others."[1]

In addition to the centralized position democracy has also assumed a normative status. The welfare warfare national state that was founded to keep security and foster prosperity is considered good or bad according to its commitment to democracy; that is to the way it rules not the objectives it makes. The irony here is that the Islamic State, at least in the imagination of its ideologues, would be the best example of a political authority, which guaranteed the best economy and best security to its citizens. Why should democracy then be important anyway, especially when we see how failing the newly democratic Eastern European states are and when we know that the essence of Muslims' problems is economic crises and security threats?

The security-economy notion interestingly reminds us with the foundation of the liberal democratic states in another sense. European cultural enlightenment and industrial revolution gave birth of liberalism that its objective was keeping religion, the family and the economy as independent domains away from the direct control of the political authority. The establishment of capitalism, the development of the industrial society and the deep involvement of the liberal states in militarism, and therefore the dire need to taxes, turned the liberals into liberal democrats as they needed to be directly involved in politics. It is hard to believe how this history and context is simply forgotten in our cry to democratize the world. It is also hard to believe how democracy is claimed as a *natural* way to international peace-building when it was born out of the direct involvement in heavy militarism. That is, once again, not to deny its importance in peacemaking, but only to raise every possible doubt against taking it as normative. It is not the Orange Revolution, or any other coloured revolution that will bring in democracy; it is the unfolding of capitalism, the industrial society, and the coupling of taxation and representation that could make it.

Now let us raise the last perplexing doubt. Let us first put aside the rich and extended nineteenth and early twentieth century debate about the credibility of democracy in making the good society; can we still talk about democracy the

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[1] David Held, "The 1989 Revolutions and the Triumph of Liberalism, in Modernity", in: Stuart Hall et al. (eds.), *An Introduction to Modern Societies*, Polity Press, 1995, p. 462.

way it was a century ago or the way it is now in Western media manifestos directed basically to reform the yet unreformed Islamic World? Are not we simply ignoring an entire century-long history of evolvement of this "democracy"? Where can we find the Habermasian public sphere that invites rational debates and direct public participation, the Foucauldian discourse and its tackling of the nature of power, and therefore resistance, the one-issue oriented activism and alliance politics, the debates around cultural identities, the theorization of the new media and its role in increasing direct, not representative, public participation, and all the debates around neoliberal globalism? Invisible here is also a long history of postmodern critique that has defied the very bases of representative democracy: the modern independent subject, the possibility of representation, the existence and separation of public and private spheres, and not the least the hegemonic national state and its claimed functions. Can we still take a project that is both controversial and open as normative and rush to measure to it a premodern historical experience of different nature and objectives?

New Approaches

The above refraining from directly answering the question and the detouring around and through it do not mean the issues concerned should be ignored. The nexus of religion and politics, displayed in different historical contexts with the objective of creating the "good society" will forever be an un-escapable site for reflection and revision. In this trajectory both the "Islamic State" and "democracy" are quite significant. They are significant however not as alternatives that one should weigh them to pick his/her choice. Nor are they significant as comprehensive or complete projects. They are in fact significant as particular historical human experiences that went on through a larger ongoing human endeavour of creating the good society. Besides, they are especially important when we become conscious of a turning point in history. In such moments we need not to pick an alternative or even to develop or modify it, but we need to make a new alternative(s), a new historical beginning, which later on, and in retrospective wisdom, we will recognize only as a humble and particular experience constructed through the larger and universal endeavour of creating the good society.

In the making of this new alternative discourse what we need the most is a profound critique, a de and reconstruction of all earlier discourses. Here both the Islamic State and Western democracy, as historical discourses, become an essential and integral part in the process of constructing a new discourse, a process that has to go through their critique. Here the seeking of the good society, a legitimate and eternal human dream, requires the careful examination of the core knowledge of a nexus of contemporary discourses. With Islamic State and Western democracy we must visit discourses of modernity, postmodernity, nation state, globalization, civil society, human rights, secularization, authenticity, fundamentalism and terrorism among others. We must also examine how the concepts of this core knowledge are translated into a discursive system of power: non governmental organizations, social formations, institutions, legisla-

tions, curricula, traditions, cultural products, political institutions, and business companies.

At the heart of our inquiry lies "power"; how is it mediated; and how is it exercised? How religious traditions, political institutions, cultural narratives, social formations and economic structures are all weaved out and used through dominant discourses; and how this use reflects the dynamism and biases of power? Moreover, how does this dynamism open new possibilities and how does it shutter others; what potentials could exist because of a certain arrangement of this power; and what limits could be arbitrary imposed because of this very same arrangement? What, for instance, practices, concepts, strategies, tactics and structures does a discourse of secularization create and further; and what practices, concepts, strategies, tactics and structures does the same discourse limit or even make impossible? Could "Islam" be a by-product discourse of secularization? How does that affect its modern nature and action?

How such a discourse as Islam opens new possibilities, gathers new impetus and simultaneously locks up others? What questions could be registered and legitimized and what questions could not even be thought of because of such a discourse? In addition to that, how discourses of Islam or democracy are contested, negotiated and compromised by different groups; what are these groups; and could the identity of these groups be based in subjectivities created by the same contested discourse, as the case is when we see for example a debate between democrats and nationalists, who are automatically converted into autocrats, or a debate between liberals and orthodox, who are both turned into reformers and fundamentalists? How consciously or unconsciously certain classes assume new subjectivities to attain more power and how does this instantly marginalize their social competitors?

These are the sort of questions we need to raise. Put it in one question they could be: how power is mediated, regularized and exercised, in a particular historical context, and how does our understanding of the nature and action of this power help us in our ambition to create "the good society", which is in itself a discursive historical discourse that mediates, regularizes and exercises power? To tackle this elusive and abstract question we must situate it in specific issues. There are numerous sites that are appropriate to accommodate this question: the making of law, the ruling of law, the social welfare, the just distribution of wealth, the national and international security and others. While addressing these issues and uncovering the dynamics and biases of power we will be surprised with the size of knowledge we will gain about the "Islamic State" and "Western democracy".

THE ISLAMIC STATE:
ALTERNATIVE TO WESTERN DEMOCRACIES?

Prof. Dr Fikret Karčić (BIH)

1. Ideal Islamic state is perceived by many in the Muslim world as an alternative to Western democracies. Further elaboration of this phenomenon requires discussion of the concept of state in Islam or Islamic State and its comparison with Western democracies.

2. There are two variations of the concept of Islamic State: classical and modern:

3. **The classical concept of Islamic State (example: *Al-ahkam al-sultaniyyah* by Al-Mawardi [d. 1031])**

4. This concept is built on the historical experience of the state of Madina during the time of the Prophet, early Caliphs, and their successors down to the 5th /11th century.

5. Basic characteristics:

- Islam is defined as *din wa-dunya* (religion and this world) what implies the unity of religious and political authority.

- The head of state is the *imam* who possesses both religious nad political qualifications.

- He has an advisory body (*majlis al-shura*).

- He is elected by an electoral body or appointed by his predecessor

- He is given an expression of acceptance and loyalty (*bay'a*) by representatives of the Muslim community (*ahl al-hall wa'l-'aqd*).

- His main duty is to guarantee security of, and protect, his subjects and to administer Islamic law (*shari'a*).

- In this state *Shari'a* rules and nobody is above it.

- The Imam can only arrange for the administration of Islamic law and pass regulations needed for its application (*qanun*) based on the concept of *al-siyasa al-shar'iyya* ("administration in accordance with *Shari'a*").

- Inhabitants of such a state politically constitute a body of subjects known as *ra'iyya* (lit. *flock*), while the ruler is seen as *ra'i* (lit. *shepherd*).

- In terms of legal status there is a difference between Muslims and Non-Muslims or *dhimmis* (protected minority). As such there is no all-inclusive category of "citizenship".

- *Dhimmis* were entitled to protection of life, religion, property, family and honour. They were allowed to hold public offices up to the level of "executive minister" (*wazir al-tanfidh)* in government.

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6. Shortcomings of the classical model:

- Procedure for the election of imam was not precisely developed
- Checks and balances between "legislature", executive and judiciary were not established.
- The procedure for peaceful removal from, change of, power was not envisaged (therefore, a large number of changes in Muslim political history were achieved by force, only).
- The election of members of the advisory council (*majlis al-shura*) was not regulated.

7. **A modern model of Islamic State (example: *Islamic Law and Constitution* by Sayyid Abu l-Ala al-Mawdoodi (d. 1979)**

The notion of "Islamic State" (*al-dawla al-islamiyya*) was especially used in present time by Islamists or those who define Islam as an ideology and strive to establish polity based on such ideology

8. Basic characteristics:

- Islam is defined as *din wa-dawla* (*religion and state*).
- *Republic*, not only monarchy is acceptable for of an Islamic State.
- Territorially, an Islamic state could be a *nation state*, not a universal one.
- Basic features of *republican government* are included into an Islamic framework: the existence of parliament, responsible government, independent judiciary and elected head of state.
- All-inclusive concept of *citizenship* is used. Non-Muslims are seen as religious minority (-ies) with limited access to public high offices.

The Combination of Islamic and republican elements opened some important issues:

- To whom does sovereignty belong in an Islamic state? Al-Mawdoodi answered: *De iure* sovereignty belongs to God, but, *de facto*, it belongs to the people. This form of government he called "theo-democracy".
- What is relationship between *Shari'a* and legislative power of the government? Al-Mawdoodi answered: Parliament legislation can not go against prescriptions of the *Shari'a*.
- Who will determine that some laws are contrary to *Shari'a*? Practice in Pakistan: Federal *Shari'a* Court is authorized to proclaim a specific law as *ultra vires* for being contrary to *Shari'a*.
- What is meant by "contrary to *Shari'a*" – contrary to Shari'a principles or contrary to detailed elaboration of *Shari'a* in books of jurisprudence (*Fiqh*)? The answer to this question varies in theory, with modern reformist scholars emphasizing "principles of *Shari'a*" (*mabadi al-shari'a al-islamiyya*).

9. **Is the Islamic state alternative to Western democracies**?

- We have seen that the concept of the Islamic State has been modified in our times by including a number of features of Western republican democracies.

- Among supporters of the idea of an Islamic State there is no consensus about the model which they wish to establish: classical or modern. In some cases, such as the case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, there are significant changes in the very vision of the Islamic State. Now, members of this organization officially support democracy without mentioning Islamic characteristics of it such as *shura* (consultation), they say that democracy belongs so the people without mentioning "in accordance with *Shari'a*", and, finally, they accept the concept of citizenship without any restriction for Non-Muslims with regard their eligibility to hold the highest offices in the government.

- In the same time, some Muslim authors begun to pay attention to issues such as "Islam and secular state" considering a concept of secular state, understood as "neutrality with respect", as possibly acceptable for, at least, some Muslim communities. This tendency is becoming more visible among Muslims living in the West.

- The ongoing debate on the Islamic State in contemporary Muslim world indicates that there is strong a stand among Muslims for the presence of Islam in public life of the Muslim countries. The issue is whether such presence necessarily means calling for establishment of a religious state or state modelled according to the idea of Western democracy with religious-Islamic-society.

- The Muslim world is still in search for the answer to this last question.

Living together.
Learning from Other's Experiences

THE THREE FAITHS FORUM

Mr Sidney L. Shipton (UK)

Introduction

First, I want to make it quite clear that I am not an academic but a non-practicing lawyer working in the voluntary not-for-profit sector for many years. Since 1997 I have been the Co-ordinator of the Three Faiths Forum – Muslim/Christian/Jewish Trialogue although I have been involved in interfaith activity for many years, in fact, since my student days and I believe passionately in this work.

There is one word that is of paramount importance, namely, 'dialogue'. Through dialogue we get integration but not, I hasten to add, assimilation

1. The background to Interfaith activity in the UK

To make a presentation on the activities of the Three Faiths Forum I must first give something of the background to interfaith activity, with specific reference to the UK. I firmly believe that we in Britain have taken the lead, and continue to take the lead, in this field. It was in 1942, during World War Two, that the Council of Christians and Jews was formed and which led to the formation of the International Council of Christians and Jews – which today consists of some 40 member organisations worldwide. I am not afraid to use the terms religion or faith because I believe they are of importance in the context of what we discuss today. Perhaps we can use the words faith, religion and heritage interchangeably.

1.1. The Jewish community

Until comparatively recently in historic terms, there was only one minority community in the UK, namely the Jews. It has been suggested that the first Jews who came to the British Isles were slaves from the Holy Land taken prisoner by the Romans and brought over with Julius Caesar in 55 BC. There does not appear to be any documentary evidence as to this, but certainly Jews were part of the Norman invasion force of William the Conqueror in 1066.

Jews continued to be a minority community in Britain until King Edward expelled the community in 1290 and although some Jews remained, hiding their religion, it was not until the mid-17th century that Jews were re-admitted by Oliver Cromwell, when Britain was a Republic. He acceded to the request of

Menasseh Ben Israel of Amsterdam. (Jews had arrived in the Low Countries from Portugal and Spain when they were expelled from Spain in 1492 and a few years later from Portugal.)

Today the British Jewish community is a well established and integrated but small community of approximately 300,000.

1.2. The Muslim community

The Muslim community has been in existence in Britain for several hundred years but they did not come from the Mediterranean area. They came primarily as seamen, (known as Lascars), who were recruited by the East India Company from Yemen, Bengal, Assam, Sind and Gujarat. Of course, some did settle in British ports, including London and there were a number of Muslim businesses (such as the Mohammed Baths in Brighton, founded by Sake Deen Mohammed). When the Suez Canal was opened in 1869 even more Muslim sailors arrived. Some married and settled in British ports such as Cardiff, Liverpool, South Shields and Tyneside.

However, today we must note that the bulk of the Muslim population came from Pakistan in the 1950s (and some from Uganda, when President Idi Amin decided to expel his Muslim community). Today the Muslim community in Britain is estimated at two million (see Table 1):

Country or region of origin	Lower estimates	Higher estimates
Bangladesh	180,000	200,000
India	120,000	160,000
Pakistan	520,000	610,000
Middle East and North Africa	230,000	350,000
Other	150,000	180,000
Totals	**1.2m**	**1.5m**

All population figures are "guesstimates" since in the last census following a great deal of controversy questions as to religion and ethnicity were voluntary, although completing a census form is compulsory in all other respects.

It is important to note that the background of Muslim populations differs from country to country. For example, the majority of Muslims in France come from North Africa and the majority in Italy come from Libya. Also, the majority of Muslims in the world are not from Arab countries or the Mediterranean area.

2. The Three Faiths Forum

The Three Faiths Forum was set up in January 1997. Sir Sigmund Sternberg, who then held an honorary position on the Council of Christians and Jews in UK, suggested that the Council should become a Council of Muslims, Christians and Jews. For various reasons this suggestion was rejected and Sir Sigmund then resigned from the Council of Christians and Jews and together with

Sheikh Dr. M.A. Zaki Badawi KBE and Rev. Dr. Marcus Braybrooke DD set up the Three Faiths Forum. I was appointed Co-ordinator.

2.1. The Three Co-founders

Let me say a word or two about the three co-founders of the Forum. Sir Sigmund Sternberg, a businessman, devoted to interfaith relations is the President of the Reform Synagogues of Great Britain. In 1998 he was awarded the Templeton Prize for Progress in Religion for his interfaith work. He is the sole Patron of the International Council of Christians and Jews, and one of only two Jewish Papal Knights in the UK.

Sheikh Dr. M.A. Zaki Badawi KBE is Principal of the Muslim College in London, Chairman of the Council of Imams and Mosques UK and former Chief Imam and Director of the Islamic Cultural Centre and Central London Mosque in Regent's Park. Dr. Badawi is a leading moderate Muslim.

Rev. Dr. Marcus Braybrooke DD, Joint President of the World Congress of Faiths, is known worldwide for his work over many years in the field of interfaith activity. He is a former Director of the Council of Christians and Jews and has recently been honoured with a doctorate by the Archbishop of Canterbury at Lambeth Palace.

2.2. Charitable status

The Three Faiths Forum then applied for charitable status and a legal battle began with the Charity Commission, who strangely enough did not consider that the promotion of interfaith understanding was for the benefit of the community, but after seeking a legal opinion from a well-known expert on charity law, within days, charitable status was granted.

3. The work of the Three Faiths Forum

The basis of the work of the Three Faiths Forum is comparatively simplistic, in that the major activity is to promote understanding and mutual respect between the three Abrahamic monotheistic faiths. Islam, Christianity and Judaism all spring from the Hebrew Scriptures and the prophets, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob and Moses and thus have much in common.

3.1. The Advisory Board

The Three Faiths Forum works at several levels. First, it has an Advisory Board, where approximately 50 representatives of Islam, Judaism and Christianity come together every couple of months to hear reports and to act as a think tank. Although one cannot claim that all branches of the three Abrahamic monotheistic faiths are represented, through a process of regular rethinking and co-option, the Advisory Board maintains a good representation. Something one often forgets is that there are many differing groups within each of the three faiths, for example regarding Christianity we have representatives not only of the Protestants and Catholics but also the Greek Orthodox and the Salvation Army.

With regard to Judaism, there are representatives of the United Synagogue (middle of the road Orthodox), Reform, Liberal, Conservative and even Ultra-Orthodox. It may well be that the Advisory Board of the Three Faiths Forum is one of the few places where we can get so many different religious communities within one faith to come together. The Jewish representatives can also be divided into Ashkenazi (or European tradition), the Sephardi (or those with their roots in Spain and Portugal who were dispersed in 1492 when they were expelled from the Iberian Peninsula) and lastly, Jews from Iraq, who trace their roots back several thousand years, to the time when Jews were expelled from the Holy Land to Babylon.

The Muslim Community can be divided between Shiite and Suni, and the important minority community, the Ismaili who often host Advisory Board meetings at their excellent central London venue.

I should mention that Advisory Board meetings are never held in the same place but alternate between Muslim, Christian and Jewish venues, for example, meetings have been held in the East London Mosque, the Ismaili Centre, in the aptly named Jerusalem Chamber in Westminster Abbey, Westminster Cathedral, the West London Synagogue and for the convenience of some of our Members of Parliament, we have met at the House of Commons and Portcullis House.

3.2. Local and regional activity

The second level which the Three Faiths Forum works is possibly the most important, namely at the local or regional level. That is to say, at grass roots, since the good relations between the leadership of the Muslim, Christian and Jewish communities does not always percolate down to the local level. Local groups are therefore a priority and have been formed recently in the County of Surrey, where the inaugural meeting was held at Guildford Cathedral and an excellent group are at work in South Central England, focussing on Winchester. In East London we find one of the largest Muslim and Jewish Communities and the East London group has been working effectively for some time. As we are purposely a loosely structured organisation, the local groups prepare their own agendas and the only guidance we lay down is that like the Advisory Board, meetings should take places alternately at churches, synagogues and mosques. One group, in fact, had the equivalent of what the British call a 'Pub Crawl' and had its members walk and visit most of the mosques, churches and synagogues in their area, over the course of a weekend.

3.3. The specialist groups

The third level on which we work is through our Medical Group, where Muslims, Christians and Jews involved in medicine and medical matters come together to discuss controversial matters such as abortion, euthanasia, mental health, genetic engineering and other similar subjects. These meetings are open to all, but with the proviso that individuals shall not be quoted so that discussions are not inhibited in anyway. A lawyers group is in the process of being

formed where Muslim, Christian and Jewish lawyers will come together to discuss matters of mutual interest.

3.4. Colleges and Universities

A new field of activity in the last couple year has been our endeavours to promote and form Three Faiths Forum groups in universities. The first such group has been formed in the world famous Eton College (a public school in the British sense, not the American!). Eton College is a Christian foundation but has had Jewish students for some time, together with a Jewish tutor or chaplain. When the number of Muslim students increased, Eton appointed a Muslim tutor. Such appointment appeared in the press and I immediately wrote to request an opportunity to meet. Quite rightly, the Head of Eton College asked me to wait until the Muslim tutor had settled in, which of course I did and some months later I was invited to the college to speak to the three tutors or chaplains who agreed almost immediately to the setting up of a Three Faiths Forum. In fact, the Muslim tutor has since been speaking at other schools and universities promoting the Three Faiths Forum and several have expressed an interest in setting up their own Three Faiths Forum groups.

3.5. Annual Meeting with Ambassadors to the Court of St. James.

At the request of the Three Faiths Forum an invitation was sent to all the ambassadors accredited to the Court of St. James by Sir Anthony Figgis, HM Marshall of the Diplomatic Corps to a meeting on 22 October 2003 to meet the leadership of the Three Faiths Forum and to hear a presentation on the work of the Forum. Approximately 70 Ambassadors, High Commissioners, Ministers and Counsellors attended the event at St. James's Palace.

The second meeting called by Sir Anthony Figgis on behalf of the Three Faiths Forum was held on 26 October 2004 to meet with the leadership of the Three Faiths Forum and more particularly, four Iraqi representatives of the Iraqi Institute for Peace for a briefing session (See 3.7). The third meeting will take place on 28 November 2005.

3.6. Joint meetings with other like-minded organisations.

The Three Faiths Forum endeavours to hold joint meetings with other organisations and this has included a joint meeting with the Royal Society of Medicine when Sheikh Dr. M. A. Zaki Badawi KBE spoke on organ transplants; with the *Globe Theatre Education Department*, where a well attended seminar on *Shakespeare and Islam* was arranged; with St. Ethelburga's Centre for Reconciliation and Peace, where a joint meeting was held with the Muslim Council of Britain; with the Immigration Advisory Service on the problem of asylum seekers.

A relationship has been established with the International Centre for Reconciliation at Coventry Cathedral with regard to the Middle East and the Alexandria Process.

3.7. The Three Faiths Forum and the Iraqi Institute for Peace

Fadel Alfatawi, Dr. Hamid Al-Sherifi, Sheikh Maher Al-Hamra and Jamal Al-Baddri, representative leaders of the Iraqi Institute for Peace, came to London

in November 2004 at the invitation of the Three Faiths Forum for an intensive round of meetings.

The Iraqi Institute for Peace (IIP) was the outcome of the Baghdad Religious Accord agreed in February 2004, at the initiative of Canon Andrew White, co-Director of the International Centre for Reconciliation of Coventry Cathedral. Leading Shi'ite and Sunni clerics and representatives of all Iraq's other religious groupings formed the IIP, and its first association with an outside body was with the Three Faiths Forum.

The four leaders met with Baroness Symons, Secretary of State for International Development at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office; William Chapman, advisor to the Prime Minister at Downing Street; Godfrey Stadlin and Maqsood Ahmed of the Faith Communities Unit at the Home Office; David Johnston, the Charge d'Affaires at the US Embassy; Sir Evelyn de Rothschild of the Interfaith Foundation; Ian McCartney, Chair of the Labour Party; and Alex Goldberg and Priya Lukka of the Commission for Racial Equality. The four representatives of the IIP also held discussions with Prof. Malcolm Grant, the Provost of University College London and Prof. Michael Worton, and visited Cambridge University, where they met Prof. David Ford and members of the Cambridge Interfaith Programme.

As the visit coincided with the month of Ramadam, the fast was broken at dinners hosted by the Iraqi Ambassador, Dr. Salah al Shaikhly, the Muslim College and the West London Synagogue.

4. Mutual problem solving

So what does the Three Faiths Forum do? Well, in the first instance, the main activity is to bring Muslims, Christians and Jews together at the grass roots level, but there is also the objective of mutual problem solving.

4.1. Animal rights and animal slaughter

Muslims and Jews every so often are targeted by so-called animal rights groups and the government of the day is then asked to ban the Muslim and Jewish methods of slaughter of animals for food. The Jewish method of *shechita* and the Muslim method, which comes under the heading of *Halal* are, according to leading veterinary experts, probably safer and less painful to the animals than the use of the stun gun, which so often misfires or misses its target creating a more painful method of slaughter. Muslims and Jews can and do combine to fight against any proposed banning legislation. (It is an unfortunate fact that while Muslims can eat meat from animals slaughtered in the Jewish method, it does not work the other way round!)

4.2. Anti-Semitism and Islamophobia

Muslims and Jews (as well as of course Christians) can and do combine, against those racists who practice both anti-Semitism and Islamophobia. The terms anti-Semitism and Islamophobia have well know meanings and although one can argue that Arabs are Semites and therefore fall under the heading of anti-

Semitism or that Islamophobia is a "fear" of Islam and is not anti-Islam, nevertheless, both terms have taken on a particular meaning and no useful purpose is served in the game of semantics.

4.3. Faith Schools

A third issue is that of faith schools. In Great Britain there have been Catholic and Anglican faith schools for many generations and Jewish faiths schools have increased in number during the last century. In English law, if certain criteria are followed, faith schools can obtain 80% funding from Government sources. Accordingly, the Three Faiths Forum has done its best to help Muslim schools obtain funding similar to Christian and Jewish faith schools. There are, of course, points to watch in supporting faiths schools. In any of the three Abrahamic religions, one can only supports faith schools where secular education is of a high quality since regretfully there are faith schools, which may concentrate too much on the religious aspect of the faith, to the detriment of the general education. Faith schools have consistently topped the educational league tables and many send their children to faith schools for the general ethos and high standards. In Britain, there is a good example in Liverpool of a Jewish high school where the Jewish population has reduced considerably. 80% of the pupils who attend King David "Jewish" High School today are non-Jewish.

Within the Muslim community, just the same as there was (and still is) in the Jewish Community, those who believe that faith schools segregate the children who attend from the outside world. The pros and cons can be considered by the Muslim community with the knowledge of similar discussions have taken place in the Jewish community.

There are, of course, many other local matters that can and do arise, but of course the question of the Middle East and the Israel/Palestine conflict is uppermost in the minds of many Muslims and Jews. The Three Faiths Forum endeavours to put this issue on the backburner at first, on the basis that once Muslims, Christians and Jews, at all levels, begin to understand and respect each other and know each other, it is then easier to discuss the complex problems of the Middle East, and although agreement may not be reached, at least one is able to argue and discuss with people one knows, rather than with strangers when verbal violence can be the only outcome.

4.4. The International Level

Lastly, I must point out that The Three Faiths Forum was founded as a national organisation in Great Britain but has become more and more involved on the international level.

First, the Three Faiths Forum is affiliated to the International Council of Christians and Jews whose constitution permits any organisation which is involved in promoting better relations between Christians and Jews, (whether or not other religions are involved) to be affiliated. The Abrahamic Forum of the International Council of Christians and Jews was created to permit discussions between all three Abrahamic faiths.

Secondly, due to the fact that observers on the Advisory Board represent the Foreign and Commonwealth Office (FCO), in recent years the FCO has begun to send visiting delegations to meet the leadership of the Three Faiths Forum and to listen to presentation on the activities of the Forum. For example, following a visit from an Albanian delegation, the first ever Interfaith Conference was held in Albania, followed by a second conference there last year, at which the Three Faiths Forum was represented. Delegations from Bulgaria, Ghana, Cameroon and even Iran have participated in such discussions with the Three Faiths Forum at their request.

Leaders of the Three Faiths Forum have visited Paris, where an Interfaith seminar was held at the British Embassy. In Belgium, meetings took place in the European Parliament in Brussels. Meetings also took place hosted by the German Ambassador in Belgium, with a view to establishing a forum in Belgium.

Conclusion

In conclusion, I believe the Three Faiths Forum can be used and is being used as a model in many countries, and the approach of people meeting others at grass roots level is, with respect, probably more important than speaking with academics, professionals and leaders of organisations.

INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE IN MACEDONIA

Prof. Dr Hasan Džilo (MK)

With my short presentation I wish to demonstrate a number of examples of inter-religious dialogue in Macedonia, including my personal experience in establishing the principles of cooperation between religious officials. Following a long interruption in the relations between the Islamic Community and the Macedonian Orthodox Church, which are the two largest religious communities, their relations were restored during the 2001 conflict and are now moving in! a positive direction. The two factors that contributed to this are the dialogue forum, encouraged by the international community, and the common interests in relation to the religion's public role in society, especially in raising initiatives for many other open issues involving the state and the religion.

1. One of the numerous movements and initiatives coming from the West, particularly after the clashes in the Balkans, is the issue of dialogue. Hence one often speaks of a dialogue with Islam or with the Muslims, because Muslims have become an integral part of Europe's reality. Part of the European intellectual elite and the elite of some Islamic countries have stressed the need for establishing a dialogue as an expression of the universal right to free religious

expression and the common needs of all religious communities in society. There are, however, also such groups that aim to develop a hostile attitude toward Islam in accordance with a previously drafted scheme, as of something that is foreign to the structural features of the Western culture. Such views have an influence in Macedonia, as well, either in the religious press, or in various electronic or print media. Lately, however, the former type of approach has prevailed, thanks to the debates and conferences organized by numerous US and European foundations in Macedonia. The absence of a dialogue was the result of the privileged status of some religious communities. More specifically, the Macedonian Orthodox Church has so far had a privileged status over the other religious communities owing to its nature and relatedness to the national being of Macedonians. This was also provided in the highest legal act, the Constitution, which mentioned the Macedonian Orthodox Church, but not the others. The inauguration of democratic processes rectified this paragraph by mentioning the Macedonian Orthodox Church and the other religious communities, such as the Islamic Community, the Jewish Community, the Catholic Church, and the Evangelistic-Methodist Church, which accounts for the passage of two laws on the position of the religious communities in Macedonia. In view of the emergence of some weak points regarding the religious communities' rights, a third law, which would regulate the state's relations with the religious communities, is being drafted. So far the attitude of the majority communities has dictated the position of the minority religious communities, causing an unequal status of some religious communities -- either in terms of recovering their expropriated assets, or obtaining permits for erecting religious buildings, schools, colleges, and so forth.

The forum of inter-religious dialogue, which has been conducted in the past few years, has thus stressed the need for an equal status of the religious communities in the Republic of Macedonia, driven by the right to religious freedom and by the religious communities' common needs in society. This dialogue model implies the gathering of members of different religions to discuss cooperation and cohabitation and exchange experience toward improving the aggravated relations between the religious and ethnic groups. This has resulted in common views on the believers' needs and in guiding them toward the contemporary values of tolerance, freedom of thought and conviction, and mutual openness. Consequently, the Macedonian Centre for International Cooperation has issued a number of publications and a common calendar for all religious communities in Macedonia, while the German Konrad Adenauer Foundation organized a debate on the religious communities' social responsibility and trends.

At those religious officials' meetings, which raised initiatives for establishing a mutual dialogue, some officials would rightly object to what they saw as an external initiative for a dialogue, understanding, and acquaintance. They would claim that it would be much better if they themselves could identify ways and models of conducting a dialogue, that religious tolerance is an inherited condition in the Balkans, and that this is not a dialogue from a distance or a dialogue

with Islam as something that is foreign or recent in the Balkan reality, but that it is a matter of a multiethnic and multi-religious environment with an autochthonous background, which distinguishes the Balkans from Europe. They would justly point out that unsettled interethnic, religious, and linguistic relations are the result of a wider political framework, not of religious factors. The good news is the increasing awareness among the Muslim and Christian elite of finding a dialogue that would be based on their own traditions. Never was a sort of pluralism within the Byzantine Empire or within the Ottoman Empire's millet system discussed as much as now, because it referred to multiethnic territories that they covered. Pluralism in the Balkans is some sort of a historical fact, which existed even when the people were not aware of it. The ruling mechanisms that these two empires had developed allowed long-term tolerance and coexistence between different religious groups. This has been the subject of numerous essays, analyses, and public debates in TV shows and roundtables, attended by analysts of different religious affiliations.

The results of these meetings were various forms of dialogue and association, followed by some college professors' initiative for teachers' exchange and lectures. Teachers from the School of Islamic Studies in Skopje held a series of lectures on Islam at the School of Theology, while a number of lecturers from the School of Theology presented some Christian doctrines at the School of Islamic Studies. Some Jewish lecturers delivered presentations at the School of Islamic Studies, as well. This way of presenting religious studies in a way in which their representatives experience and feel them undoubtedly leads to an objective image of the themes that all religions, especially the revealed ones, have in common. This leaves room for an institutional dialogue between the religious communities.

People who are capable of discussing various religious issues do exist. What is lacking, though, and what can build upon the still new dialogue forum in the future is not only people, but also topics of discussion in joint meetings. Mutual acquaintance and curiosity are not an issue, because we are regularly described as being unfamiliar with each other. Experience has indicated that nowadays those who know each other best are the greatest enemies in the Balkans. Evil goes much deeper and if it is even guided by knowledge, it can be much more dangerous. Some others know much more about us than we know about ourselves. It is therefore not a matter of knowing the others, but of evil and the way in which it can be avoided. By all means, every religion has the potential of showing one how to suppress evil and help other human beings and God's creatures when in trouble, which is more or less the same for everyone. Muslims can find ample examples of how to avoid evil and help mankind in the Islamic tradition/the Hadith. Evil-guided people are unable to establish a dialogue even within their own religious community, let alone with members of other religious communities. This fact was in focus in all meetings of religious authorities.

2. Issues related to the religion's public nature have also emerged from the religious officials' meetings in Macedonia. They regularly meet and discuss with

a view to coordinating and ironing out their positions before the government institutions regarding issues related to the religion's public nature, in addition to the still topical issues of religious education in schools, the official status of religious high schools and colleges, and the return of property to the religious communities. In all those meetings the religious officials of different religious communities present their views, respecting the differences and equality before the law. It often happens that the problem lies not in arranging talks, but rather in the law, which is slow and not too resourceful in the field of religion. There are also many other issues that the modern age brings with its fast pace, which neglects some traditional moral values that religions propagate. The impression is that religious officials are much more harmonious and open to each other when faced with a third challenge, such as – in this case – the modern trends in liberal democracies, to which they are not as indifferent as to each other.

In conclusion, the religious communities' institutional dialogue, initiated primarily by both local and foreign NGOs, is turning into a process that constantly requires initiative, incentives, and fresh substance. As much as it is a necessity for the religious communities, it is also necessary between the state and the religious communities. In this area, there are still no examples following the Western democracies, probably for national reasons. Although there have been, or there might be interruptions in the dialogue, it will always re-emerge, particularly in the Balkans, as a way of survival and reconciliation between the representatives of different religions. A dialogue is virtually impossible without its challenges or if it is understood merely as a format, with no differences, initiatives, or awareness of pluralism as a specific reality or a historical legacy. Yet, even the dialogue itself and the pluralism that it professes is not sufficient on its own, but it would be effective also as a legally binding rule, necessary for maintaining democracy in multi-religious societies -- the kind of democracy that is still not sufficiently present in Macedonia, which the perpetual amendments to the law on the religious communities' position confirms.

INSTITUTE FOR INTER-RELIGIOUS DIALOGUE

Ms. Bibi Fatemeh Mousavi Nejad / Ms. Fatemeh Mahjourian Ghomi (IR)

The need for understanding and co existence among followers of different religions, bearing in mind that divine religions share the same essence and are able to dialogue on their common beliefs, is among the main reasons of establishing the Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue (IID).

As a Non-Governmental Organization (NGO), the Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue has forecasted considerable activities in the domain of inter-religious dialogues, of which, the most important principal is to highlight the

necessity and importance of religious dialogue and also awareness campaign directed at the interested people in the field of religious dialogues. This transparent circulation of information far from any prejudice and unpleasant thoughts will encourage the thinkers and researchers to deal with this issue seriously. Consequently it will enhance the insight of Iranian society toward religious researches and inter-religious dialogue.

Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue has had a positive function so far and in line with spread of information in the field of religion and religious culture, developing of the culture of mutual respect with regard to other religions and advancement of peace and friendship through inter-religious dialogue, many of the above mentioned objectives have been materialized. Institute for Inter-religious Dialogue, through conducting these activities hopes to be able to meet part of the needs of researchers, thinkers within the domain of religion studies and inter-religious dialogues. Generally speaking, of the honours of the Institute, the followings can be mentioned:

Establishing professional library of religions with more than 4000 titles of professional books of religions in different languages, Internet Site, conducting some research projects, developing archives for professional Journals, translating and editing books for faculty members, thinkers, researchers and those interested in this field, holding monthly professional meetings in the presence of authorities and interested people, participating and cooperating with different local and international conferences, holding different meetings with authorities of religious minorities , establishing professional foreign language classes for the students and researches of the religious field, publishing professional journal of Religious News, forming the Youth group and inviting them to respect each other's religion and other effective activities in this field

The IID has been operating as a Non-Governmental Organization, NGO in special consultative Statues with ECOSOC, in the field of inter-religious dialogue since 2000 and its main focus has been providing those interested in this area with information and assistance.

The IID has established a library regarding the needs of researchers and investigators on religions and inter-religious dialogue. The books are in different languages such as Farsi, English, Arabic, etc. The library also provides members with specialized Iranian and foreign magazines and other publications.

THE RIGHT TO BE OTHER (DIFFERENT) MUTUAL RESPECT, FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND THEIR RESPECTIVE LIMITS

Session I:

Muslims in the Western Diaspora:
Legal Implications and Everyday Experiences

THE RIGHT TO BE DIFFERENT
MUTUAL RESPECT, FREEDOM OF RELIGION, AND THEIR
RESPECTIVE LIMITS: MUSLIMS IN THE WESTERN DIASPORA
– LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES

Prof. Dr Jamal Malik (D)

How carriers of multiple religious traditions can share social spaces creatively, rather than antagonistically, is the most challenging question of the time.

My working premise is that in Europe all religions – from long established ones, such as, Christianity, Judaism, or Islam, to more recent imports such as Hinduism, Buddhism and new religious movements - have developed and defined themselves by mutual reference. This relational mutual and self-definition was true even before labour immigration from Muslim countries following World War II was promoted by the host societies to help rebuild Europe. It was not distance, but proximity, that fostered religious boundaries in Europe and constructed non-believers into 'deviants' or 'heretics'.

In fact, the unquestioned presupposition, that European identity and value-system was tightly knit to Christian religion, e.g., that religious plurality and diversity never had been part of European history has to be questioned – because, religious pluralism is the *conditio sine qua non* for co-existence of different religious groups living or immigrating here. One may pose the question of how far this idea is programmatically supported, and by whom and by what means.

Certainly, the significance of Christianity for Europe cannot be ignored. But this should not lead to overlooking the importance of other powerful or even not so powerful religious traditions. Tracing the religious path of Europe is not conceivable without recognising the mediating role played by Muslims in transmitting the philosophy and science of other civilisations. The great store of their literature and philosophy is unthinkable without the profound influence from, e.g., the Jewish religion and people. Their histories have by no means been the monolithic religio-cultural unity that some have made out of them, and their contemporary religious landscapes are certainly of increasing religious plurality.

Historically speaking, the rejection of pluralism and the idea of mutually exclusive religious options are based in processes of singularisation and norma-

tisation of religious dynamics, in the course of which other systems were marginalized and de-legitimized in the public perception. The extensive establishment of monotheistically inclined theologies led to a process of *regularisation*, in which alternative options were even hereticised by the respective 'meta narrative'.[1] But the complex network of various religious attitudes, unfolding reciprocal relationship, cannot be characterised by singular closed systems, like the reductionist clash of civilizations hypothesis suggests. The dominant monocausal and monolinear concept of religious history has to be replaced by new historical and societal perspectives in the context of a global framework, giving voice to the varieties of religious actors. A "polyvocal" analysis of an open, plural(ist) field might open up new perspectives to do more justice to the historical and contemporary situation of incremental pluralisation in a global framework, which, one might add, is most important for peaceful co-existence.

Similarly, relations between Muslim minority and the majority in different European countries have been shaped by powerful stereotypes of otherness – of Muslim and non-Muslim. These images are now located in the heartland of Europe. They affect the paths towards integration pursued by different Muslim diasporas, which are informed by the specific political cultures of different European countries, the varied cultural traditions migrants have brought with them, and by their continuing ties to their home countries. The latest debate about the introduction of Islamic instruction and Islamic schools has generated public debate across Europe.

In the face of these developments there are a number of initiatives that try to reduce the pluralism of Muslims, among Muslims as well as in the various host societies, and consider the "other" in culturalist terms. A short glimpse into European history school-books reveals symptoms of a profound lack of dealing with Muslims and Jews alike in a respectful way. Jews and Muslims barely hold a place in these books, which also marginalize their influence upon history and development of the West. Thus, the very presence of Jews and Muslims is felt as a problem, as something non-Western rather than an integral part of Europe. When Jews or Muslims are mentioned in these books, it is mostly in connection with conflicts or problems, which they allegedly caused directly or indirectly. Especially Muslims have a very difficult stand. The explosive and supposedly aggressive expansion of Islam in the so-called Middle Ages is presented as the main historical point of contact between both entities. Both, Jewish and Muslim cultural elements are dealt with under the headings as "foreign", "alien"

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[1] With regard to the ethnological description of foreign religions, Mary Louise Pratt has coined the term of *normalising discourse*, which has the function "to fix the Other in a timeless present" (Mary Louise Pratt, "Scratches on the Face of the Country; or, What Mr. Barrow Saw in the Land of the Bushmen", in: Henry Louis Gates Jr. (ed.): *"Race", Writing, and Difference*, Chicago: University of Chicago Press 1985, pp. 135-162, here p. 139); cf. also Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, London: Routledge 1992, and Johannes Fabian, *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes Its Object*, New York: Columbia University Press 1983.

or "other cultures". The development of Islam is seen as a threat to Christianity and as a conquering power opposing the Christian world. Islam was halted by European powers which in turn connoted a return to normality, to chasing the Muslims from the continent. When dealing with the twentieth century, at the time of political unrest, Muslims tend to appear either as immigrants needing integration, which again includes the fear from those who "cannot" be integrated, or as "fundamentalists" or "terrorists." In both cases they must be dealt with severely, on the basis of rules which range from cooperation to coercion. Hence, the various traditions within Islam are disregarded, creating a distorted image of this 'Other'. In this way, a cultural 'otherness' is imagined and – in a culturalist twist – is being overemphasized, which in turn invites simplification and ignorance.[1]

In this situation, religious dialogue seems to be a proven vehicle for a change,[2] but how can a dialogue be conducted with a religion which is divided into multiple facets, which does not know one single authority and which, during its history, has created a multiplicity of forms which complement, imitate or contest each other within various hybrid or "pure" forms? 'The Islam' is as less a single entity, as it can be used as a common marker by which most Muslims would primarily identify themselves. Within the idiom of a dialogue with Islam and within Islam it becomes clear at least, that the partner for the dialogue is created: The 'Other' is nothing but a creation from one's own archive. Thus, the question arises of how mechanisms are vital in constructing a projection or an autosuggestion of the Muslim *Other*, and how Muslims react or how they construct counter – projections.[3]

Islam is diverse, everywhere in the world, and particularly in Europe. In a post-colonial world, Muslims made good and cheap labour, which was used to rebuild war-torn Europe in 1960s:

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[1] See Lisa Kaul-Seidman, Jorgen S. Nielsen & Markus Vinzent, *Europäische Identität und kultureller Pluralismus: Judentum, Christentum und Islam in europäischen Lehrplänen. Empfehlungen für die Praxis.* Bad Homburg: Herbert-Quandt Stiftung 2003; Lisa Kaul-Seidman, Jorgen S. Nielsen & Markus Vinzent, *European Identity and cultural pluralism: Judaism, Christianity and Islam in European curricula. Supplement: Country reports.* Bad Homburg: Herbert-Quandt Stiftung 2003; similarly Gerdien Jonker: „'Sind Kreuzzüge noch aktuell?' Präsentation der bisherigen Untersuchung", in: *Workshop: „Sind Kreuzzüge noch aktuell?" Eine kritische Hinterfragung der Information über „Orient", „Islam" und „Muslime" in deutschen und europäischen Geschichts- und Geographiebüchern*, Georg-Eckardt Institut, Braunschweig, 3.-4.11.2005.

[2] See also Jamal Malik, „Islamisch-christlicher Dialog", in: P. Eicher (ed.), *Neues Handbuch theologischer Grundbegriffe*, Vol. 2, München: Kösel 2005, pp. 235-242.

[3] On this whole issue of discourses on dialogue with Islam, a research project is being conducted at the Chair of Islamic Studies, University of Erfurt in 2005/06. The project „Dialogue(s) with Islam(s) in European and South-Asian Perspective" is supported by the German Academic Exchange Service (Delhi Branch) and is conceived as well as co-ordinated by Dr. Michael Dusche.

During the first oil crisis at the beginning of the seventies, the wave slowed down somewhat, but the workers themselves stayed on, and tended to invite their families from back home. Soon after that, political asylum seekers followed. Each European nation implemented its own set of rules and legislative measures to get hold of the situation. Eventually, Islam started to become a public issue followed by a restrictive immigration policy. On the other side, second and third generation immigrants showed a desire to articulate themselves and their situation more vocally. The Rushdie-affair and the debate about the headscarf made headlines and brought Islam definitely into the limelight. During this time Muslims were strictly organized on ethnic and national lines, the mosques being a centre for the memorization of ethnicity and soon became an institution endowed with migrant-specific features.

During the nineties, further waves of immigration brought more and more Muslims to Europe. The end of the Soviet Union, periodically rising tensions in the Middle East, and the war in the Balkans did their part to keep the topic of Muslims living in Europe in the headlines and created fear and uncertainty.

So far the European states did not mange to create such a Pan-European immigration policy in a time when the European integration seems to undermine the traditional nation-states. This is particularly the case when actors of this religion are ethnically, theologically and nationally diverse, but nonetheless linked to a transnational – albeit virtual - Muslim public sphere. The images thus evolved affect the paths towards integration pursued by Muslim diasporas.

There are app. 20 million Western European diaspora Muslims, making up to 3-4% of all residents in these countries – most of them being not actively practicing Muslims.[1] According to some estimates the number of Muslims in the extended European Union will double by 2015. Muslims, like other minority members, are subjected to discrimination in areas like employment, housing and access to service[2] and in many countries they are dealt with as a matter of internal security. After 9/11 discriminatory tendencies have increased,[3] giving rise to a collective suspicion about Muslims. Many speak of "Muslim parallel societies" for which Muslims are made responsible alone. The failed integration process is however caused by the host societies who have so far done little to integrate the labour migrants whom they have called. But then, which society likes its minorities?

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[1] 4-5 million Muslims live in France, over 3 million in Germany, more than 1.5 million in the United Kingdom, about 1 million in Spain and close to 1 million in Italy and the Netherlands respectively, in Belgium 400,000-500,000, Greece up to 400,000, Austria more than 300,000, Sweden also more than 300,000, and Denmark up to 180,000.

[2] See the detailed report International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF): *Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims in the EU. Developments since September 11, March 2005.*

[3] Though according to a recent inquiry, 95% Germans do not feel disturbed if Muslims are living in their neighbourhood. See Konrad Adenauer Foundation (ed.), *Was halten die Deutschen vom Islam? Ergebnisse einer Umfrage*, Sankt Augustin 05/2003.

Hence, the main debates are about the degree of liberty and freedom the various communities can live in, as well as about the borders of cultural and religious differentiation with which Muslims have to deal with in an openly secular Europe. Specifically, the debates are about the recognition of Muslim communities as organizations of public interest, about the possibilities and modalities of Islamic religious education in the framework of a national educational curriculum, and about public signs of membership, such as the wearing of a headscarf or the calls to prayer, burial sites and mosques.[1]

The latter has been subject to various debates and court judgements mostly informed by the notion that minarets are incompatible with "the cultural and architectural landscape". Similarly, the microphone-call for prayer can only be stopped with arguments such as to impair the health of a third party by exceeding the noise level or being dangerous to the public traffic. As far as Islamic ritual burial is concerned, sanitation regulations and lack of space are the main hurdles.

The use of headscarves has become the subject of increasing controversy in the European Union. The headscraf's compatibility with the principle of separation of church and state is questioned, and the right to freedom of religion outweighed against the rights of pupils who are obliged to go to school and can not avoid looking at the headscarf. Apart from being a "conspicuous" religious symbol in public schools the headscarf has become fashionable and it expresses the desire for difference.

Similarly, religious education has generated public debate across Europe. Basically, states are obliged to respect religious education but are not obliged to organize religious education in public schools. Various governments in Europe have responded to this issue and have even conceded these demands of Muslim communities in a gradual manner, according to their respective political cultures. In some countries, the costs for these classes are born by the state, while the official representative bodies of the country's Muslim communities are responsible for the content of the instruction. In Germany for example religious education is protected by law, and the organization of such classes is currently under way and welcomed by many Muslim groups as a first step toward effective implementation of existing legal provisions. The problems are however grave since this issue has become a battle ground for those who want to hold agency over Islam, such as some national organizations based in the home-countries. Moreover, in the process of domestication of religion the state might end up with unconstitutional interference by preferring one Muslim group over the other.

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[1] See Thomas Schmitt: *Moscheen in Deutschland. Konflikte um ihre Errichtung und Nutzung*, Flensburg: Deutsche Akademie für Landeskunde 2003; Louise Kubelka & Marcus Schian: *Causa Kopftuch. Ein europäischer Vergleich*, Berlin: Europa-Kontakt 2004. Cf. also the report of the International Helsinki Federation for Human Rights (IHF): *Intolerance and Discrimination against Muslims in the EU. Developments since September 11, March 2005*: http://www.ihf-hr.org/documents/doc_summary.php?sec_id=3&d_id=4029

In other countries, religions are taught from a non-denominational perspective, the emphasis being on the majority religion of the host country. At the same time support is granted to an increasing number of independent religious schools, including Muslim schools (Sweden, Denmark, UK, the Netherlands). However, only small numbers of Muslim students attend Muslim schools.

Privately run faith-based schools constitute another field of discourse. This instruction is linked to imported Imams having little knowledge of the host societies' values and customs. In some cases the imams preach non-compliance with values fundamentally important in societies of the European Union, and thus having a detrimental impact on the integration of pupils into wider society. Some have given statements encouraging hatred or violence among Muslims. Therefore, training of local Imams and organized instruction in Islam at public schools are considered important to help reduce the impact of Quran schools housed in mosques. A number of universities is involved in this project.[1]

Finally, the issue of halal food made quite some headline and Muslims still have to face opposition, such as from animal welfare organizations.

In these fields Muslim communities in Europe have made headway: they managed to demonstrate a growing potential of self-awareness in the national-religious framework of Europe. This intra-Muslim Eurocentric discourse took two centuries to emerge. It can be exemplified in different areas, Islamic Minority Law being one of them. This notion of law renders obsolete the idea of an abode of Islam (*dar al-islam*) and a territory not under Muslim sovereignty (*dar al-harb*), which had rationalised the myth of return of migrants to Muslim countries.[2] At the same time it stresses the minority status of Muslims making them into a perennial minority. The notorious call for Islamic identity in these diasporic Muslim deliberations may hark back to the refusal of the majority of migrants to strictly follow the sharia in the diaspora.

Meanwhile, vernacular forms of Islam are emerging, when young Muslims increasingly perceive their religion in terms of personal convictions rather than in terms of family and tradition. This *protestantisation* of Islam needs also to reject the notion that modernity can be monopolized. It also may engage critically with the holy texts, and concede that any identification as Muslim would lead via a hermeneutical approach to these texts. At the same time, membership of Islam cannot continue to be the main requirement for accession to Paradise and the experience of the Grace of God. In fact, the new media facilitate and enhance transnational Islam undermining the voices of traditional religious

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[1] See Jamal Malik: "Ausbildung und Rolle der Imame in der Moschee", in: http://www.anawati-stiftung.de/seiten/100jahre-11-19.pdf (21. Nov. 2005)

[2] Especially since this post-Muhammadan duality has long since ceased to be a working legal construction for Islamic jurisprudence. However, it does influence the neo-Islamic discourse. According to this discourse, Islam would refuse the legitimacy of political authority due to its focus on a universal, spiritual equality. It would thus usurp the ability of the state to establish itself as a strong entity. According to this concept, Islam would not allow for the existence of a civil society within its own framework.

authorities and giving space to a variety of new authorities contesting with each-other.[1]

Other collective attempts to offer alternatives for integration appear in form of models of representation. They mirror specific forms of national politics concerning religion,[2] and they reflected a tendency towards ecclesiatisation, and thus centralization. But this sort of centralization does not imply a parallel political leadership among Muslims per se. Austria, Belgium, France, and Spain installed such public institutions of representation, with more or less success, according to their own legal traditions and orders. Great Britain and Germany on the other hand have private organizations, which represent the Muslim minorities in their issues. None of these institutions can claim to speak or act for all Muslims. More often, they only represent a faithful, organized minority of Muslims. However, this should not hide the fact that these minorities often play a vital role in national debates about the direction of Islam.

Apart from these integrationist attempts one can find isolationist, radicalised approaches. But this radicalism is not the result of an inherent immovability within the cultures of Muslim immigrants. Instead, it seems to be an outcome of socio-economic marginalization when people start uniting around the perceived cause of their discrimination, e.g. their religious affiliation.

It is in this context that an attempt is made to create a pure, untainted religion outside the confines of traditional and Western cultures. Biographically, this can be proven among the followers of radical groups or individuals, since hardly one of them is close to traditional Islam. Indeed, most of the members of these organizations tend to keep away from traditionalist structures and centres of Islam, and do not participate in the discourse and debates of these Muslim centres.

These individuals tend to have suffered isolation in their religion, have a tendency to be autodidacts, suffer from generational tensions, and they reject any sort of authority or family ties. Added to this are often failed processes of socialization within their religious community, as well as within ethnic groups.

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[1] See Dale F. Eickelman & Jon W. Anderson (eds.), *New Media in the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere*, Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1999; also Gary Bunt, *Virtually Islamic: Computer-Mediated Communication and Cyber-Islamic Environments*, Cardiff: University of Wales Press, 2000; Karim, Karim H. (ed.), *The Media of Diaspora*, London: Routledge, 2003; Naomi Sakr, "Testing Time for al-Jazeera", in: ISIM Newsletter 9/02, p. 21; Ahmad Kamel, "Al-Jazeera. An Insider's view", in: *ISIM Newsletter* 9/02, p. 20; Ermete Mariani, "Hadith On-line. Writing Islamic Tradition", in: *ISIM Newsletter* 9/02, p. 24; Martin Brückner, "IslamiCity. Creating an Islamic Cybersociety", in: *ISIM Newsletter* 8/01, p. 17; Miriam Gazzah, "Maroc-Hop. Music and Youth Identities", in: *ISIM Review* 16/05, pp. 6f.

[2] See Werner Schiffauer, *Fremde in der Stadt. Zehn Essays über Kultur und Differenz*, Frankfurt/M.: Suhrkamp 1997, pp. 36-48, and Matthias König, "Islamische Minderheiten in Westeuropa. Eine Herausforderung des säkularen Rechtsstaats?", in: Thorsten Gerald Schneiders & Lamya Kaddor (eds.), *Muslime im Rechtsstaat*, Münster: LIT 2005, pp.33-46.

Furthermore, Islam is converted from a lived religion into an imaginary, non-historical, abstract model. There is no community with grown roots in the resident society, by which it could counteract these tendencies. Instead, the existence of a virtual community is made dependant on how the faithful acts, on their public appearance. Hence, blasphemy and apostasy will be immediately sanctioned with all strength. Religion ceases to be a geographic reality and instead sets its borders elsewhere: in the heads of the people. These new borders work with discourses, and unlike geographic borders, which can be fixed, these borders are always negotiable because they are fictional and unstable. This radical discourse of difference and de-culturist and *deterritorialised* Islam appeals to Diaspora youth who are disadvantaged in terms of the cultural capital of adult immigrants.[1] Thus it seems to be logical that vociferous and charismatic leaders often come out of this context with intellectual background.

These are some of the everyday experiences and legal implications faced by Muslims in Europe. For sure, the foundations for Muslim integrationist and isolationist tendencies can be found in Muslim texts and sources. It is banal to point out that these positions mirror social realities, dressed up in religious debate. However, considering that the same arguments once were formulated in political terms, but now appear in the guise of culturalism and religion, one can clearly discern a confessionalisation of political discourse. The vocabulary has changed, the basic problems, however, seem to be the same.

To come to an end, it is not enough to conceive and construct the cultural 'other' on the basis of a selection of texts without trying to understand the respective socio-political embeddedness. The temporal and spatial context of these forms of cultural articulations is central to any understanding of the other. Moreover, one may reconsider concepts of identity that focus on the importance of boundaries which draw a sharp line between us and them. But is exclusion central to the creation of a community? The recognition of the idea of plural or multiple identities might be a chance to enable to appreciate social constructions of the self and the other beyond limited imaginary and imagined boundaries, simply because plural identities mean ambivalence. And does not a dialogic principle constitute identity? Can not the other be perceived as part of the self, and thus rigid dichotomies blurred to replace singular essentialist discourses?[2]

I concede that multi-religious and multi-confessional dialogue in Europe requires the acceptance of the others' religious convictions, the refraining from ones own dogmatic ideals of non-failure, and the acceptance of democratic system. There is need to address how, in terms of concrete organisational and institutional arrangements, structures might be evolved that enable people who

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[1] Compare Marcia Hermansen, "How to Put the Genie back in the Bottle: 'Identity Islam' and Muslim Youth Cultures in North America" in: Omid Safi (ed.): *Progressive Muslims*, Oxford: One World 2003.

[2] See also the articles in Jamal Malik and Helmut Reifeld (eds.), *Religious Pluralism in South Asia and Europe*, New Delhi: Oxford UP 2004.

live by different and sometimes radically conflicting values and expressions of ultimate concern, to co-exist and, if possible, not only to co-exist, but also to co-operate. In this sense, religious pluralism implies active engagement with plurality, it requires participation; and it is more than mere tolerance, because of its inherent active attempt to understand each other. And, it does not displace or eliminate deep religious commitments, but it is the encounter of commitments.

MUSLIMS IN WESTERN EUROPE

Imam Mustafa ef. Klanco (D)

What we (do not) have and how to go on?

I am a Muslim, a *Bosniak*, a Bosnian – a German and a European, raised in a multi-religious society. I studied for five years in this city, in which I have been awakened by church bells and by azans (calls for prayer) from the minarets. Twenty two years ago I was called on by a group of *Bosniaks*, and nominated by the decree of the Supreme Islamic Assembly of SFRY, to come as an imam to Germany, to the small city of Kamp-Lintfort, in which one can only hear the ringing of church bells, whilst the azans are closed and silent in the interior of the masjids. I thank you for inviting me to this city, a rare one hundred-year old example of the encounter of monotheistic religions and cultures, to talk about Muslims in Western Europe and about what they (do not) have, and to state my thoughts regarding the future.

Islam, through its past centuries, has, in a significant sense and to a significant extent, historically determined Europe as well. This has not only been the case in spiritual communication, contacts, conflicts, and pervasions. Historically, the European continent has been splashed relatively early and significantly from the Mediterranean with multi-century Islamic presence in Spain and, from south-eastern Europe, with Ottoman presence in the Balkans and in south-eastern Europe. If one has in mind the multifunctional, enduring, and interactive links between Europe and Islam, it is possible to view today's presence of Islam and Muslims in Western Europe from the perspective of a historic continuity.

Nonetheless, the current situation, in which Muslims and Islam are present in factual, legal and political, economic, cultural and civilization contexts in Western Europe, is - to some extent -completely unique.

- First of all, there is today no Western European country in which Muslims do not live in significant communities in all of its cities.

- Secondly, Islam has never before been present in Western Europe in such an ethnic, cultural, spiritual and religious dissection and diversity as it is today. In Western Europe today, Islam is present in the characters of important Muslim intellectuals, as well as the characters of factory workers, merchants, pupils and students on school benches, housewives and retired people, in the characters of liberal and conservative Muslims, in the characters of Arabic, Turkish, Pakistani, or Bosnian Muslims, *Sunnis, Shi'is, Sufis, Wahhabis,* according to the *Hanafi, Shafi'i, Maliki, Hanbali* schools, or other legal traditions.

- Thirdly, today's Muslim presence in Western Europe is primarily linked to economic reasons: on the side of *European employers,* to reasons of economic development and superiority, and on the side of Muslim *guest workers,* to reasons of economic impotence and poverty in their own countries.

- Fourth, a relatively significant number of Muslims in Europe today find political asylum due to political persecution and lack of freedom in countries of the traditional world of Islam.

- Fifth, today's presence of significant Muslim communities in some fifteen countries of Western Europe should also be viewed, if not at this very moment, then at some foreseeable time, as a fact of the presence of (one) Muslim community of almost fifteen million within (one) Europe.

Today's Muslim presence in Western Europe is, in a world-historical perspective, extremely significant in one special regard. Namely, today's Muslim presence in the West presents a significant secular challenge. For Europe and the West, this is a challenge to make possible a multi-religious life, religious and cultural plurality, inter-religious tolerance and dialogue, direct and life-long familiarization with Islam and Muslims. For Europe and the West, this is, in one word, a challenge for that «other» Europe, which is enrooted historically in its still non-prevailing own views of openness towards other and different peoples; the Europe of Czeslaw Milosz, the Europe of fullness. When the anti-Bosnian – anti-Bosniak – war was raged, Germany took in approximately three hundred thousand refugees. The politics of a false image of Muslims did not rule over German politics.

For Muslims, this is a challenge for the testimony of Islam in today's economic, scientific, technological, technical, political, and civilization «heart» of the world, in terms of the following: the internal plan, in which Muslims in Western Europe need to find new models for the preservation of their own Islamic identity (the testimonies of Islam), and the external plan, in which Muslims in Western Europe need, in preserving their Islamic identity, to find models for their own spiritual and socially creative integration and for legal and political loyalty within Western societies and states.

In other words, Muslims in the Western world are facing the most direct, indeed - in terms of their real potential - almost superior challenges and temptations, before which they are in a position to testify and tempt the universality and worldliness of the spiritual messages of Islam. If they were to respond creatively to these challenges, Muslims, who live and work together with their non-

Muslim fellow European citizens in significant communities, could significantly contribute to the dispersion of historical European stereotypes concerning themselves and their religion.

The European and Islamic future of Muslims will, to a great extent, depend on the means in which their collective identities mutually intertwine, clash, imbue, and complement one another.

Generally speaking, for Muslim communities in all European countries, it is a serious problem that they are regarded - in comparison to other immigrant groups - as a group, or a community of an «extremely different culture». Such an outlook strengthens the terrorist actions in USA, Spain, Holland, London and elsewhere, which are attributed to Muslims, or are conducted «in the name of Islam». All of this together facilitates the task of those who do not accept strangers at all, especially Muslims, in marginalizing those groups, discrediting them, or - and some advocate this - banishing them. Today, Muslim communities in Western Europe are experiencing deep states of fear.

On the other hand, we also have to keep in mind the fact that Muslims themselves often fall into the trap of emphasizing their «cultural differences» and their specific cultural identity within the still-prevailing mono-cultural European structural and value context.

The modern Muslim existence in Europe, and thus its cultural identity, does not present straightforward or simple facts either. Many historical, cultural, political, and other factors are not looked upon in the same fashion by two European peoples who belong to the same Islamic historical circle, the *Bosniaks* and the Albanians. The historical fate of Balkan Muslims differs from the one that determines the modern situation of Muslim people and ethnic groups of Eastern Europe. The modern Muslim presence in the countries of Western Europe is a story in itself. All three of these components, themselves complex in their historical and cultural morphology, are significant for the future of Muslims and their cultural identity in Europe.

As a result of these factors, Muslim cultural identity in Europe as a whole depends, to a significant, even crucial extent, on the issue of Muslim education systems within the countries of Western Europe. More precisely speaking, the cultural identity of Muslims in Europe will, viewed in a perspective fashion, depend primarily on the models of Islamic education which they develop and follow in the future, within the framework of their Islamic communities.

Towards a New Islamic Discourse

In such educational models, the third and fourth generations of Muslims in Western European societies cannot understand Islam in their everyday language and in terms of universal Islamic values, but only as distant ethnic folklore, a yellowed photograph serving as a memory of their ancestors. In that regard, it might be interesting to remind ourselves here of a seminar in 1993 in France, which brought together various groups of Muslim youth from throughout Western Europe, and in which the Muslim pupils and students discussed the various problems that concern their future in Europe. In this seminar it was

concluded that young Muslims living in Europe should not feel as if they were living in a space of *dar al-harb*. This term and such classical Sharia legal orientation, it was said, do not reflect the modern reality of Muslim life in Europe. Instead, Muslims in this part of the world should view themselves according to the third definition of political space, which is differentiated by some Islamic schools of thought, as citizens of *dar al-'ahd* (the domain of agreement or contract).

Generally speaking, the conviction that the true path lies in *new Islamic discourse* is being increasingly strongly emphasized in Muslim circles of the third generation. This opens up the possibility of active participation in life in society, instead of the introversion that characterized the early stages of Muslim presence in Western Europe, from the 1950s all the way through to the 1980s.

The Concluding Thesis

This is why it seems to me that the most significant challenge facing Muslim communities in Western Europe, in their efforts to build their Islamic identity in this part of the world, is precisely the issue of their religious education. If this is so, then the following practical demands are facing Muslim communities in Western Europe.

Muslim communities in Western Europe cannot be anyone's Diaspora. In designing their religious life and Islamic identity within Europe, they must break away or, if I were to say this in a more moderate fashion, to gradually pull out of the ethnic, national, state, political, and any other guardian embrace of their so-called original Islamic communities, without being misunderstood in the process!

Muslims need a more universal approach to Islam.

Muslims must design and build models, systems and institutions for religious education within their Muslim communities in Western Europe. More concretely speaking, they should have their own religious education institutions within European countries, their own religious education faculties, imams, religious teachers, Islamic social workers, and others educated in their own Islamic education institutions, which should be located in European countries, either autonomously or within the framework of European universities. Religious lessons in Islamic communities, mosques, Muslim religious schools (*maktabs*), religious weekend schools, Islamic primary and secondary schools, *madrasas*, and other religious and education institutions should be held in the languages of the third and fourth generation of Western European Muslims, meaning in English, French, German, or other Western European languages. Otherwise, hundreds and thousands of Muslim boys and girls will not be able to understand the message of Islam and to accept it as a part of their identity, because language is, if this even needs to be emphasized, more than mere understanding. Majority religious communities should help Muslims in taking this path.

The Sultan of Muslims in Western Europe, as Reis-ul-ulema Dr Mustafa Cerić said on one occasion, is not in Istanbul, but in Brussels. The sooner we understand this, the easier our lives will be. Thank you for your attention.

Session II:

Non-Muslims in Islamic societies:
Legal Implications and Everyday Experiences

NON-MUSLIMS IN ISLAMIC SOCIETIES:
LEGAL IMPLICATIONS AND EVERYDAY EXPERIENCES

Dr Christiane Paulus (ET)

The phenomenon of non-Muslims within Islamic societies is a very old one, unlike that of the existence of Muslims in the West. Here another quality of concrete relationship has arisen because of the historical dimension of this relationship. The people have got used to each other, and there is no sense of strangeness which could create aversion or racist feelings. However, this does not mean that there are no problems between them.

But, before I go into the historical and empirical dimensions of the subject, I would like to mention that different readings of history come up with differing analyses of history. As I am convinced that there is no objective view on history, neither from the Muslims who often idealise history, nor from the Copts who regard their history as a history of suffering and martyrdom (collective identity), nor either ours as academics or scholars! What I am trying to do is just to achieve a second level of observation, but one which is still contingent.[1]

As I live in Egypt I would like you - instead of concentrating on a philological view on the different kinds of non-Muslims - to observe the empirical situation in Egypt and to analyse with me the everyday experiences of the orthodox Christians there, the Copts, in relation to the Muslims - their neighbours, colleagues, friends, enemies etc. We will also have a look at Muslim experiences with Christians – to be able to evaluate the relationship better. At the end we can ask - together with a theoretical view on the legal implications - for some typical or more generalised statements. So we have already entered the hermeneutic circle.[2]

The conquering of Egypt in 642 by 'Amr Ibn al-'As was not too bad for the Copts, as beforehand they had suffered a lot through persecution by the Romans and pressure from the Byzantine. From the political dimension of Islam

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[1] In the sense of the System Theory of Niklas Luhmann: *Die Religion der Gesellschaft*, pp.29f and 71f.

[2] Clifford Geertz, „Aus der Perspektive der Eingeborenen". Zum Problem des ethnologischen Verstehens, in: C. Geertz, *Dichte Beschreibung. Beiträge zum Verstehen kultureller System*, Frankfurt 1987; Ralf Bohnsack, *Rekonstruktive Sozialforschung*, Opladen 1991.

or *shari'a*, they now received the status of *dhimmis*. If they wanted to stay in the Dar Al-Islam or Islamic State, they were seen as persons or religious groups which had to be protected through Muslim forces. They kept the right to carry out their religious practices - but not in public - and also their juridical autonomy in the ecclesiastical, civil and familial domain. In addition, they had to pay the *jizya* - as Muslims pay *zakat* or alms-giving.

Over the centuries their predicaments depended on the style of the particular Muslim sovereign: Although the concept of *dhimmi* existed, there have been phases of discrimination and persecution. On the other hand the Copts worked as - more or less high-ranking - employees in the administration of the Muslim sovereign throughout all the centuries, especially in the financial area. As far as we know the atmosphere was not disagreeable for the Jews in the Middle Ages. Many Jews fled from Spain or Morocco in the later Middle Ages and settled in Cairo.

At the beginning of the modern times of Muhammad Ali, the Copts began to organise their interests and their community. First, financial employees formed a syndicate with the *Ra'is al-Aqbat* as head. He had to take care of the Coptic wealth and of the building and restoration of churches and monasteries. In 1798 they asked for the removal of the conditions of discrimination. Muhammad Ali gave permission for the carrying of crosses and for bell-ringing. After the French conquered Egypt in the early 19th century, the Copts began to develop their financial possibilities – not in trade, a traditional domain of the Jews in Egypt – but as high ranking employees in finance and in the handicraft sector (as goldsmiths, carpenters, tailors, etc.) Coptic farmers were the first who had water pumps. They bought land, especially in Upper Egypt, and invested in the new industrial projects. Hence sometimes the description "the wealthy minority" is found in literature.

In 1855 the *jizya* was removed and compulsory general military service was introduced, which caused a protest by the Coptic people. Furthermore, a difficult problem emerged, which affected Muslim-Christian relations very negatively, that of the Christian attitude towards British colonialism. Some Christians saw privileges in dealing with the British and, as a result, the Coptic attitude towards the national struggle against the British raised doubts on the side of the Muslims. During this period the Copts kept their way of being *dhimmis*, there was improvement in their circumstances in living and education, and an increase in their possessions. A high school education was offered by western Christian missionary institutions, and these schools were attended by the Copts, and later by the Muslims too. The English language of such new schools was required for the new jobs in the administration of the railways, postal services, banks and in trade. The Copts began to feel superior in the field of education. Today there are many Copts in the public universities and especially in the expensive private ones.

As for the Copts' lack of interest in political life, they have recently participated in discussions on the national or civil state. At the end of the 19th century

Copts joined the liberal *Wafd*-party, which put emphasis on the old Egyptian heritage. They tried to reach a secular society regardless of the Islamic law. At the same time there was a laic movement inside the Church, calling for the secularisation of the Church's wealth and of the judiciary. During the "revolution" after World War I, Copts and Muslims resisted British colonization together. For the new constitution they discussed the model of proportional representation for the Christian minority in the Parliament, but in the end it was refused. Nevertheless, a relatively large number of Copts were elected in the first election of the Egyptian parliament.[1]

During the Nasser-era many Copts fled the country with their remaining wealth, especially to the USA - because of the socialist regime there. Under Sadat, in the 70s, they felt threatened, because this was marked the beginning for extremist Islamic groups. On the other hand, the Church began discussing the idea of a Coptic state, which created political problems. Today the government has urged peace and tolerance between Muslims and Christians. There are some problems between the two religious communities, which re-emerge from time to time. Politics-wise, Egypt is a civil state, but religion still has judiciary dimensions for both Christians and Muslims. Therefore the *dhimma* still exists.

The Coptic Church has had an enormous renaissance since the 50s because of the laic movement. Every prayer session and every event, especially those of the Sunday-school, every monastery is full. So many Copts are busy and involved in religious life: learning the old Coptic language, its songs, the Bible, stories of persecutions. Old and modern miracles and apparitions are in the centre of their communication. At weekends, they travel to the monasteries or to other holy places.

In my empirical study[2], I asked about the time and place of any Muslim-Copts meetings: The Christian youth spend almost all their free time in the church, engaged in various activities. Hence they don't meet up in their free-time, but instead at school or university, or in the neighbourhood. They visit one other on occasions like weddings or funerals.

It was interesting to observe that Copts and Muslims share the same opinion retrospectively, concerning their relationships at the primary school and in childhood. They found it intimate, warm and friendly. Although they knew that there was a religious difference, there were no aversions or problems at this age. Most of the pupils were neighbours too, so they went to school together and played together in the afternoon. Regarding their experience in high school or university, they told me that they became conscious of their differences and

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[1] Doris Behrens-Abouseif, *Die Kopten in der ägyptischen Gesellschaft – von der Mitte des 19. Jahrhunderts bis 1923*, Freiburg im Breisgau 1972 (= Islamkundliche Untersuchungen, Bd. 18).

[2] Christiane Paulus, Zusammenleben von Kopten und Muslimen in Ägypten, in Hans-Martin Barth & Christoph Elsas, *Religiöse Minderheiten, Potentiale für Konflikt und Frieden*, Schenefeld 2004, pp. 65-82.

therefore they separated. It is the time when girls and boys want to start their emotional life. Christians in particular try to avoid mixed religious love and marriages, because a mixed marriage means the loss of their child. This is a problem everywhere. In Upper Egypt such stories have often ended with murder.

Furthermore, in high schools or universities some students – young religious Muslims – start religious preaching or open religious discussions, but the Christian colleagues always avoid any discussion on religion.

On the other side, almost all those who were interviewed told me that the relationship between them is fine, that there are no problems. The relationship is "normal", normal in the sense of neighbourhood or as colleagues. Hence they have got used to each other. As a Christian woman told me, she normally likes Muslims, but she only puts her trust in Christians. Real friendships between them are very rare. And there is no dialogue on religious subjects. On the contrary, they feel that any communication on the subject of religion represents a danger for their "friendship" or relationship.

The same thing was said by Muslims and Christians of the older generation, retired employees. From the empirical material it came out that the older generation has no experience of any bad feelings or aversion. They tell only stories of solidarity and good neighbourhood and of how they helped one other. The resemblance to the experiences of childhood is remarkable: It's the feeling of difference without problems, i.e. without (critical) reflection; a level of mutual and pure confidence.

When the perception of religious differences in the younger generation in the high school or university becomes a conscious one, it is followed by a feeling of aversion and separation. The younger generation today is educated and socialised in the process of continuous modernisation, which means they get used to a high level of self-reflection. Consequently, they are not able to keep this simple feeling of difference without problems. The relationship with the other has to be reflected upon, and they reflect on it in a certain way. This case does not, however, mean the necessity of leaving paradise.

Modernisation has taken place in the heart of religion too, against its will. As a phenomenon of modernisation in Egypt we can also see, beneath the tendency towards islamisation, namely the increase in Muslim religiosity, the reform of the Church,[1] in particular the Sunday school movement,[2] which occupies all the

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[1] This can be understood as a phenomenon of fundamentalism in general, s. Werner Schiffauer, Islamischer Fundamentalismus. Zur Konstruktion des radikal Anderen, in: W. Schiffauer, *Fremde in der Stadt. Zehn Essays über Kultur und Differenz*, Frankfurt 1999.

[2] Otto F. Meinardus, *Two Thousand Years of Coptic Christianity*, Cairo 1999, pp. 93ff and Wolfram Reiss, Die Erneuerung begann in der Sonntagsschule: Geschichte und Entwicklung der Sonntagsschulen in der Koptisch Orthodoxen Kirche, in: Albert Gerhards & Heinzgerd Brakmann, *Die koptische Kirche, Einführung in das ägyptische Christentum*, Stuttgart u.a.1994, pp. 84-92

free time of the youth and separates them from the Muslim youth. The islamisation of the Muslim youth sometimes has the same effect too. For example, since the 80s there have been private Islamic schools. Here separation begins very early, and there is therefore no chance to regain the basic experience of the simple feeling of difference without problems, which is very important as a basic feeling for the relationship between the two groups in the future.

For sure, these mechanisms of separation are not conscious. Those who go to an Islamic school and spend the weekends with *da'wa*, are religious. The same thing can be said for the Christian side concerning prayers, Sunday school events or living in a house with Christians only, buying only from Christian stores. However there is a big difference between the Islamic modernisation of religion or religiosity and the Coptic one: on the Islamic side there is an immense discourse on religious issues, whereas on the orthodox Christian side there is (only) religious activity. Rational discourse is not in the core of the Coptic orthodox religiosity, even after the reform of the Church. The theology and dogma and religious issues remain as they were at the time of the old church. In the centre we find traditional stories of persecution and miracles, beyond logical or reflexive thinking. From this side as well, the Copts do not enter into any discussion with Muslims, nor into dialogue. It's not their habit, and their communication on the subject of their own faith is totally different, especially so at a time of modernisation, which asks for plausibility of the subject. Furthermore it seems to be that there is a lack of reflective, unbiased comprehension of reality, especially towards Muslims, by whom they feel threatened, in most cases without real reason.

It is very interesting to see the statement of a young Copt who gives a positive interpretation of the taboo on religious discussions. Not to debate the other religion means to respect the other in his different religion: "I don't debate on his religion, no, every one has his religion. This is mutual respect."

It can be supposed that this attitude is a sediment of the *dhimma*, because it was forbidden for the *ahl al-dhimma* to practise their religion – showing crosses, icons etc. – in public or it is a sediment of the geological circumstances of Egypt. Many Christians fled into the desert because of persecution by the Romans, and the monastic style of religiosity emerged. These monasteries etc. had the intention to escape from, not to shape, the world and this element entered into the dogma. These are merely hypotheses, which would need special research.

However, modernisation of religiosity presents the biggest danger and the biggest task for both religious communities. As we have seen in the last few years, we have had further clashes and problems between them, but also difficulties within the Coptic Church, especially concerning two new issues: conversions to Islam and divorce, or a combination of the two problems. For biblical reasons, divorce is forbidden and concerning conversions – I suppose that, for some Copts, Islam is sometimes more reasonable than the Coptic dogma in relation to daily life problems. Thus they embrace Islam, in which they find a

solution for their personal problems: for example getting a divorce through conversion to Islam.

It seems to be necessary to make a claim for more "living together" instead of modern religious separation for religious causes. The concept of obtaining a religious identity only in the community is no longer convenient in the modern and post-modern context of pluralism. To get a religious identity cannot mean to be separated from the other, no, on the contrary: it means to become a good believer in relation to the "other". It has been proved through empirical studies that practical experiences with others are very fruitful during childhood and in the primary school.[1]

The Coptic Church is more reserved than before, especially in the area of religious education for children. However, to be open for the other, to show mutual respect and especially friendship does not necessarily mean to discuss religious issues. As a Coptic civil rights activist, Ra'id al-Sharqawi, said: "Friendships between Muslims and Christians are built on the principle 'no discussions of religious topics'." But there will certainly be more possibilities for discussions and mixed marriages. Today they cannot be forbidden.

For the social and especially the political side of life, it means that the Copts have to participate in political discourse and in political institutions. As the debate before the election of the presidency this year in Egypt showed, there are some Copts who are able to enter the political arena critically, with questions like: Is it possible to have a Coptic candidate for the presidential elections? It must be possible, although it is not probable that he or she would win, because the Copts make up 6 or 7% of the population of Egypt. Furthermore, they join the political parties and there is the possibility for independent candidates to undergo election to the parliament.

As stipulated in the Egyptian constitution: Islam is the source of legislation, although the conception of the state is civil. Many Copts want to remove the religious article, as they interpret this as discrimination. Under this article they cannot be civilians of Egypt in the full sense of the word. But to remove the religious article would mean to remove Coptic legal autonomy in the religious and familial domain too. Do the Copts really want this?

Everything depends on the comprehension or interpretation of the notions of *dhimma* and *jizya*. Both have today very bad connotations, corresponding to the Coptic concept of their history of suffering. At the same time, Muslim thinkers have tried to show, through the dogmatic and historical dimension, that the significance of the *dhimma* can be understood as a privilege in the Islamic state, not a disadvantage: as Youssuf al-Qaradawi, professor of Islamic Theology and a famous intellectual, said in his book of 1993: *Gheir al-Muslimin fi al-mujtama' al-*

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[1] Barbara Asbrand, *Zusammen leben und lernen im Religionsunterricht. Eine empirische Studie zur grundschulpädagogischen Konstruktion eines interreligiösen Religionsunterrichtes im Klassenverband der Grundschule*, Frankfurt 1999.

islami[1], i.e. the same title as my lecture. Or, as Abu Ela Madi suggested in his programme for the Egyptian *Wasat* Party: that Copts should pay the *zakat*, i.e. taxes in general, voluntarily.

A vision of a just society for this context cannot necessarily be based on equality of civilians; it doesn't function. If it's the people's will and if they ask their religion to form social and political life too, there is a possibility or a choice to deal with the notion of *dhimma* and to give it a practical interpretation, in co-operation with Christians, Jews and others, to obtain *dhimma* within civil dimensions. - Thank you very much.

CHRISTIANS UND MUSLIMS
AS MAJORITY OR MINORITY IN THE SOCIETY

Bishop Prof. Dr Irinej Bulović (SCG)

1. Christianity and Islam represent, without doubt, the two most widespread and dynamic religions on the planet. Moreover, both of them were founded in the Middle East, though they are in terms of geography and demography equally ecumenical and international. Both are by intention and according to its deepest interior direction and inspiration universal, pananthropic, while each considers itself, by dogma and theology, the legitimate succession of the ancient source of the divinely revealed faith of Abraham, and the authentic version of monotheism. Differences in faith and doctrine exist between them, in other words in the interpretation of the divine revelation which is in principle and history one and unique. These differences historically cannot be overcome except by the direct activity of God, or else, in other words, by a miracle. At the same time, however, wonderful similarities exist between them, too, and in addition to that, there exists also a partial permeation on certain levels of religions and spiritual experience, and this in such a quantity that we can surely state that there is no similar phenomenon in the world of religions. In brief, but basically correct, we can say that Islam experiences itself as the completed realization and fullness of Judaism and Christianity, while Jews and Christians see in Islam a radical modification of their respective faiths, but not to such an extent that they are unable to recognize in it something of their religions.

Christians and Muslims, usually, live together. There are a few countries with exclusively Muslim population, without any Christian, and there may be even fewer countries with an exclusive Christian population, without any Muslim.

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[1] Al-Qahira 1993.

Mostly we live in countries where either the majority is Muslim and the minority Christian, or the majority Christian and the minority Muslim.

If these remarks apply to the relations of Christianity and Islam as a whole and in general, then they apply even more to the relations of Orthodoxy and Islam in particular. Firstly in the wider region of the traditional East, and thus also in the whole world, coexistence of Christianity and Islam in practice means more often coexistence of Orthodoxy and Islam, as can be seen in the traditionally orthodox countries, from the Balkans and Eastern Europe to the Asian part of Russia and the Russian Far East on one side, and in the traditionally Muslim countries, from North Africa and the Middle East to Indonesia on the other. The Islamic world learned about Christianity mostly from orthodox traditions, while among Christians, it is again orthodox Christians only who have centuries-long experiences of living together with Muslims. All the more interesting is the fact that besides the historical and geopolitical tangle – with all its positive and negative amended appearances, from sincere friendship to misunderstandings and conflicts – the orthodox-Christian and Islamic worlds experience proximity also on a spiritual or religious-ethical level. This is, of course, closer than the encounter of the Islamic world with Western Christianity. Recently, however, the presence of Islam in the life of society became an everyday phenomenon also in the Christian West, and even there, it is no longer an exotic exception.

It may be that the entire introduction of my humble address is not only too sizeable, but, strictly speaking, also irrelevant to the topic. However, I do not think that it is totally pointless. I hope that this introduction implicitly carries a message or idea without which serious encounter and dialogue between orthodox Christians and Muslims are impossible. This message or idea could be phrased like this: Our substantial or providential, in any case God given or permitted, mutual historical-geographical dependence and spiritual-cultural correlation, we can and shall – not by dictate of necessity or interest but in the name of our religions conscience, everybody on the base of the spiritual postulations of his own faith – transform into a common conscience and free choice, into moral imperative, into an action which we would interpret as God given. But its main goal would be not only the development of peaceful coexistence and tolerance among us as believers and ordinary people,, but also mutual acceptance and respect, recognition of the widest communion and brotherhood, based on the fact that we all are created by God, and we all want to serve Him. From this emerges an obligation to sincere, unbiased and unprejudiced dialogue and full cooperation, especially in the struggle for peace, justice, freedom, equality, for a life in human dignity, and also for the protection of God's creation, moral values, responsibility in the field of bioethics and genetic explorations and so on.

2. I believe that the openness to dialogue and cooperation in the above mentioned sense represents the choice of an increasing number of people on both sides, irrespective of occasional psychological obstacles and dilemmas because of a spontaneous and often frequently programmed implication of religions

feelings and religions identity into political debacles, interethnic conflicts and territorial disagreements. But for a substantial progress on this way it is indispensable to have, besides a good will, a compatible social ambience, in other words, a compatible political climate which is only possible in societies that through their legislation, and justly assured by their administrative management, guarantee absolute religious freedom with freedom of conscience for all civilians without exception, in other words, for the believers of all well-known, traditional and historical religions. (The only exception in this context could and should be members of those sects and para-religious movements who by their doctrine and action threaten public peace and moral or endanger integrity of persons, families and the wider community.) Inter-religious peaceful coexistence and prosperous inter-religious cooperation are realized, thus, in the frame of guaranteed religions freedom and freedom of conscience.

Please, allow me to explain and motivate this self-evident thesis a little bit further. True and sincere dialogue, as well as constructive cooperation, is not possible between non-equal partners. Particularly, however, they are not possible if one of the partners feels himself insufficiently free and protected or, even worse, restricted and dependent on the mercy or disfavour of the stronger partner. Hereby the weaker partner – weak in the sense that he is a member of a minority community or a community which is legally and politically subject to pressure and threat – is not only psychologically hindered or hesitant when facing the risk of being tied together with that religious community which his own community or Church experiences as superior, or maybe expansive and potentially dangerous for its future. Sometimes, the stronger partner or member of the majority community (which is relevant for the historical identity of a concrete wider social complex) is psychologically imperilled and even frightened, because in the politically fragile, legally insecure and ideologically burdened social surrounding he also can be convicted, and thus also judged, somehow as a heretic and traitor. However, when we face a situation without legal safety and absolute equality before the law, it is difficult, if not impossible, to work on true knowledge of our neighbour who has a different religions experience. Without a mutually direct knowledge, however, the path to mutual respect and love is distant and uncertain, the path to accepting our neighbours as they are, and not as we would like them to be. These observations apply, naturally, not only to single persons or groups„ but also to entire Churches and religious communities.

Before the law of our heart and conscience, before the interior moral law or, in terms of faith, before the absolute law of God's justice and love, we all, Christians and Muslims, are responsible not only for ourselves but. also for others. We are not only responsible when our neighbours, because of our action or non-action, are suffering evil or pain„ but also when, because of our inconsequentiality or unworthiness, our neighbours do not get the chance to live a full human life, a life in freedom and dignity, or are prevented from rejoicing in the gifts and blessings of the Almighty to which they have the right according to His holy will and generosity. But this same responsibility for oth-

ers, particularly for the weak, we have also before the positive laws of this world. Fair and humane laws are never selective, but always serve the human being, protecting the rights of everybody, especially the weak and endangered ones, from the threat of the mighty, who ever or what ever it is.

I think that the so-called theocratic or religious-fundamentalist societies were never possible in history, while in the modern world they are practically unimaginable; but at the same time I think that no human laws, if they are really in the service of living people and for their good, can ontologically be absolutely alien to God's Law, that is to the divine love, directed to the eternal good of all people. Particularly they cannot be opposite to the Law that is above all laws. In history, surely, existed – and still exist, unfortunately – societies and states with such „laws" which in fact even deny the most elementary rule of law or, more than that, directly abolish the very idea of law and legal protection. These are – do I need to remind you of that at all – monstrous totalitarian, racist and other similar social pseudomorphoses. To them, in a full weight, applies the ancient wise proverb: *summum ius, summa iniuria.* According to Christ and His Gospel, which generally demands loyalty towards State and government, a government issuing such substantial antihuman laws is totally unacceptable; and in this case the principle to *give God what belongs to God, and give the king what belongs to the king,* is no longer valid, but is replaced by the principle: *follow, obey God more than the people.*

There are, however, also worse social situations, with incomparably more perfidy and more perverse quasi-legislative production, in other words, crafty prefabricated and realizable legal fiction instead of legal practice, with virtual, but not real laws and rights. In fact, it is easy, to identify lawlessness, immorality and arrogance in the law which *a priori* discriminates or exposes to persecution and devastation people of a certain religion, race, class, orientation… But how can someone act in a situation when the law prohibits all this, when in the name of the very law all this is realized in real life? In other words, how to act in Orwell's world in which peace means war, while law means the desire of Big Brother? We who lived in the world under communist rule, theory and practice, know how all this looks. In a similar way, this was also known to those who lived before us under the Nazis. On paper, the constitution and law are blameless, nearly perfect; in life, however, in a "just" and "human" society, there are camps, arrests, deportations, executions according to the verdict declared "in the name of the people" or without court and judge… To tell the truth in full, however, it is necessary to point out that in today's conditions of a sophisticated and extensive propaganda of the media, often also directed and manipulated by the media, the contemporary democratic societies, according to definition, are no longer immune either to the temptation, since some lawlessness is "legalized", some punishing expedition is declared bringing peace or humanitarian action, innocent civilian victims are called "collateral damages", some occupation is called liberation and so on...

3. It may be that the distinguished listener asks himself: what is all this reminding of things which are known in general for? Here is the answer: because I

would like to highlight more emphatically the importance of jurisprudence and law, that is to say the legal responsibility of all parties and the moral responsibility of ourselves, the representatives of our respective religious communities, in order to create conditions under which we can undertake a concrete dialogue and realize cooperation, with the goal of promoting those spiritual values which we recognize as common ones. None of the briefly previously mentioned "models" of legal relations and legal atmosphere in certain countries and regions, even not the "model" of legal voluntarism and relativism, or even worse, the "model" of legal nihilism can oppose encounter and cooperation between religions completely if their representatives truly want encounter and cooperation. It is necessary to underline even more that experience teaches us that being deprived of law under a regime of dictatorship and living under legal insecurity because of the tyranny of political power-holders in autocratic societies and authoritarian regimes very often equally inspires members of different religions, in our case Christians and Muslims, to solidarity and togetherness, cooperation and mutual support.

But we should not be enthusiastic about this fact. Once the conditions change, and the social-legal climate becomes unbearable, it can lead again to subversiveness, relations become colder and one gets alienated from the other. If however conditions change and it happens that in the new social-political situation Muslims enjoy priority or at least become dominant, eventually with the status of a „state-creating element" like in some of the former Soviet republics, or the opposite, if that occurs to the Orthodox or other Christians, while Muslims find themselves in the position of a minority what is state-ideologically doubtful or socially undesirable and, in addition to that, they are regarded "strangers" and related to their brothers of same faith and origin from other "alien", "strong" and "dangerous" countries - then it can come to an unintended tragic reverse, in which former friendship and cooperation under conditions of shared misfortunes are forgotten and mistrust increased, even bringing more hostility which did not exist before or had been overcome long ago. (This just mentioned scenario occurred, to a certain degree, on the territory of former Yugoslavia and, *mutatis mutandis*, in the former Soviet Union).

Again, thus, also by this way we come to the same conclusion: only the society which is based on, and rooted in, law and freedom guarantees a normal existential frame for social life in general, and inter-religious cooperation in particular. That is why I think, being aware of the importance and meaning such cooperation has for believers (Christians, Muslims and others) and for the world as a whole, that in countries where Christians are the majority, and with a good public "rating" of the Church, it is right and appropriate that the Church should advocate equal rights for Muslims, as well as their full integration and participation in solving social problems of the entire community. And *vice versa*, in countries with a Muslim majority and with strong public influence of Islamic religious institutions and organizations, it is likewise right and appropriate that they should have confidence in the Church, its clergy, monks and lay-believers, and to support its active participation in general social processes. In this way,

mutual respect and cooperation between the Islamic Community and the Christian Churches (Orthodox, Roman Catholic, and / or Protestant) could serve as an example also for other sectors of a multi-religious and multi-cultural society, and become a meaningful element of cohesion. Last, but not least, it can be a living proof that religious and cultural diversity must not be the cause of conflicts, but can be the very source of spiritual richness and an important element of unity.

I do not exclude the possibility that for someone it seems exaggerated when I insist on the legal responsibility of all sectors of society for the spiritual harmony within it, especially when I insist on the mutual recognition of, and respect for, identity, dignity, and spiritual values between Muslims and Christians. This someone could ask: "Is it not enough for the regulation of the legal position of the churches and religious communities and for the quality of their mutual relations, that we have international declarations on human rights, political and civil freedom, especially about freedom of religion and conscience?" This, even more, because the declarations in question oblige all member states of the United Nations, thus, the whole civilized world, too! – I think that these declarations are very important, sometimes of decisive importance, but nevertheless, not sufficient. In order to lend them the weight which they deserve and to produce concrete and positive consequences, according to my conviction, they must be constitutionally guaranteed in every country and legally precise and detailed in their formulation.

In this context, I do not want to start an illustration and evaluation of the quality of legal responsibility concerning the legal status of religion and believers in certain countries, because something like that goes beyond the scope of my subject, especially as I possess neither sufficient related facts nor information. So I will only say something principally and briefly. I am pleased to state the following: the Church to which I belong and serve with all my being, the Orthodox Church, has no reserve or suspicion towards non-Christian religious communities in countries where Orthodox Christians form the majority, or indeed elsewhere in the world. This, of course, applies also to the Muslim community. The Muslim community, as us, has the inalienable and untouchable right to freely confess and practise its religion and develop religious and cultural activities which are part of its identity. Our Church wants at the same time, that the same right is granted it and acknowledged everywhere in the world.

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Guests of Honour

Reis-ul-ulema Dr *Mustafa Cerić* (Grand Mufti of the Muslim Community in BIH)
Mr *Jacob Finci* (Jewish Community in BIH)
H. E. Cardinal *Vinko Puljić* (Roman Catholic Church in BIH)
Bishop Dr *Maksim Vasiljević* (Orthodox Church in BIH)
H. E. *Arne Freiherr von Kittlitz und Ottendorf* (German Ambassador to BIH)

Bosnia and Hercegovina

Fra Prof. Dr *Mile Babić* (Catholic Church)
Mr *Samir Beglerović* (Muslim Community)
Prof. Dr *Ivan Cvitković*
Fra *Miro Jelečević* (Catholic Church)
Prof. Dr *Fikret Karčić* (Muslim Community)
Mr *Alen Kristić* (Catholic Church)
Fra *Mirko Majdandžić* (Catholic Church)
Mrs *Elma Softić Kaunitz* (Jewish Community)
Mr *Eli Tauber* (Jewish Community)
Father *Vladislav Topalović* (Orthodox Church)
Mr *Boško Tošović* (Orthodox Church)
Father *Nenad Tupeša* (Orthodox Church)
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